

BRYAN BYRNE,

OF GLENMALURE.

BRIGHT shines the morn o'er Carickmure,
And silvers every mountain stream;
The autumnal woods on Glenmalure
Look lovely in the slanting beam.

And hark! the cry, the cry of joy,
The hounds spring o'er yon heathy brow!—
“’Tis but the hunter’s horn, my boy,
No death-tongued bugle scares us now.”

In vain the widowed mother smiled,
And clasped her darling to her breast;
Horror and rage o'er all the child
A manly beauty strange impressed,

Fierce rolled his eye, of heaven's own hue,
 And the quick blood strong passions told,
 As fresh the breeze of morning blew
 From his clear brow the locks of gold.

'Tis not alone the horn so shrill ;——
 Yon martial plume that waves on high,
 Bids every infant nerve to thrill
 With more than infant agony.

Yet gentle was the soldier's heart,
 Whom 'mid the gallant troop he spied
 Who let the gallant troop depart,
 And checked his eager courser's pride.

“What fears the child?” he wondering cried,
 With courteous air as near he drew.
 “Soldier, away! my father died,
 Murdered by men of blood like you.”

Even while the angry cherub speaks,
 He struggles from the stranger's grasp :
 Kissing the tears that bathed her cheeks,
 His little arms his mother clasp.

“ And who are these,—this startled pair,
 Who swift down Glenmalure are fled?
 Behold the mother's maniac air,
 As seized with wild and sudden dread!”

“ 'Tis Ellen Byrne,” an old man cried ;
 “ Poor Ellen, and her orphan boy!”
 Then turned his silvered brow aside,
 To shun the youth's enquiring eye.

“ And is there none to guard the child,
 Save that lone frenzied widow's hand?
 These rocky heights, these steep woods wild,
 Sure some more watchful eye demand.”

“ Ah, well he knows each rock, each wood,
The mountain goat not more secure ;
And he was born to hardships rude,
The orphan Byrne of Carickmure.

“ That boy had seen his father’s blood,
Had heard his murdered father’s groan ;
And never more in playful mood
With smiles his infant beauty shone.”

Sad was the pitying stranger’s eye :
“ Too well,” said he, “ I guess the truth ;
His father, sure, was doomed to die,
Some poor deluded rebel youth.”

“ No rebel he,” with eye inflamed,
And cheek that glowed with transient fire,
Roused to a sudden warmth, exclaimed
The hapless Ellen’s aged sire.

“ He did not fall in Tarah’s fight,
No blood of his the Curragh stains,
Where many a ghost that moans by night
Of foully broken faith complains.

“ He triumphed not that fatal day,
When every loyal cheek looked pale,
But heard, like us, with sad dismay,
Of fallen chiefs in Clough’s dark vale.

“ For, wedded to our Ellen’s love,
One house was ours, one hope, one soul:
Though fierce malignant parties strove,
No party rage could love control.

“ Though we were sprung from British race,
And his was Erin’s early pride,
Yet matched in every loveliest grace,
No priest could e’er their hearts divide.

“ What though no yeoman’s arms he bore ;
 ’Twas party hate that hope forbad :
 What though no martial dress he wore,
 That dress no braver bosom clad.

“ And had our gallant Bryan Byrne
 Been welcomed to their loyal band,
 Home might I still in joy return
 The proudest father in the land.

“ For, ah ! when Bryan Byrne was slain,
 With him my brave, my beauteous son
 His precious life-blood shed in vain ;—
 The savage work of death was done !”

He ceased : for now, by memory stung,
 His heart’s deep wounds all freshly bled,
 While with a father’s anguish wrung,
 He bowed to earth his aged head.

Yet soothing to his broken heart
 He felt the stranger's sympathy,
 And age is ready to impart
 Its page of woe to pity's eye.

Yes! it seemed sweet once more to dwell
 On social joys and peaceful days,
 And still his darling's virtues tell,
 And still his Ellen's beauty praise.

"But say," at length exclaimed the youth,
 "Did no one rash, rebellious deed
 E'er cloud thy Bryan's loyal truth,
 And justice doom thy boy to bleed?"

"No; never rash, rebellious deed
 Was his, nor rash rebellious word;
 That day of slaughter saw him bleed,
 Where blushing Justice dropped the sword.

“ In Fury’s hand it madly raged,
 As urged by fierce revenge she flew;
 With unarmed Innocence she waged
 Such war as Justice never knew.”

“ ’Twas ours (the sorrowing father cried),
 ’Twas ours to mourn the crimes of all:
 Each night some loyal brother died;
 Each morn beheld some victim fall.

“ Oh, ’twas a sad and fearful day
 That saw my gallant boys laid low;
 The voice of anguish and dismay
 Proclaimed full many a widow’s woe!

“ But doubly o’er our fated house
 The accursed hand of murder fell,
 And ere our Ellen wept her spouse,
 She had a dreadful tale to tell!

“ For early on that guilty morn
 The voice of horror reached our ears;
 That, from their thoughtless slumber torn,
 Before a helpless sister’s tears,

“ Beneath their very mother’s sight
 Three youthful brothers butchered lie,
 Three loyal yeomen brave in fight,
 Butchered by savage treachery.

“ They were my nephews; boys I loved,
 My own brave boys alone more dear;
 Their rashness oft my heart reproved,
 And marked their daring zeal with fear.

“ They were my widowed sister’s joy;
 Her hope in age and dark distress;
 And Ellen loved each gallant boy
 Even with a sister’s tenderness.

“ It was from Ellen’s lips I heard
 The tidings sadly, surely true :
 To me, ere yet the dawn appeared,
 All pale with fear and grief she flew.

“ Roused by her call, with her I sought
 The sad abode of misery :
 But to the wretched mother brought
 No comfort, but our sympathy.

“ On the cold earth, proud Sorrow’s throne,
 In silent majesty of woe,
 She sat, and felt herself alone,
 Though loud the increasing tumults grow.

“ In throngs the assembled country came,
 And every hand was armed with death :
 Revenge ! revenge ! (they all exclaim,)
 Spare no suspected traitor’s breath :

“ No ; let not one escape who owns
 The faith of Rome, of treachery :
 This loyal blood for vengeance groans,
 And signal vengeance let there be !

“ What, shall we feel the coward blow,
 And tamely wait a late defence ?
 No ; let us strike the secret foe,
 Even through the breast of innocence !

“ Poor Ellen trembled as they raved ;
 Her pallid cheek forgot its tears ;
 While from the hand of fury saved,
 Her infant darling scarce appears.

“ I saw her earnest searching eye,
 In that dark moment of alarm,
 Ask, in impatient agony,
 A brother's dear, protecting arm.

“ Woe! bitter woe, to me and mine!
 Too well his brave, his feeling heart
 Already could her fears divine,
 And more than bear a brother's part.

“ When the first savage blast he knew
 Would bid each deadly bugle roar,
 Back to our home of peace he flew :
 Ah, home of peace and love no more!

“ Oh! would to God that I had died
 Beneath my wretched sister's roof!
 Thus heaven in mercy had denied
 To my worst fears their utmost proof.

“ So had these eyes been spared a sight
 That wrings my soul with anguish still,
 Nor known how much of life, ere night,
 The blood-hounds of revenge could spill.

“ Sinking at once with fear and age,
 Her father’s steps my child upheld;
 The mangled victims of their rage
 Each moment shuddering we beheld.

“ Down yon steep side of Carickmure,
 Our rugged path we homeward wound;
 And saw, at least, that home secure,
 ’Mid many a smoking ruin round.

“ Low in the Glen our cottage lies
 Behind yon dusky copse of oak:
 On its white walls we fixed our eyes,
 But not one word poor Ellen spoke!

“ We came the clamour scarce was o’er,
 The fiends scarce left their work of death:—
 But never spoke our Bryan more,
 Nor Ellen caught his latest breath.

“ Still to the corse by horror joined,
 The shrinking infant closely clung,
 And fast his little arms entwined,
 As round the bleeding neck he hung.

“ Oh, sight of horror, sight of woe!
 The dead and dying both were there:
 One dreadful moment served to show,
 For us was nothing but despair.

“ Oh, God! even now methinks I see
 My dying boy, as there he stood,
 And sought with fond anxiety
 To hide his gushing wounds of blood,

“ Ere life yet left his noble breast,
 Gasping, again he tried to speak,
 And twice my hand he feebly pressed,
 And feebly kissed poor Ellen's cheek.

“ No word she spoke, no tear she shed,
Ere at my feet convulsed she fell,
Still lay my children, cold and dead!
And I yet live, the tale to tell!

“ She too awoke to wild despair
With frenzied eye each corse to see,
To rave, to smile with frantic air;
But never more to smile for me!

“ But hold! from yonder grassy slope
Our orphan darling calls me hence:
Sweet child, last relic of our hope,
Of love and injured innocence.

“ Soldier, farewell! To thee should power
Commit the fate of lives obscure,
Remember still in fury's hour
The murdered youths of Glenmalure.

" And chief, if civil broils return,
 Though vengeance urge to waste, destroy;
 Ah! pause! think then on Bryan Byrne,
 Poor Ellen, and her orphan boy!"