

174 HISTORICAL BALLAD POETRY OF IRELAND

Our trust is not in musket or in sabre—
Our faith is in the fruitfulness of labour,
The soul-stirred willing soil;
In Homes and granaries by justice guarded,
In fields from blighting winds and agents warded
In franchised skill and manumitted toil.

Grant us, O God, the soil and sun and seasons!
Avert despair, the worst of moral treasons,
Make vaunting words be vile.
Grant us, we pray, but wisdom, peace, and patience,
And we will yet re-lift among the nations
Our fair and fallen, but unforsaken Isle.

1690

SCHOMBERG

BY WILLIAM ARCHER

Schomberg was born in 1618 at Schomberg Castle on the Rhine, served for a time in the Swedish army, fighting much in the Thirty Years' War. Subsequently he entered the Dutch army, after which he served in the French army from 1650 to 1685, becoming a Marshal of France. As a Protestant he left France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1686), and then took service with William of Orange. He fell at the Boyne at a spot now marked by his monument.

GLORY illumines with holy light
The memory of the brave;
And laurel leaves, fresh, green, and bright
Adorn the hero's grave.
But none more nobly fell in fight
Or Freedom's sword did wave
Than William's true and gallant knight—
Schomberg the bold and brave.

THE FOURTH PERIOD

175

Europe beheld his bright career
In gallant chivalry,
And victory blessed his martial sphere
With immortality.
But oh, at Boyne for ever famed
He fell beside the wave,
While glory's trumpet-blast proclaimed—
Schomberg the bold and brave!

Sons of the Royal Schomberg, ye
Who take that noble name,
Show in the spirit of the free
Ye honour Schomberg's fame.
Then fill the wine-cup sparkling bright,
Drink—nor one sweet drop leave—
Unto the name of freedom's knight—
Schomberg the bold and brave!

1690

A BALLAD OF SARSFIELD

OR, THE BURSTING OF THE GUNS

BY AUBREY DE VERE

This intercepting of de Ginkles' siege train on its way to Limerick is one of the most famous episodes in the career of the gallant Patrick Sarsfield. Through his mother Sarsfield was a grandson of Rory O'Moore.

SARSFIELD rode out, the Dutch to rout,
And to take and break their cannon;
To Mass went he at half-past three,
And at four he crossed the Shannon

Tyrconnel slept. In dream his thoughts
 Old fields of victory ran on;
 And the chieftains of Thomond in Limerick's towers
 Slept well by the banks of Shannon.

He rode ten miles and he crossed the ford
 And couch'd in the wood and waited;
 Till, left and right on march'd in sight
 That host which the true men hated.

"Charge!" Sarsfield cried; and the green hillside
 As they charged replied in thunder;
 They rode o'er the plain, and they rode o'er the slain
 And the rebel rout lay under!

He burn'd the gear the knaves held dear—
 For his King he fought, not plunder;
 With powder he cramm'd the guns, and ramm'd
 Their mouths the red soil under.

The spark flash'd out—like a nation's shout
 The sound into heaven ascended;
 The hosts of the sky made to earth reply,
 And the thunders twain were blended!

Sarsfield rode out the Dutch to rout,
 And to take and break their cannon;—
 A century after, Scarsfield's laughter
 Was echoed from Dungannon,

August 27, 1690.

THE BATTLE OF LIMERICK

BY THOMAS DAVIS

"The Irish Royalists' commander in these later stages of the war was Patrick Sarsfield, a most noble, brave, and chivalrous gentleman, tall and handsome, respected by his enemies and passionately beloved by his own soldiers."
 —Standish O'Grady, *Story of Ireland*.
 The Siege of Limerick by William called forth as much valour as had the Siege of Derry. When William's troops were pouring into the city through the breach, the citizens rushed out, many women among them, and using any weapons or missiles they could find succeeded in repulsing the besiegers.
 August 27, 1690.

I

OH! hurrah for the men who when danger is nigh,
 Are found in the front looking death in the eye.
 Hurrah for the men who kept Limerick's wall,
 And hurrah! for bold Sarsfield, the bravest of all.
 King William's men round Limerick lay,
 His cannon crashed from day to day
 Till the southern wall was swept away
 At the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.¹
 'Tis afternoon, yet hot the sun,
 When William fires the signal gun
 On the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.

II

Yet hurrah! for the men who when danger is nigh
 Are found in the front looking death in the eye.
 Hurrah for the men who kept Limerick's wall
 And hurrah for bold Sarsfield, the bravest of all.
 The breach gaped out two perches wide;
 The fosse is filled, the batteries plied.
 Can the Irishmen that onset bide
 At the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas?

¹ Luimneach linn-ghlas = Limerick of the Azure River.

Across the ditch the columns dash,
 Their bayonets o'er the rubbish flash,
 When sudden comes a rending crash
 From the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.

III

Then hurrah! . . .
 The bullets rain in pelting shower,
 And rocks and beams from wall and tower.
 The Englishmen are glad to cower
 At the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.
 But, rallied soon, again they pressed,
 Their bayonets pierced full many a breast,
 Till they bravely won the breach's crest
 At the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.

IV

Yet hurrah! . . .
 Then fiercer grew the Irish yell,
 And madly on the foe they fell,
 Till the breach grew like the jaws of hell—
 Not the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.
 The women fought before the men;
 Each man became a match for ten,
 So back they pushed the villains then
 From the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.

V

Then, hurrah! . . .
 But Bradenbourg the ditch has crossed
 And gained our flank at little cost—
 The bastions gone—the town is lost;
 Oh! poor city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.
 When sudden Sarsfield springs the mine;
 Like rockets rise the Germans fine,
 And come down dead mid smoke and shine
 At the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.

VI

So, hurrah . . .
 Out with a roar the Irish sprung,
 And back the beaten English flung,
 Till William fled, his lords among
 From the city of Luimneach linn-ghlas.
 'Twas thus was fought that glorious fight
 By Irishmen for Ireland's right
 May all such days have such a night
 As the battle of Luimneach linn-ghlas.

1690

WILLIAM'S FLIGHT FROM LIMERICK

BY ERIONNAH

After the repulse on August 27, William withdrew his army, marched them into winter quarters, and himself went over to England.

I

WILLIAM came in grand array
 All the way from Dublin Bay,
 Swearing—Sarsfield he would slay
 Or hunt him out in the morning!
 O, when gallant Sarsfield heard of that
 O'er his head he waved his hat,
 To his good horse he gave a pat,
 And spoke full proud and scorning.

Chorus.

Then hurray, hurray! for Freedom's fray
 Flashing pikes and banners gay,
 And oh! by Sarsfield's side to stay
 And charge with him in the morning.

II

"Well for him he were away,
Back again by Dublin Bay,
Or that in some Dutch fog he lay
Before that welcome morning.
Now he is come to make us fly;
Strong he is, and if he try
We must run—but Saints on high!
'Twill be after him in the morning!"
Then hurray, etc.

III

William pitched his camp before
Limerick town by Shannon's shore;
He vowed "'twill run all red with gore
Of the Irish in the morning!"
But our Sarsfield took his fiery course
With his gay and gallant force—
'Come on,' he said, "my Lucan horse,
We'll give him a gentle warning!"
Then hurray, etc.

IV

Right on they dashed on William's rear,
Slew his guards, blew up his gear,
Till every mountain quaked with fear
And English hearts with mourning.
But William's guns fired on the town,
Limerick's walls came tumbling down—
"Now, now," he cried, with an angry frown,
"We'll pay him back his warning!"
Yet hurray, etc.

V

Quick they mounted o'er the wall—
Down they came with a quicker fall!
"O cowards—cowards—cowards all!"¹
Cried their King with fury burning,
For our Irish swords were far too bright—
William fled at the dead of night—
O, they feared to wait for broad daylight
And meet our men in the morning!
Then hurray, hurray! for Freedom's fray.
Flashing pikes and banners gay!
And oh, by Sarsfield's side to stay,
And charge with him in the morning!

August 27, 1690

THE BLACKSMITH OF LIMERICK²

BY ROBERT DWYER JOYCE

HE grasped his ponderous hammer, he could not stand
it more,
To hear the bombshells bursting, and the thundering battle's
roar;
He said—"The breach they're mounting, the Dutchman's
murdering crew—
I'll try my hammer on their heads and see what *that* can do!
"Now swarthy Ned and Moran, make up that iron well;
"Tis Sarsfield's horse that wants the shoes, so mind not shot
or shell;"
"Ah, sure," cried both, "the horse can wait—for Sarsfield's
on the wall,
And where you go we'll follow, with you to stand or fall!"

¹ William is said to have reproached his men for cowardice and to have
envied Sarsfield his handful of gallant Irish.
² *Irish Minstrelsy* (Walter Scott), p. 22 (Walter Scott Publishing Co.).

The blacksmith raised his hammer and rushed into the street,
His 'prentice boys behind him, the ruthless foe to meet—
High on the breach of Limerick, with dauntless hearts they
stood,
Where the bombshells burst, and shot fell thick, and redly
ran the blood.

"Now look you, brown-haired Moran, and mark you, swarthy
Ned,
This day we'll prove the thickness of many a Dutchman's
head!
Hurrah! upon their bloody path they're mounting gallantly;
And now, the first that tops the breach, leave him to this and
me!"

The first that gained the rampart, he was a captain brave!
A captain of the Grenadiers, with blood-stained dirk and
glaive;
He pointed and he parried, but it was all in vain,
For fast through skull and helmet the hammer found his
brain!

The next that topped the rampart, he was a colonel bold,
Bright through the murk of battle his helmet flashed with
gold—
"Gold is no match for iron!" the doughty blacksmith said,
As with that ponderous hammer he cracked his foeman's
head!

"Hurrah for gallant Limerick!" black Ned and Moran cried,
As on the Dutchmen's leaden heads their hammers well they
plied;
A bombshell burst between them—one fell without a groan,
One leaped into the lurid air and down the breach was thrown!

"Brave smith! brave smith!" cried Sarsfield, "beware the
treacherous mine—
Brave smith! brave smith! fall backward, or surely death
is thine!"
The smith sprang up the rampart and leaped the blood-
stained wall
As high into the shuddering air went foemen breach and all!

Up like a red volcano they thundered wild and high,
Spear, gun and shattered standard, and foemen thro' the sky;
And dark and bloody was the shower that round the black-
smith fell—
He thought upon his 'prentice boys, they were avenged well!

On foemen and defenders a silence gathered down,
'Twas broken by a triumph-shout that shook the ancient
town;
As out its heroes sallied, and bravely charged and slew
And taught King William and his men what Irish hearts can
do!

Down rushed the swarthy blacksmith unto the river's side.
He hammered on the foe's pontoon, to sink it in the tide;
The timber it was tough and strong, it took no crack or strain—
"Mavrone, 'twon't break," the blacksmith cried, "I'll try
their heads again!"

* * * * *

The blacksmith sought his smithy and blew his bellows strong,
He shod the steed of Sarsfield, but o'er it sang no song:
"Ochon! my boys are dead," he cried, "their loss I'll long
deplore,
But comfort's in my heart, their graves are red with foreign
gore!"

FORGET NOT THE FIELD

BY THOMAS MOORE

FORGET not the field where they perished—
 The truest, the last of the brave
 All gone—and the bright hopes we cherished
 Gone with them and quenched in the grave.

Oh! could we from death but recover
 Those hearts as they bounded before,
 In the face of high Heaven to fight over
 The combat for freedom once more;

Could the chain for a moment be riven
 Which Tyranny flung round us then—
 No!—'tis not in man nor in Heaven,
 To let Tyranny bind it again!

But 'tis past; and though blazoned in story
 The name of our victor may be;
 Accurst is the march of that glory
 Which treads o'er the hearts of the free.

Far dearer the grave or the prison
 Illumed by one patriot name,
 Than the trophies of all who have risen
 On Liberty's ruins to fame.

1691

THE TREATY STONE OF LIMERICK

ANON.

After Aughrim the Irish retreated to Limerick, and the second siege began on August 25, 1691. On September 22 Limerick fell.

The Treaty of Limerick was signed on October 3 by Sarsfield and the Lords Justices. By it the Catholics were to be restored to the estates, rights and privileges they had enjoyed in the reign of Charles II. All the soldiers who had taken part in the war were to be allowed a free passage to France with their wives and families.

"The violation of this Treaty and the subsequent enactment of the Penal Laws is one of the most disgraceful chapters in the history of Protestantism."
 —Standish O'Grady.

THE Treaty-Stone of Limerick! what mem'ries of the
 past
 Flashed through my soul, when first on it mine eyes I fondly
 cast!

To see it proudly standing by the lordly Shannon's flood,
 And think that there for centuries the grey old stone had
 stood!

How breathless did I listen while my fancy heard it tell
 Of all that erst, 'mid strife and storm, the olden town befel;
 Since proud Le Gros' bold kinsman crossed the azure stream
 alone,

Til! Château Renaud's¹ frigates weighed beside the Treaty
 Stone.

The Treaty Stone of Limerick! the monument unbuilt
 Of Irish might, and Irish right—and Saxon shame and guilt—
 That saw the Prince of Orange the siege obliged to raise
 And leave his wounded Brandenburgs to perish in the blaze,
 When the storied maids and matrons rushed fearless on the
 foe,
 At the breach where fell their kinsmen, by the side of Boisse-
 leau;

¹ Château-Renaud was in command of the French naval force sent by Louis XIV in 1691 to aid the Irish. He arrived after the Treaty of Limerick had been signed, but the Irish, faithful to their engagement, refused to renew the war.

That saw the vet'ran conqueror of Aughrim and Athlone
Forced to comply with D'Usson's terms—the aged Treaty
Stone.

The Treaty Stone of Limerick! the ancient city's pride,
That oft rang loud with clash of steel, and oft with blood was
dyed;

That saw the hope of Lucan's Earl¹—his own unconquer'd
band—

With stern resolve but broken hearts around it take their
stand.

That saw him sign the Treaty, and saw him sign in vain;
For shamefully 'twas broken, ere the Wild Geese² reached
the main.

That witnessed the departure and heard the wild Ochone
As Louis' ships dropped down the tide that washed the Treaty
Stone.

The Treaty Stone of Limerick!—that oft, with magic charm,
Lit up in wrath the Irish heart, and nerv'd the Irish arm.
What hewed, in scores, at Fontenoy, King George's cohorts
down,

But burning thoughts of thee and home—the treaty-riven
town?

And oh! how Sarsfield's great heart throb'd, on Landen's
bloody field,

That fast for thee, for fatherland, his life-stream he could
yield.

Thrice holier than the treasure robb'd by England's King
from Scone,

Is the glory of old *Luimeneach*—the hallowed Treaty Stone!

¹ *Lucan's Earl* was Sarsfield, who was ennobled by James II.

² *The Wild Geese* were the Irish on the continent of Europe during the eighteenth century, and chiefly those who sailed from Ireland after the Treaty of Limerick was broken.

THE DEATH OF SARSFIELD

BY THOMAS DAVIS

"And so, in all that splendid and tragic array (i.e. of Ireland's champions) there is no name more cherished than that of Patrick Sarsfield, there is no figure more truly heroic, there is no man who achieved less."—Stephen Gwynn Sarsfield in *Studies in Irish History*.

I

SARSFIELD has sailed from Limerick town,
He held it long for country and crown;
And ere he yielded the Saxon swore,
To spoil our homes and our shrines no more.

II

Sarsfield, and all his chivalry
Are fighting for France in the Low Countrie—
At his fiery charge the Saxons reel,
They learned at Limerick to dread his stee.

III

Sarsfield is dying on Landen's plain,
His corslet hath met the ball in vain—
As his life-blood gushes into his hand
He says: "Oh, that this were for fatherland."

IV

Sarsfield is dead—yet no tears shed we,
For he died in the arms of Victory;
And his dying words shall edge the brand
When we chase the foe from our native land!