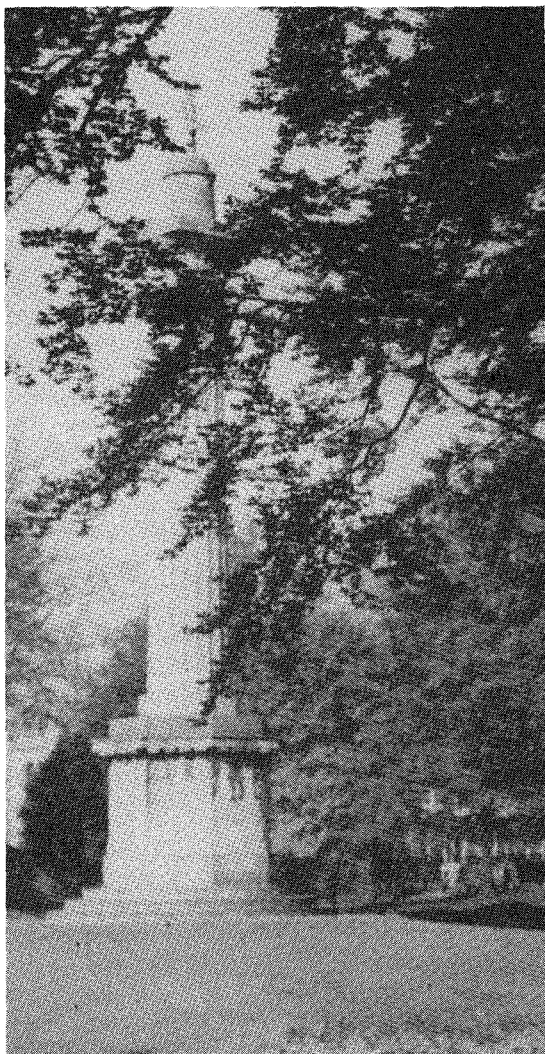


# Spring Rice

by finbarr crowe



The Spring Rice statue.

Once again youth comes to frolic,  
Sportive seedlings sapped with joy.  
Mothers, purling, knit their future—  
Dreams that melt in a clear spring sky.

New life bursting through the old wood,  
Oozing sprays of luscious green,  
Sickly saplings sprout new vigour,  
Nature stirs through my demesne.

Over yonder emerald ivy  
Slowly scales the Georgian wall;  
Cut, yet gripping, clipped, advancing,  
Running crimson in the fall.

And in November Poppies marching,  
Hiding old wounds, bodies frail,  
Braving scorn to honour comrades,  
Dead, interred at Passchendaele.

I see, but keep my stony silence,  
Who would heed me if I spoke?—  
"Spring Rice, haughty Lord Monteagle,  
What can **he** know of Irish folk?"

I meddle not, but ripening watch,  
The rose that made a thorn crown,  
The rich red berry filled with bitter,  
The thistle's tears of soft white down.

\*A statue of Thomas Spring Rice, Lord Monteagle,  
M.P. for Limerick 1820-32, stands in the People's Park.