

WITH THE STORY TELLERS

The Slaughter of the O'Byrne

I.

Though Rathdown's fair as eden's paradise,
The foe stole down through Cookstown's sandy rut,
As the first rays showed sol about to rise
O'er hamlet, sheltered cot, and lonely hut;
But on their murderous work, both horse and foot
Pursued the peaceful dwellers of those vales,
Until their bodies did the Dargle glut,
A host of carrion crows above them sails,
And the whole vale is full of corpses, sobs and wails.

II.

These charming dells begirt with lofty hills—
Kippure, Tonduff and Douce above them frown;
Whence flow Glencree's and Dargle's charming rills,
While from Prince William Seat comes the Cooks-
town;
On them War Hill and Sugar Loaf look down.
Such lovely scenes prompt brave souls to aspire,
To heroic deeds that crown men with renown;
But baser natures here, they also fire,
This eden to destroy, ere from it they retire.

III.

Those devastated glens shall yet resound,
Where now is heard the dying clansman's groan,
To the war pipes that through its length shall sound;
The Saxon matrons then shall weep and moan
Their husbands' fate, attacked and overthrown.
Dundrum shall then in troubled dreams disclose,
Phantoms of murdered kinsman not their own,
For terrible revenge will *Feach take on his foes,
And pay the Saxons back with still more deadly
blows.

* Feach M'Hugh O'Byrne.