

FONTENOY.

By Bartholomew Dowling.

By our camp-fires rose a murmur,
At the dawning of the day,
And the tread of many footsteps
Spoke the advent of the fray;
And as we took our places,
Few and stern were our words,
While some were tightening horse-girths,
And some were girding swords.

The trumpet blast has sounded
Our footmen to array;
The willing steed has bounded,
Impatient for the fray;
The green flag is unfolded
While rose the cry of joy,
'Heaven speed dear Ireland's banner,
To-day at Fontenoy.'

We looked upon that banner,
And the memory arose
Of our homes and perished kindred
Where the Lee or Shannon flows;
We looked upon that banner,
And we swore to God on high
To smite to-day the Saxon's might,—
To conquer or to die.

Loud swells the charging trumpet,—
'Tis a voice from our own land;
God of battles—God of vengeance,
Guide to-day the patriot band;
There are stains to wash away;
There are memories to destroy,

In the best blood of the Briton
To-day at Fontenoy.

Plunge deep the fiery rowels
In a thousand reeking flanks,—
Down, chivalry of Ireland,
Down on the British ranks:
Now shall their serried columns
Beneath our sabres reel,—
Through their ranks, then, with the war-horse;
Through their bosoms with the steel.

With one shout for good King Louis,
And the fair land of the vine,
Like the wrathful Alpine tempest,
We swept upon their line,—
Then rang along the battle-field
Triumphant our hurrah,
And we smote them down, still cheering
'Erin, slanthagal go bragh.'

As prized as is the blessing
From an aged father's lip,—
As welcome as the haven
To the tempest-driven ship,—
As dear as to the lover
The smile of gentle maid,—
Is this day of long-sought vengeance
To the swords of the Brigade.

See their shattered forces flying,
A broken, routed line,—
See England, what brave laurels
For your brow to-day we twine.
Oh, thrice bless'd the hour that witnessed
The Briton turn to flee
From the chivalry of Erin,
And France's *'fleur de lis.'*

As we lay beside our camp fires,
When the sun had passed away,
And thought upon our brethren,
Who had perished in the fray,—
Who prayed to God to grant us,
 And then we'd die with joy,
One day upon our own dear land
 Like this of Fontenoy.