

**ERIN MOR: THE STORY OF
IRISH REPUBLICANISM,
PP. 2-272**

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Erin Mor: The Story of Irish Republicanism, pp. 2-272 by John Brennan

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THE STORY OF IRISH
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BY
JOHN BRENNAN.

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DEDICATION.

TO

BENJAMIN HARRISON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

Under whose patriotic and enlightened administration the flame of American National spirit has been rekindled, this book is respectfully dedicated. The purpose of the author is neither to excite nor perpetuate any form of foreignism, but the earnest desire of creating in the minds of his Celtic brethren a deep, intense and fervid American National spirit. In the present Chief Magistrate the author recognizes the ideal American, who, in his official character and conduct, reflects all that is wise, generous, heroic and merciful in the genius of the Great Republic. Toward Russia, charitable; with Chile, patient; with Italy, merciful; and calmly courageous toward England. Proud and happy be that President under whose administration the Republic has attained a position of material greatness and moral eminence unexampled in the lives of nations, ancient or modern. This grateful tribute is not of that reprehensible sort "born of benefits received," or "fostered by the hope of favors yet to come," but the heartfelt testimony of an adopted citizen, who joyfully contemplates the prosperity and glory of the Great Republic. *Esto perpetua.*

JOHN BRENNAN.

San Francisco, Cal., May 1, 1892.

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the choicest cuts for the neighbors who were convalescing from the typhus fever at the improvised hospital at the old ruins of the woolen mill, and a fore-quarter for his own family, he distributed the remainder to all of his neighbors who were not too proud to accept of his generous offering. It might seem foolish to think of pride among people who were slowly starving to death; but there were still left traces of pride among a people who, before that famine, were proud as they were virtuous and gay—the proudest people in Europe. His guests were not all of the human species. Gaunt and hungry dogs gathered from the neighboring streets, and even from the surrounding country, attracted by the scent of blood, and animated by the instinctive expectation of animal food. The butcher divided the heart, the lungs and liver, and other odds and ends, among the dogs.

A wretched looking man, named Barney Devoy, disputed with a hungry cur for an attractive looking piece of liver, and to signalize his triumph, when he had secured the prize, he gave the brute a kick; and then remarked apologetically:

“This is the first meal of meat my family has had since Easter.” The butcher kindly but firmly reprimanded the kicker.

“Barney,” said he, “don’t kick the poor brute. He is one of us, one of God’s creatures, a victim of the calamity that has befallen our country.”

And on that blessed summer morning the incense of cutlets, fries and fricassees went up to heaven with

the thankfulness of those who feasted on the body of the ass.

John Dillon hastily cooked some juicy steaks, and placing them in a warm iron pot, hastened to the old factory building. He carried a bucket full of pure spring water from the great well in the public square, and entered the building intent upon feeding those who were able to eat. In a remote corner of the ruined building, a young peasant named Patsy Kenny, and his wife, lay side by side. They had passed through the heated period of the fever, and on the preceding night were in the condition of the disease vulgarly called "the cool." The butcher approached them with the feast. He sprinkled their faces with the cold water, and the young husband responded with a feeble moan, but the woman made no sign. Her partially opened eye-lids revealed the ghastly whitish indications of death. Her soul had passed into eternity during the night, but the husband knew it not. Through the long hours of the night the festering remains of the dead peasant woman had lain upon its pallet of straw, beside the emaciated living body of a husband, whom hunger and disease had rendered insensible, and too feeble to realize that the wife was dead.

He gave drink and meat to Kenny, and hastily returned to his residence and brought with him a clean sheet, in which he tenderly wrapped the slender form of Kitty Kenny.

The corpse was placed in the hospital coffin; a grave was hastily dug, and the mortal remains were dropped coffinless into earth.

The public coffin of the period was a hinged contrivance, in which persons were borne for interment. The bottom was fastened by a clasp to one side, with hinges on the other side. This coffin with its corpse was carried to the grave, the bottom unclasped, opened upon its hinges, ashes returned to ashes, and dust to dust, and the coffin was returned to the hospital for future use. There was no funeral, and rarely ceremony. While Dillon and three other men were burying the remains of Kitty Kenny, a poor peasant entered the graveyard with the body of his child wrapped in a piece of sack-cloth, dug the little grave with a spade in his own hands, and returned the infant clay to mother earth. At the same time a cart, provided by the public authorities, returned from its daily round of collecting the dead who had perished by the road-side; and these horrible spectacles excited little notice or comment, because such scenes were of daily and hourly occurrence in many parts of the western and southern counties of Ireland, all the way from Donegal in the Northern province, to Western Cork in the South, and all through the counties on the coast of Connaught in the West.

John Dillon knelt upon the grave of Kitty Kenny and prayed—implored Almighty God to soften the hearts of Ireland's oppressors, or preserve sufficient numbers of the race to become the administrators of God's vengeance upon them. He then washed his hands at the horse-pond below the public spring, and returned to the old factory building to render such relief as he could to the fever-stricken patients.

The typhus fever, which usually followed extreme hunger, was highly infectious; and hunger begets cowardice and fear. As he approached the old ruin he saw Barney Devoy walk up near the door of the building with a little can full of milk, and after placing the milk at the threshold, hastily beat a retreat. Another man came near the door, and fixing a loaf upon the point of a long pole, placed the bread inside the building and retired. It remained for some fearless person, and sometimes for the convalescing patients, to distribute the food and drink among the sick.

The hospital was now crowded with the fever-stricken and the famishing; and it was no uncommon sight to see applicants for admission lying in the sun upon the sidewalks, until death had made some vacancies.

John Dillon's heart seemed to sink within his breast as he saw these poor creatures, their faces upturned to the sun, their blackened teeth obtruding through their fever-parched lips. But nature has its special as well as its general claims. His own family was on the verge of starvation, and this fact had been painfully impressed upon him before he decided to kill the ass, the only domestic creature that he owned. He had decreed the death upon the preceding night. Three days previously he had expended his last shilling for food, and the day preceding that upon which the donkey had been slaughtered, he had entered his cabin to witness a scene which impelled him to certain determinations. His wife was in tears, and his infant child was hungry.