The Pearl of the Irish Nation

The Pearl of the Irish Nation

Hard was my lot for to be shot
All by Cupid's cunning arrow
Thus both Night and Day I fall away
It's thro' perfect grief and sorrow
Thro' the Hills and Dales I often reveal [?]
I sigh and breaths forth my Lamentations:
The which I endure for that virgin pure
She's the pearl of the Irish Nation

This Beauty so bright has Dazled my sight
Now alace my poor heart is wounded
There's no way I find to ease my mind
For by Cupid I am surrounded
[obviously a line is missing here]
Great and sad is my grief & vexation
--and all for the sake of that Beautiful maid
She's the pearl of the Irish Nation

Tho many there be that daily I see
of beautiful charming creatures
with red rosie cheeks & Rubie lips
and likewise comely features
Yet there is none abroad or at home
in Country town or plantation
that can compare with that maiden fai[r
the pearl of the Irish Nation

No way can I find to ease my mind
but spend my time in weeping
I sigh, I groan I sit and moan
while others lies by me weeping
To some longsom place I'll go for a space
there I'll make my habitation
since I cannot gain that beautiful [dame
the pearl of the Irish Nation

I know there is some that thinks I do mow--
and makes all my moan for the Lilly
perhaps it is so but the cause of my woe
Is for the rose that Grows in the valley
It's rare to be seen like Venus the Queen
For modest virtue and patience

My hearts is link'd to that Beautiful pink
The pearl of the Irish Nation

Alace! there is none that can ease my moan
But only that charming creature
With cheeks like the Rose that sweetly grows
There by the banks of the Cedar[?]
Her name to Declare this time I forbear
Tho' my heart is fill'd with vexation
Though you may suppose she's called ye rose
The pearl of the Irish Nation

These lines I intend for to have pen'd
And send to my dearest Jewel
Thus let her know a part of my woe
And if she chance to prove cruel
Then a pilgrim I'll go thro frost & thro snow
I'll forsake my former station
Since I cannot gain that Beautiful Dame
The pearl of the Irish Nation

I'll travel to spain from thence to Lorrain
I'll often times cross the wide ocean
Since sorrow and pain thro' her Disdain
happened to be my fortune
If hunger and cold should on me take hold
and cause me to die in this station
the woods shall not ring nor hear me to sing
of the pearl of the Irish Nation

Tho' I be sad (Oh!) if I had
some part of the wits of ovid
with a willing heart to what I intend-- 'impart' seems right,
but my reading
it should freely be Disclosed can't be that far off
My Name I'll rehearse and there piti--
and to make a Declaration
for I vow and I swear my heart is caught here?
by the pearl of the Irish Nation

P is a part and A is an art [Cap. letters spell out
and T is the teacher of strang[ers] PATRICK KELLY]
[R, I] and C is Numbers three
And] K is the is the Keeper of Chambers
K shall be King when E cannot reign
Double] L must ly by in its station
Y shall be young when it is New sung
sh]e's the pearl of the Irish Nation

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Vir]gin most kind when you read these b[?][-- probably lines
I']d have the same perused
If] I have said ought out of the way
Pr]ay let my fault be excused
An] answer pray send to what I have pe[nned
since I have made a Declaration
Fo]r I vow and I swear my heart is insnar'd
By] the pearl of the Irish Nation

The Modest Maid Reply

Th]en Reply'd this this [sic] Beautiful Bride
He]r answer was with Discretion
M]y parents they say they'll turn me away
If] I join with your profession
Out of this land as I understand
they'll send me where I'll se [sic] no man [there
if that I attemp [sic] without their conse[nt
to marry a man that is a Roman,

My Dear said he if thou wilt agree
this Day with me for to marry,
there is gold and land at your Command
therfor no longer tarry
for let your friends say what they will
I am not obliged to no man
I will prove faithful to you still
altho I be a Roman

Alas why do you slight me so
is it for my religion
You are ungratfull if you do so
hold me in such Derision
if all the grecian gold were mine
on you I would bestow it
then for your heart to me resign
befor your parents know it

O then said she as I am a maid
with you I'll freely marry
I will no longer be afraid
Therfor let us not tarry
I know my parents wish me slight
A]nd say I will be ruled by no man
turn me quite out of there [sic] sight
For] marrying a man thats a Roman

Text from NLS MS 6299, f. 63, 1740-50. Erratic indentations make it impossible to guess how much might be hidden under left

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margins, anything from about zero to five letters. On left side pages it is the ends of long lines that are missing. There is printed copy of this song that I have not seen, British Library, Roxburghe Collection, Vol. III, p. 468 (Ebsworth's contents listing, <<Roxburghe Ballads>>, VIII, p. 185)

Donal O'Sullivan (<<The Bunting Collection>>, Irish Folk Song Society, JIFSS, XXVI, 1927-32. Part IV, 1932), found the alternative title "Pearl of the Irish Nation" in Edw. Bunting's MSS for a tune printed by Bunting in his 1809 work as "The charming fair Eily". Bunting used the tune as a setting for one of Thomas Campbell's immitations of old ballads, "Lord Ullin's Daughter", (but without its usual title). O'Sullivan also gave an undated Gaelic song found amongst Bunting's papers, and gave a literal translation of it. He also noted what may be the original Gaelic song in Edinburgh Univ. Libr
variants of the third and eleventh verses of our song here, with the tune in <<Old Irish Folk Music and Songs>>, p. 25, 1909, but said they were written by Patrick Kelly (see next to last verse of 1st part) at the beginning of the 19th century, but did he mean 18th?

There is another tune, "The Pearl of the Irish Nation", in 4/4 time, in <<The Roche Collection>>, Vol. III, no. 29, 1927, but it does not seem to be related to that here, and does not fit our verses.

tune:PERLIRN, from Joyce
WBO
OCT98

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