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The Brave Old Oak

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The Slave Chase.

“Set ev’ry stitch of canvas to woo the fresh’ning wind,
Our bowsprit points to Cuba, the coast lies far behind;
Fill’d to the hatches full, my boys, across the seas we go,
There’s twice five hundred niggers in the stifling hold below.
A sail! what say you, boys? well—let him give us chase!
A British Man-of-War, you say—well, let him try the race,
There’s not two swifter vessels ever floated on the waves,
Than our tidy little Schooners, well ballasted with slaves.”

Now stronger yet, and stronger still, came down the fiery breeze,
And even fast and faster sped the strange ship on the seas;
Flinging each rude and bursting surge in glitt’ring halos back,
And bearing high to heav’n aloft, the English Union Jack.
“Now curses on that Ensign,” the slaving captain said,
“There’s little luck for slaves when English hunting’s spread.
But pack on sail, and trim the ship, before we’ll captur’d be,
We’ll have the niggers up, my boys, and heave them in the sea.”

Hoarse was the slaving captain’s voice, and deep the oath he swore,
“Haul down the flag, that shot’s enough, we don’t want any more.”
Along side dash’d that cruiser’s boat, to board and seize the prize;
Hark! to that rattling British cheer, that’s ringing to the skies,
“Up, up, with the negroes speed’ly, up, up, and give them breath;
Clear out the hold from stem to stern, that noisome den is death.
And run aloft St. George’s Cross, all wanton let it wave,
The token proud that under it there never treads a slave.”

Kathleen Mavourneen.

Kathleen Mavourneen, the grey dawn is breaking,
The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill,
The lark from her light wing the bright dew is shaking—
Kathleen Mavourneen—what slumbering still?
Oh, hast thou forgotten how soon we must sever,
Oh, hast thou forgotten how soon we must part?
It may be for years, and it may be for ever,
Oh, why, art thou silent—thou voice of my heart?

Kathleen Mavourneen, awake from thy slumbers,
The blue mountains glow in the sun’s golden light,
Oh, where is the spell that once hung on thy numbers—
Arise in thy beauty, thou star of my night!
Mavourneen, mavourneen, my sad tears are falling,
To think that from Erin and thee I must part!—
It may be for years and it may be for ever,
Then why art thou silent,—thou voice of my heart.

(57.)



The Brave Old Oak.

A song to the oak, the brave old oak,
Who has ruled in the greenwood long,
Here’s health and renown to his broad green crown,
And his fifty arms so strong.
There’s fear in his frown when the sun goes down,
And the fire in the west fades out,
And he showeth his might on a wild midnight,
When the storm through his branches shout.

Then here’s to the oak, the brave old oak,
Who stands in his pride alone,
And still flourish he, a hale green tree,
When a hundred years are gone.

In the days of old, when the spring with cold,
Had brightened his branches grey,
Through the grass at his feet crept maidens sweet,
To gather the dew of May;
And on that day, to the rebeck gay,
They frolicked with lovesome swains:
They are gone—they are dead in the church-yard laid,
But the tree it still remains.

Then here’s to the oak, &c.
He saw the rare times, when the Christmas chimes
Were a merry sound to hear,
When the squire’s wide hall and the cottage small,
Were fill’d with good English cheer,
Now gold hath the sway—we all obey,
And a ruthless king his he:
But he never shall send our ancient friend
To be tossed on the stormy sea.
Then here’s to the oak, &c.

The Star of Glengary.

The red moon is up on the moss-covered mountain,
The hour is at hand when I promis’d to rove,
With the turf cutters daughter, by Logan’s bright water,
And tell her how truly her Donald can love,
I ken there’s a miller wi’ plenty o’ siller,
Would fain win a glance from her beautiful e’e,
But my ain bonny Mary, the star of Glengary,
Keeps a’ her sweet smiles and soft kisses for me.

’Tis long sin’ we baith trod the Highlands together,
Two frolicsome bairns gaily starting the deer,
When I ca’d her my life, my ain bonny wee wife,
Ne’er was sic joys seen as when Mary was near,
And still she’s the blossom I’ll wear in my bosom—
A blossom I’ll cherish and wear till I dee,
For my ain bonny Mary, the star of Glengary,
She’s health, and she’s wealth, and a good wife to me.