

Vermont Folksongs— Fragments of Many Tunes

By HELEN HARTNESS FLANDERS

RECENTLY Mrs. E. M. Sullivan gave me fragments of songs she very much wished to have in their complete form. I am printing these, hoping that the many readers who have been interested in the songs she knows will trouble to track down some of the ones she cannot completely remember. Here are lines that intrigue her and which she cannot place:—

With a splash and a dash and all was o'er
And the brave ship sailed as she sailed before.

"John Maynard" is another partially known song:—

John Maynard

'Twas on Lake Erie's broad expanse
One bright midsummer's day
A gallant steamship "Coco Queen"
Snept proudly on her way.

(The ship was in danger, the helmsman stayed at the wheel while the 200 passengers were steered for the nearest shore. It ends with:—)

O where is he, that helmsman bold?
The captain saw him reel

He sank beneath the wheel.

In this series, I published, September 20, 1931, "Pat O'Brien" as known to Orion Merrill of the Sumshire district of Charlestown, N. H., who picked it up during his early days among logging crews around the Connecticut lakes.

Mrs. Sullivan was recalling past days spent in Ireland as a child and gave to me what she termed "A Sorrowful Lamentation of Pat O'Brine." This, she said, was part in the song about a murder which had occurred near her home. She knew a postman who "saw Pat O'Brine coming over the stile" near the big house, "White Gates," and his testimony during the investigation incriminated the guilty man:—

Sorrowful Lamentation of Pat O'Brine

"O mother, dearest mother
You ne'er shall see me more
For Pat O'Brine has murdered me
And left me in my gore.

"Go in to John Raylin's grove
And make no delay.
You'll find my body buried there
And covered up with clay.

"You'll find my blood in streams
Where he has murdered me
And go and get him taken
And hung he'll surely be

While we are in Irish lore, it is natural also to include Mrs. Sullivan's version of "The Boys of Wexford":—

The Boys of Wexford

(A county in Ireland.)

In comes the captain's daughter, the captain of the yeas,
Saying, "Brave united men, we will ne'er again be foes.
A thousand pounds I'll give thee and thy
from home with me
And I'll dress myself in man-attire and
we'll fight for liberty.

Refrain: We are the boys of Wexford, who
fought with heart and hand
To bust in twain the galling chain and free
our native land.

And when we left our cabin, boys, we left
with right good-will
To meet our friends and neighbors who
fought at Vinegar Hill.
A young man from the ranks a cannon he
let go
And missed his right into Lord Mountjoy
and a tyrant he laid low.

We bravely fought and conquered Aross and
Wexfordtown
And if we failed to keep them, twas drink
that brought us down.
We had no drink beside us till Tibbarnearing
Day
Depending on the long bright pikes and well
they fought their way.

They came into the county our blood to
waste and spill;
And let them weep for Wexford and think
of Vinegar Hill.
Twas drink that still betrayed us. Of there
we had no fear
For every man could do his part like Forth
and Shallmore.

My curse upon the drinking. It made our

hearts full sore
For bravery was each battle but drink lost
even more
And if for want of leaders we lost at Vinegar
Hill,
We're ready for another fight, and love our
country still.

Mrs. Sullivan gave no title to the following wistful folksong:—

O many's the time I am sad at heart
And I haven't a word to say
As I keep from the lassies and lads apart
In the meadows making hay.
Willie will bring me the first wild rose
In my new sunbonnet to wear,
And Robbie will wait at the keep's gate
For he follows me everywhere

Refrain: So I tell them they need not come
wooing to me
For my heart, my heart lies over the sea,
For my heart, my heart lies over the sea.

O well I remember when the brave ship
sailed
Far away to the golden west.
Nobody knew that my heart went too
For the secret I never confessed
A mother took leave of her boy that day.
You could hear her sob and cry
And I followed her back to her weary home
But never a word said I.

(Refrain):
I sat by his mother one bright summer's
day

And she looked me through and through.
She spoke of her boy that was far away
And she guessed that I loved him too.
She clung to me fondly and whispered low
I was worthy her sailor boy
But my foolish tears they began to flow
But my heart beat high for joy.

(Refrain for last verse):
So I tell them they need not come wooing
to me
For my love, my love was over the sea,
For my love, my love was over the sea.

The issue of November 27 contained the version known to Mrs. E. M. Sullivan of "Green Grows the Laurel." Paul Lorette of Manchester Depot sent me the following as learned in his youth in lumber camps in southern Vermont:—

Green Grows the Laurel

I once had a lover but now I have none
Since he has left me, I'm left all alone
But since he has left me, contented I'll be
For he loves another one better than me.

Chorus:—
Green grows the laurel and so falls the dew,
Lonely am I since I parted from you,
Upon our next meeting, I hope you'll prove
true.
We'll change the green laurel for the red,
white and blue.

I wrote him a letter—all rassy red lines,
He wrote me another all tangled with twine
Saying, "Keep your love letters and I will
keep mine.
Write to your true love and I'll write to
mine."

I passed by his window both early and late
And the looks that he gives me makes my
poor heart ache,
The looks that he gives me ten thousand
would kill
And these are the looks from the boy I
love still.

Oftimes I have wondered why women love
men,
More times I have wondered why men, they
love them.
I am writing this letter to let you all know
That young men are deceitful wherever
you go.

In the files I come upon the three
or four forms in which this song has
appeared in Vermont and discover this
verse furnished by someone who did
not sign her name, and of whom I
am shocked to find I made no record:
Sometimes I wonder why women love men
And more times I wonder why men do love
them.
They kiss them and court them while youth
does remain,
It's an old saying and a true one. "A new
broom sweeps clean."

POLITICAL CASUALTY

New York—"Jimmie" O'Toole, nine,
swallowed a Roosevelt campaign button
while listening to a political
broadcast. An operation was performed
and "Jimmie" and button are
as good as new.