## THE



## WAKE OF O'CONNOR

## AN IRISH RHAPSODY

THE WORDS BY

ROBERT BUCHANAN

SET TO MUSIC FOR SOLI, CHORUS, AND ORCHESTRA

BY

# HUBERT BATH <br> NAE VO 

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## THE WAKE OF O'CONNOR.

To the wake of O'Connor
What boy wouldn't go ?
To do him that honour Went lofty and low. Two nights was the waking, Till day began breaking, And frolics past spaking, To please him, were done;
For himself in the middle,
With stick and with fiddle,
Stretch'd out at his ease was the King of the Fun.
With a dimity curtain overhead,
And the corpse-lights shining round his bed,
Holding his fiddle and stick, and drest
Top to toe in his Sunday best,
For all the world he seem'd to be
Playing on his back to the companie.
On each of his sides was the candle-light,
On his legs the tobacco pipes were piled;
Cleanly wash'd, in a shirt of white,
His grey hair brush'd, his beard trimm'd right,
He lay in the midst of his friends and smiled.
At birth and wedding, at fair and feast,
Welcome as light or the smile of the priest,
Ninety winters up and down
O'Connor had fiddled in county and town.
Never a fiddler was clever as he
At dance or jig or pater-o'-pee;
The sound of his fiddle no word could paint-
'Twould fright the devil or please a saint,
Or bring the heart, with a single skirl,
To the very mouth of a boy or girl.
He played-and his elbow was never done;
He drank-and his lips were never dry;
Ninety winters his life had run,
But God's above, and we all must die.
As she stretch'd him out, quoth Judy O'Roon -
' sure life 's like his music, and ended soon-
There 's dancing and crying,
There 's kissing, there 's sighing,
There 's smiling and sporting,
There's wedding and courting,-
But the skirl of the wake is the end of the tune!'
'Shin suas, O'Comnor,'*
Cried Kitty 0'Bride-
Her best gown upon her,
Tim Bourke by her side-
All laughed out to hear her,
While Tim he crept near her,
To kiss her and cheer her
At the back o' the door ;
But the corpse in the middle,
With stick and with fiddle,
All done with diversion, would never play more!

On the threshold, as each man entered there,
He knelt on his knee and said a prayer,
But first before he took his seat
Among the company there that night,
He lifted a pipe from O'Connor's feet,
And lit it up by the bright corpse-light.
Chattering there in the cloud of smoke,
They waked him well with song and joke;
The gray old men and the cauliaghs $\dagger$ told
Of all his doings in days of old;
The boys and giris till night was done, Played their frolics and took their fun,
And many a kiss was stolen sure
Under the window and behind the door.
Andy Hagan and Kitty Delane
Hid in a corner and courted there,
' Monamondioul!' cried old Tim Blane,
Pointing them out, ' they re a purty pair !'
But when they blushed and hung the head,
'Troth, never be shamed!' the old man said;

- Sure love's as short as the flowers in June,

And life's like music and ended soon-
There's wedding and courting,
There 's smiling and sporting,
There's grief and there 's pleasure
To fill up the measure-
But the skirl of the wake is the end of the tune!
At the wake of O'Connor Great matches were made,
To do him more honour-
We joked and we played-
Two nights was the waking,
Till day began breaking,
The cabin was shaking
Before we were done,
And himself in the middle,
With stick and with fiddle,
As large as in life, was the King of the Fun !
At the wake of $\mathrm{O}^{\prime}$ Connor, The merry old man,
To wail in his honour
The cauliaghs began ;
And Rose, Donnell's daughter
From over the water,
Began (sure the saints taught her !)
The sweet drimundhu: $\ddagger$
All was still ;-in the middle,
With stick and with fiddle,
O'Connor, stretched silent, seem'd hearkening too!
Oh, 'twas sweet as the crooning of fairies by night,
Oh, 'twas sad,-as you listened, you smiled in delight,
With the tears in your eyes; it was like a shower falling,
When the rainbow shines thro' and the cuckoo is calling;

You might feel through it all, as the sweet notes were given,
The peace of the Earth and the promise of Heaven!
In the midst of it all the sweet singer did stand,
With a light on her hair, like the gleam of a hand;
She seem'd like an angel to each girl and boy,
But most to Tim Cregan, who watch'd her in joy,
And when she had ended he led her away,
And whisper'd his love till the dawning of day.
After that, cried Pat Rooney, the rogue of a lad,
'I'll sing something merry-the last was too sad!'
And he struck up the song of the Piper of Clare,
How the bags of his pipes were beginning to tear,
And how, when the cracks threaten'd fairly to end them,
He cut up his own leather breeches to mend them!
How we laugh'd, young and old! 'Well, beat that if you can,'
(Gried fat Tony Bourke, the potheen-making man-
' Who sings next?' Tony cried, and at that who came in,
Dancing this way and that way in midst of the din,
But poor Shamus the Fool? and he gave a great spring -
' By the cross, merry boys, 'tis mysilf that can sing!'
Then he stood by the corpse, and he folded his hands,
And he sang of the sea and the foam on the sands,
Of the shining skiddawn * as it flies to and fro,
Of the birds of the waves and their wings like the snow.
Then he sank his voice lower and sang with strange sound
Of the caves down beneath and tha beds of the drown'd,
Till we wept for the boys who lie where the wave rolls,
With no kinsmen to stretch them and wake their poor souls.
When he ceased, Shamus looked at the corpse, and he said,
'Sure a dacenter man never died in his bed !'
And at that the old cauliaghs began to croon :
' Sure life 's like his music and ended as soon,-

There's dancing and sporting, There's kissing and courting, There's grief and there 's pleasure To fill up the measure, -
But the skirl of the wake is the end of the tune.
Then the fun brightened up; but of all that befell
It would take mea long day in summer to tell-
Of the dancing and singing, the leaping and sporting,
And sweetest of all, the sly kissing and courting !
Two nights was the waking; two long winter nights
0 'Connor lay smiling in midst of the lights,
In the cloud of the smoke like a cloud of the skies,
The blessing upon him, to close his old eyes.
Oh, when the time comes for myself to depart,
May I die full of days like the merry old man!
I'll be willing to go with the peace on my heart,
Contented and happy, since life 's but a span;
And 0 may I have, when my lips cease to spake,
To help my poor soul, such an elegant wake!
The country all there, friends and kinsmen and all,
And myself in the middle, with candle and pall!
Came the dawn, and we put old O'Connor to rest,
In his coffin of wood, with his hands on his breast,
And we followed him all by the hundred and more,-
The boys all in black, and the friends sighing sore.
We left him in peace, the poor sleeping gossoon,
Thinking, 'Life 's like his music and ended too soon.

There 's laughing and sporting,
There 's kissing and courting,
There's grief and there's pleasure
To fill up the measure,-
But the wake and the grave are the end of the tune!'
' Good-bye to O'Connor,' Cried Barnaby Blake,
( May the saints do him honour For the ould fiddle's salie!
If the saints love sweet playing-
It's the thruth that I'm saying -
His sowl will be straying And fiddling an air !
He'll pass through their middle,
With stick and with fiddle,
And they'll give him the cead mile fealta $\dagger$ up there!'

[^0]
## THE WAKE OF O' CONNOR.

R. Buchanan.

Hubert Bath.

$$
\text { No } 1 .
$$

In moderate, martial time. $\quad d=$ about 76-84.


## 2

Soprano.


18724









 -bove, and we all must die.



Più lento.





Tim he crépt near her, To kiss her and cheer her At the back o' the door; But the


Tim he crept near her, To kiss her and cheerher At the back o' the door; But the


corpse in the middle, _ With stick and with fiddle,_ All done with di -ver-sion, would

 corpse in the middle,_ With stick and with fiddle, _ All done with di-ver-sion, would

corpse in the middle,_ With stick and with fiddle,_ All done with di-ver-sion, would



No. 2.
In moderate time and heavy. $d=a b o u t 60$.









Andante sostenuto.





## No 3.

## Slow and stately. $d=a b o u t 66$.







Soprano Solo.




Oh, 'twas sweet as crooning fai-ries.






Più lento.













lie where the wave rolls,With no kins-men tostretch them and wake their poor


ad lib. Recit. a capella

c said,


kiss-ing and court-ing,There's grief and there's plea-sure T, fill up the mea-sure, But the

kiss-ing and court-ing,There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the mea-sure, But the

kiss-ing and court-ing, There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the mea-sure, But the

kiss-ing and court-ing, There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the mea-sure, But the

kiss-ing and court-ing,There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the mea-sure, But the

kiss-ing and court-ing,There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the mea-sure, But the

kiss-ing and court-ing,There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the mea-sure, But the




## No 5.




 cloud of the smoke like a
cloud of the skies













Life's like his mu - sic and end-ed too soon.There's laugh-ing and sport-ing, There's


Life's like his mu - sic and end-ed too soon. There's laugh-ing and sport-ing,There's


Life's like his mu - sic. There's laugh-ing and sport-ing,There's


Life's like his mu - sic and end-ed too soon. There's laugh-ing and sport-ing, There's


Life's like his_mu - sic. There's laugh-ing and sport-ing, There's


kiss-ing and court-ing, There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the measure But the

kiss-ing and court-ing, There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the measure But the

kiss-ing and court-ing, There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the measure But the

kiss-ing and court-ing, There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the measure But the

kiss-ing and court-ing, There's grief and there's plea-sure To fill up the measure But the












[^0]:    Note. -The preceding poem is a literal desoription of a wake in the wildest and loneliest part of Connaught. Several of the characters-e.g., Shamus the Fool-are well known to the mountaineers and fishermen of that untrodden district, where the old Celtic tongue is still spoken in its purity and the old Celtic customs are still practised, and where the author, in almost complete seclusion, pussed four happy years.

