

(The Stranger and the Fairies : concluded)

comes hard to an empty stomach. The stranger's army grew weary and lean. Though they occupied towns and ruled the land they could not conquer the nation. Winter was hard that year and the stranger left, but what he left was desolation. Only the graveyard had grown under his rule. Many young men came down from the hills and left violence. But others, whose homes were destroyed, stayed with violence and went to fight the stranger elsewhere. In the spring fields were planted and no more died of hunger. When summer came cattle grazed again in green pastures. In the evenings fairies sip their bowls of milk and listen to the fiddler's tune while soft the wind blows down the glen and shakes the golden barley.

So if your walking on the road  
from Ventry to Tralee and hear sweet  
music fill the air when the breeze  
has gone to rest, and see swirls of  
dust rise from the dirt foot path as  
fallen leaves thread lightly through  
the air, fear not, it's only the  
fairies dancing there. Then softly  
sing a rebel's song and no harm will  
come to you, from Ventry to Tralee.

## THE PRISON.

By Raymond Clark

Having won the freedom of the cell,  
 Having gained the nation of the  
                                 gaol,  
 Having lost the light he saw so  
                                 well,  
 In the prison dark sits Ireland.  
 The dust remains as parchment for  
                                 the Gael,  
 His quill, the finger of a tremb-  
                                 ling hand.  
 The epitaph for Ireland is odd:  
 "Those suffering for justice gain  
                                 the state,  
 Where the citizen is man, the  
                                 ruler God.

I AM THE GILLY OF CHRIST.\*

By Joseph Campbell.

I am the gilly of Christ,  
The mate of Mary's Son;  
I run the roads at seeding time,  
And when the harvest's done.

I sleep among the hills,  
The heather is my bed;  
I dip the termon-well for drink,  
And pull the sloe for bread.

No eye has ever seen me,  
But shepherds hear me pass,  
Singing at fall of even  
Along the shadowed grass.

The beetle is my bellman,  
The meadow-fire my guide,  
The bee and bat my ambling nags  
When I have need to ride.

All know me only the Stranger,  
Who sits on the Saxon's height:  
He burned the bacach's little  
house,  
On last Saint Brigid's Night.

He sups off silver dishes,  
And drinks in a golden horn,  
But he will wake a wiser man  
Upon the Judgement Morn.

I am the gilly of Christ,  
The mate of Mary's Son;  
I run the roads at seeding time,  
And when the harvest's done.

The seed I sow is lucky,  
The corn I reap is red,  
And whoso sings the Gilly's Rann  
Will never cry for bread.

\* taken from D.H.Greene, An Anthology of Irish Literature. A gilly is a servant and a bacach is a lame man.