

**DEATH OF OSCAR: A
CHRONICLE OF
THE FIANNA IN
XII. CANTOS; PART I**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649560295

Death of Oscar: A Chronicle of the Fianna in XII. Cantos; Part I by Alice Sargant

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ALICE SARGANT

**DEATH OF OSCAR: A
CHRONICLE OF
THE FIANNA IN
XII. CANTOS; PART I**

DEATH OF OSCAR

DEATH OF OSCAR

A CHRONICLE OF THE FIANNA
IN XII. CANTOS

BY

ALICE SARGANT

AUTHOR OF

"BALLADS AND ETCHINGS" "MASTER DEATH" ETC.

PART I.

EDINBURGH

NORMAN MACLEOD, 25 GEORGE IV. BRIDGE

DUBLIN

HODGES, FIGGIS, & CO., 104 GRAPTON STREET

1901

TO THE READER

THE characters represented in this book are essentially ideal, and appertain to the Celtic type of mind, although they also probably occur historically at three divers epochs in Irish history. Here we find the wise king, Cormac; the leader, warrior, and judge, Fionn; the poet, Ossian; the Druid, Cathbad; the priest, Patrick; the youthful hero, Oscar; the strong man, Cuthullin; the queenly Emer, the covetous Meave, the peerless Deirdre; the amazon Scathach, etc.; and though the materials for this poem have been found in ancient legend, the types are those of to-day amongst ourselves; the style of living, too, is especially suitable for modern treatment. The survival of the fittest by selection, the athletic and intellectual pursuits of the people, and the simplicity of intercourse between king and people, accentuate the best and most salient points of

TO THE READER

scientific, educational, and democratic thought and effort to-day, while the spirituality of St. Patrick's life and doctrine may interest those who still believe Christianity a living power, and look to the primitive British Church as affording the truest survival of Christ's Life and Doctrine embodied in an institution. Having therefore chosen types of character and laid stress on the best human interests of to-day, it remains to consider the plot, something elaborate, dramatic, and possessing unity of construction being that which should sustain continued interest. A date has been chosen (A.D. 60), which, though it cannot be defended historically, nevertheless may be accepted without too much demand on credulity. The epic opens in autumn with the great meeting at Tara, proceeds through winter and spring with Fionn's pursuit of Dermid and Grainne; introduces St. Patrick at Easter, the treachery of the disappointed Druids, and murder of Cormac; the campaign of Cuthullin against the usurper Cairbre, the deaths of Oscar and Cuthullin at midsummer, the revenge of Fionn and reinstallation of the rightful heir; Ossian, the last of the Fians; his journey to Tir-na-og, and his reconciliation to the world through St. Patrick, which brings us again to autumn.

However far this fable may depart from chronology, it will be found, I trust, to adhere to the main lines of tradition, and that after a perusal of it, even once, the mass of legends and poems existing on the subject will be found intelligible and consecutive. Lyric beauty, which must perforce be omitted here, will be found in primitive charm in the many collections and adaptations of Gaelic poems: in "Ossian" and Sir Samuel Ferguson's poems, Dr. Todhunter's, Sir Aubrey de Vere, Mr. W. B. Yeats, and many others; and will be, if I may say so without presumption, appreciated in new lights. Liberties taken with the stories are very few, but the legends have been assimilated mentally, and dramatic construction applied to their representation during many years of well-rewarded study; and it is this which makes me bold to appear before the public with so ambitious a venture.

Characters and plot having been considered, the emotions depicted concern us next. The strongest general emotion of this, and of perhaps any age, is the Death of the Young Hero. We see it in "Adonais," "In Memoriam," and many other works, and, alas! it is a household feeling this year in consequence of our glorious but sad campaign in South Africa. Hence the title, "Death of Oscar."

TO THE READER

Another strong prevailing emotion is "Hope." Science seems to be withdrawing its "frowning Providence to show a smiling face." The reconciliation of the antique world, in all its strength and grace, with Christianity has been attempted with a simplicity and directness which must be its own apology. Characters, plot, and emotional interest being thus defined, it remains to consider detail. This has been studied from the best authorities; where any licence has been taken, I have drawn direct from experience. Touches of true heroism, drawn from the lives of men, women, and children of our own day personally known to me, have been added where such were needed, for I find in England to-day a quiet silent greatness comparable to that of heroic times.

With these few introductory remarks I withdraw, praying the reader to overlook the many and great deficiencies of this little book, and trusting in the pre-eminence of the Royal Standard, and with heartiest wishes for the welfare of Ireland the Beloved.

DEATH OF OSCAR

CANTO I

I

THEE I invoke of swift unwearied flying,
Urania, queen of starry skies arrayed!
When dusky blue obscures the daylight dying,
Descend, O lovely Presence, to the Maid;
The Waking Dreamer, of thy scorn afraid,
Flowered into noble purpose breathes thy face,
Most eloquent, and of serenest aid,
Nor can mere mortal whisper of the grace
Flows from thy sea-soft speech and mystic pace.

Invocation

1-8