

The Limerick Rake

Ireland, Traditional



I am a young fel-low that's ea-sy and bold, in Cast-le-town con-ners I'm ve-ry well known,
in New-cast-le west I spent ma-ny a note with Kit-ty and Ju-dy and Ma-ry.
My fath-er re-buked me for being such a rake and spend-ing my time in such fro-lic-some ways,
but I ne' exould for-get the good na-ture of Jane, a-gus fá-gaim-id siúd mar a - tá sé.

2. My parents had reared me to shake and to mow,
to plough and to harrow, to reap and to sow;
but my heart being airy to drop it so low,
I set out on high speculation.
On paper and parchment they taught me to write,
in Euclid and Grammar they opened my eyes,
and in Multiplication in truth I was bright,
agus fágaimid siúd mar atá sé.
3. If I chance for to go to the town of Rathkeal,
the girls all around me do flock on the square;
some give me a bottle and others sweet cakes,
to treat me unknown to their parents.
There is one from Askeaton and one from the Pike,
another from Arda, my heart was beguiled,
tho' being from the mountains, her stockings are white,
agus fágaimid siúd mar atá sé.
4. To quarrel for riches I ne'er was inclined,
for the greatest of misers must leave them behind;
I'll purchase a cow that will never run dry,
and I'll milk her by twisting her horn.
John Dammer of Shronel had plenty of gold,
and Devonshire's treasure is twenty times more;
but he's laid on his back among nettles and stones,
agus fágaimid siúd mar atá sé.
5. This cow can be milked without clover and grass,
for she's pampered with corn, good barley and hops;
she's warm and stout, and she's free in her paps,
and she'll milk without spancel or halter.
The man that will drink it will cock his caubeen,
and if anyone coughs there'll be wigs on the green;
and the feeble old hag will get supple and free,
agus fágaimid siúd mar atá sé.
6. If I chance for to go to the market at Croom,
with a cock in my hand and my pipes in full tune,
I am welcomed at once and brought up to a room
where Bacchus is sporting with Venus.
There's Peggy and Jane from the town of Bruree
and Biddy from Bruff and we all on the spree,
such a combing of locks as there was about me,
agus fágaimid siúd mar atá sé.
7. There's some say I'm foolish and some say I'm wise,
but being fond at the women I think is no crime,
for the son of King David had ten hundred wives
and his wisdom was highly recorded.
I'll take a good garden and live at my ease,
and each women and child can partake of the same;
if there's war in the cabin, theirselves they may blame,
agus fágaimid siúd mar atá sé.
8. And now for the future I mean to be wise,
and I'll send for the women that acted so kind,
and I'll marry them all on the morrow by and by,
if the clergy agree to the bargain.
And when I'm on my back and my soul is at peace,
these women will crowd for to cry at my wake,
and their sons and their daughters will offer their prayer,
agus fágaimid siúd mar atá sé.