

JOHN KINSELLA

*Bealach Scair, 1847*

The rhythm of the hammer reneges  
As red stone splits along grain,  
Rough road zigzags up through bogs  
Draining to coast or drinking all in,  
Calorific-work-survival equation,  
Occupation honorarium, oak logs  
Deep in carpet no longer appraising time.

To grow stronger and more horrified,  
Build muscle and lose fat to the land,  
That flatstone where coffins passed  
From Cork to Kerry, the lone bird  
Off its flightroute ranting on and on,  
Gales ripping vista and panorama;  
Beauty's failure to make art of starvation.