Catholicism and Civilisation

"Ireland in the New Century"

Religion and Love

Imperialism, II.

Moods and Memories, III.

"Young Ireland" and Liberal Ideas

Poetry

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AN IRISH MAGAZINE OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT

CATHOLICISM AND CIVILISATION.

One way of realising how little progress has yet been made in sociology is to set on foot, anywhere, a discussion as to the comparative influences of Catholicism and Protestantism on civilisation, for good or for evil. Not only do the partisans of the two creeds take up purely partisan positions, but even agnostics are commonly found to lend countenance to one or other side by generalisations reached on lines not scientifically better than those of partisanism.

That Protestantism is pernicious to art, and that Catholicism is fatal to industry and political freedom, for instance, are theses often maintained quite disinterestedly by men not committed to either cause. They reason in the ordinary empirical manner, in good faith, making the ordinary primary mistakes of overlooking complications of causes. When their proofs are met by counter proofs, as they so easily may be, they either fall back on the parti pris, the commoner course, or grow sceptical as to all sociological explanation. Protestantism was, indeed, accompanied by a relative advance of political freedom in Britain, and was for a time extremely injurious to the arts and to literature in Scotland. On the other hand, it was not at all favourable to political freedom in Germany, and it was found compatible with a great development of art in Holland. Catholicism, again, did much for the arts in Renaissance Italy, and has been at least as much associated as Protestantism with political freedom in Switzerland, the ancient Forest Cantons being Catholic to this day. At no time, probably, were they less democratic than was Geneva in the eighteenth century. And the rule of Calvin and his colleagues over Geneva in his day was in many respects a worse tyranny than was felt by many Catholic communities of the same period, even as the local tyrannies of Huguenots were worse than the rule of Richelieu in France.

Evidently, then, neither ecclesiastical regimen is in itself bound to produce either good or evil, either freedom or artistic culture, either tyranny or darkness, any more than alcohol or beef is bound to produce good or bad effects in every state of the individual body. Causation there must be; in every instance there is action and reaction; but the process is much more complex than is
supposed by either the adherents of the churches or the amateur observers who generalise from the first data they see.

We are thus warned that in the case of Ireland, which specially concerns us here, we are likely to err if we ascribe either good or bad social results in general to the Catholicism of the people. That the non-inclusion of Ireland in the Protestant movement in the sixteenth century was "unfortunate," seems a safe political proposition, apart from any question of theological right and wrong; but to assume that a Protestant Ireland would have been well treated by England is a plain fallacy. Sheer greed, agrarian and commercial, as often inspired English ill-usage of Ireland as did religious enmity; and a Protestant Ireland might have been handled very much as were the American colonies, without their luck (greatly dependent on distance) of winning independence. And when it is argued, as sometimes by ill-informed Protestants, that Catholicism has made Ireland relatively non-industrial, every Home Ruler can answer that English penal laws and trade laws deliberately strangled alike culture and commerce in Ireland in the eighteenth century. Indeed, so far from Catholicism making individual Catholics slack in commerce, the trade of Ireland under the penal laws, two hundred years ago, went so largely into Irish hands as to draw special comment from an observer like Sir William Petty, who generalised that a boycotted class, of whatever faith, will always take to commerce.

What, then, has Catholicism caused in Ireland, and what has been its influence elsewhere? Those who indict it to-day as a main cause of Irish economic backwardness are met, plausibly enough, by a reference to Belgium, which, remaining Catholic, is ostensibly as prosperous as Holland. Here we come to grounds on which we may hope to reach a conclusion.

It speedily becomes clear, on retrospect, that Belgian prosperity is not a product of Catholicism. To suppose that it could be would be to ignore the long failure of prosperity under Catholicism in Spain. Belgium is well-to-do, as industrial States go, in virtue of her great mineral resources, and withal she is not conspicuously richer than Holland, which has hardly any such resources. The revival of Flemish trade under Catholic rule, after the separation of Flanders from the United Netherlands, did indeed prove that Catholicism is compatible with both artistic and commercial activity where the economic con-
ditions are favourable to begin with. Antwerp is a great trading port to-day, as before the Reformation, after temporarily losing her trade through politico-military causes. But if it be asked whether Catholicism would have been equally compatible with prosperity and culture under economic conditions such as those of Holland, we begin to press upon the essential elements in our solution.

All Churches, broadly speaking, are in themselves naturally averse to the advance of education, though all are capable of finding at times their relative advantage in education as against certain hostile forces. The early Eastern Church checked education because in a community substantially civilised and generally schooled, the power to read promoted private judgment, which means heresy. The Western Church for some centuries favoured education because in a semi-barbarous community, hardly at all schooled, all who could read were potentially churchmen, as against a largely hostile feudalism. In England, before the Reformation, the Catholic Church pushed its own schools for its own purposes, and checked others. After the Reformation the new Protestant Church for a time promoted schools, because to make Bible readers was the best way to make Protestants. When the same process was found to multiply Protestant dissenters as against Anglicans, the Anglican Church became definitely averse to education, and remains so to this day, having set up its modern schools, not for the sake of educating the people, but in order to prevent others from educating them into dissent.

Now, the Catholic Church is on various grounds less ready than any other to come to terms with education. Only the special enterprise of the Jesuits developed a Catholic policy of education in the seventeenth century, in countries where, as in Poland and France, there were special political reasons for such a policy. In countries such as Belgium, Italy, and Spain, where there is no non-Catholic Church to force educational competition, the Catholic influence is to this day in the main unquestionably anti-educational. Only in countries like the United States, Holland, and Switzerland, where the powerful rivalry of Protestant Churches forces Catholicism to seek education in self-defence, does it accept the idea. And it remains the fact that Belgium is much worse educated than Holland, while Spain and Italy are worse educated still, though the determined policy of the rationalistic socialists is in all three countries forcing a reform.
Belgium, then, owes her relative well-being not at all to Catholicism. She has simply prospered in spite of the anti-progressive influence of sacerdotalism, where Spain, broadly speaking, has not. If Belgium has in any measure held her own in the higher intellectual life as compared with Holland, it is clearly by reason of her constant culture-contacts with France. There, all modern intellectual progress has been by way of resistance, not on Protestant but on rationalistic lines, to the anti-democratic and anti-educational influences of the Church. In the first half of the eighteenth century, abundant contact with the freer intellectual life of Protestant and Inquisitionless England generated a new intellectual life in France, whose writers in turn generated a new life in Protestant Scotland, so long hidebound in fanaticism. It was the impact of writers such as Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Physiocrats—heretics all—that evoked the sociological and historical school which flourished in Scotland after the final overthrow of Jacobitism. Smith, Robertson, Ferguson, Watson, Henry, Millar, Dunbar, all shew the French influence: even Hume, who began to frame his philosophy on English stimuli, soon came under it in turn.

It thus appears that neither Protestantism nor Catholicism, as such, makes for advance of any kind. What happens is simply that Protestantism on the whole tends to sectarian subdivision, which frustrates sacerdotalism, while Catholicism on the other hand carries sacerdotalism to a point which ultimately evokes determined resistance. There emerges the general law that progress is in the ratio of education and freedom of discussion, other things being equal. Superior economic conditions, however, foster industrial activity; while conversely bad economic conditions hamper it; and as the good conditions, plus sacerdotalism, yield less good results than they otherwise might, so the bad conditions, plus sacerdotalism, yield the maximum of hindrance to progress.

To put the case concretely: (1) A Catholic Holland could not conceivably have prospered as Protestant Holland has done. Naturally poor, she would have been worse educated, and the only hope would have lain in a rationalistic reaction. (2) A Protestant Ireland would have prospered better than Catholic Ireland has done only if her Clergy were divided as those of Holland have been. The phenomena of priestly rule and popular clericalism, with a general reign of doctrinal asceticism, were as obvious in Presbyterian Scotland in the eighteenth century as in Ireland
to-day. Curiously enough, the ascetic Catholic terrorism complained of in Ireland to-day by Mr. Moore, had its close counterpart in the ascetic Protestant terrorism of Scotland before the modern industrial period; and even the political evolution of the clerical power in the two cases is in some fundamental points similar. (3) What mainly helped Scotland to progress was the exploitation of her special industrial resources. Any other influence may be reduced to the greater permeability of a Protestant country by new ideas, certainly not to Protestant ideals in themselves.

It follows, then, that Catholicism in Ireland may have made for backwardness—(1) indirectly and innocently, in so far as Protestant malice in the eighteenth century positively strangled even the education that Catholicism sought for; and (2) directly and of its own nature, inasmuch as a docile Catholic community is to-day less permeable to new light than a Protestant one.

In Ireland Catholicism is not countervailed by secular democratic movements as it is in Belgium, Spain, and Italy: the identification of the cause of the Church with that of the people, as against English tyranny, has prevented such developments. But an Ireland dominated by one Protestant Church, as Scotland was in the eighteenth century, would be not a whit better situated; and mere Protestantism can never make the difference between prosperity and poverty for the Ireland of the future. It does not do so in Ulster, where Protestantism is to-day as flagrantly unintellectual as Catholicism is in Spain.

No: the theory that Protestantism would cure Ireland's disease is a Protestant fallacy. The disease is at bottom politico-economic, and the economic side of the evil cannot be effectually treated apart from the political. A cured Ireland, finally, will not become Protestant any more than progressive France, Belgium, Spain and Italy tend to become Protestant. But as little, of course, do these countries become more zealously Catholic. They simply become more secular, as do England and Scotland. It may indeed be that Catholicism in England will still for a time, as in the past half century, gain ground relatively to Anglicanism; but that does not in the least mean a future of Catholicism. The emerging modern ideal is not ecclesiastical.

Of old, the noblest of the Pagan emperors spoke nobly and movingly of the ideal human society as the "dear City of Zeus"; and we know how the actual world matched the dream. After him came the Christian
Augustine with his eloquent ideal of the "City of God"; and we know how men fared for a thousand years under the leadership of the Church which acclaimed Augustine as one of its greatest teachers. To-day, looking back on the long eras of failure and shame, we are fain to shape our ideals anew, and their formula is the simpler and hopefuller one of a City of Man.

JOHN M. ROBERTSON.

THE MONK.

I go with silent feet and slow,
As all my black-robed brothers go:
I dig a little, fast and pray,
So portion out my pious day
Until the evening time, and then
Work at my book with cunning pen.
If she would turn her face awhile,
If she would lift her head and smile,
My book would be no more to me
Than some forgotten phantasy,
And God no more unto my mind
Than a dead leaf upon the wind.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.
"IRELAND IN THE NEW CENTURY."

This book falls naturally into two divisions; the first five chapters are speculative and critical, and the remainder relates to the Author's practical work in Ireland. He has had great opportunities for investigating the industrial problems of the country, and I opened the book hoping for information on this subject. I close it without one new idea, and with a feeling of regret that it was ever written.

The second part of the book is dull and uninforming, the first is certain to do harm to the objects I know he has at heart. If he desired to make money there would be nothing more to be said; if he aspired to literary fame, a free expression of his opinion would be necessary and laudable. But I believe him to be above the former, and his capacity does not fit him for the other. The avowed object of his life is the material improvement of the country, and for this he has sacrificed time and money. Those who had intimate knowledge of the Co-operative movement know that its success in the West was due almost entirely to the support of the Priests. I am not so well acquainted with other parts of Ireland, but I believe it was much the same in Munster and in the other provinces. It is the convents and the priests and bishops who are the principal agents of the technical education he has inaugurated, without them he is helpless: what then does he gain by a series of somewhat disagreeable statements about the very people on whom the Agricultural Department must continue to rely? Moreover, he does not seem to have any strong opinions which he can repress; he is not a bigot or a violent anti-cleric; he merely re-states some very stale platitudes, and waters them down till they are almost innocuous.

The most noticeable characteristic of the author is his singular lack of logical perception. His mind seems to be of so cloudy a nature that he is unable to connect his conclusions with his premises. For instance, he discusses the question of intemperance in order to illustrate the bad influence of Catholic priests on the national character. He begins:—

"Among temperance advocates, the most earnest of all reformers, the Catholic clergy have an honorable record."

"An Irish priest was the greatest and for a time, the most
"successful temperance apostle of the last century, and
" statistics, it is only fair to say, show that the Irish drink
" less than people in other parts of the United Kingdom."

He then passes on to give the causes which conduce to
intemperance in Ireland. He very rightly attributes it
mainly to the licence which the law in Ireland allows every
ordinary goods shop to hold, and to the indiscriminate
granting of these licenses by weak-kneed magistrates.
Not one word about priests enters, either directly or in-
directly, into the argument. The next paragraph goes
on:—

"I do not think it unfair to insist upon the large re-
ponsibility of the clergy for the state of public opinion in
this matter to which the few facts I have stated bear
" testimony."

A more inconsequent argument can hardly be imagined,
but one has only to examine any paragraph in the book to
see that the sentences are piled on one another without
any definite sequence, and to understand the impossibility
of evolving any logical result from such a method.
Every chapter teems with these illogical statements;
here is another:—

"I am convinced that the long continued misunder-
standing of the conditions and needs of this country, the
" with-holding for so long of necessary concessions, was
" due not to heartlessness or contempt, so much as a lack
" of imagination, a defect for which the English cannot be
" blamed. They had, to use a modern term, 'standardised'
" their qualities and it was impossible to get out of their
" minds the belief that a divergence in another race from
" that 'standard of character was synonymous with
" inferiority. This attitude is not yet a thing of the
" past........"

It is astonishing that an intelligent man should be
unable to perceive where such arguments lead him. No
doubt Tamerlane had 'standardised' the qualities of the
Mongols and was not to be blamed for wiping out the
civilised nations which diverged from them. The Turks
also are not to be blamed for the lack of imagination which
causes them to oppress the Bulgarians and Armenians,
How weak are the pleas we accept in defence of those we
love.

My view is not that Sir Horace Plunkett is a dishonest
thinker, but that he is not a thinker at all. I believe him
to be one of the most self-sacrificing men in Ireland; but,
like Mr. Butt, he started life stuffed with English ideas;
and when his temperament led him on to the National road, unlike Mr. Butt, he had not the clearness of view to see the direction of his steps. He gives, indeed, a very accurate description of his own mind.

"The reason for all this is plain to me now, though like all my discoveries about Ireland, the truth came to me from observation and practical experience rather than as the result of philosophic speculation."

I refer to his remarks on the alleged over-building of Catholic Churches. only to illustrate the bad taste which often disfigures the book. It might have occurred to him that a nation that can afford to spend so many millions on drink, can well afford a much smaller sum for religion; moreover, it was a sanitary necessity to pull down the damp, dirty and often over-crowded chapels built two centuries ago in out-of-the-way corners to escape observation. It might have occurred to him also that it is a matter concerning Catholics alone, and that it comes with special ill taste from the members of a church who, till thirty years ago, collected tithes for their own churches at the point of the bayonet, from the poorest of these Catholic peasantry whose bishops and parsons accumulated vast fortunes by these cruel exactions, and who still retain ten millions of the spoil.

There is an old Abbey in the west of Ireland, confiscated by Elizabeth and unroofed by Cromwell; for three hundred years people had no other place of worship, and week after week, generation after generation, they knelt bare-headed and shivering in rain and snow, while they paid tithes to support the choir in Christ Church Cathedral. The old Abbey of Ballintubber has now been partly roofed and I suppose this is one of the cases of "gross over-building in poor districts" to which he alludes. I have seen this sight, and when I begin to forget it, I am reminded of it by the gibes and sneers of men who are jealous, because having robbed and oppressed Catholics for hundreds of years, they see them now rising gradually but surely to their proper position in the State. But here again, he has merely followed rather stupidly in the trail of a few men trading on Protestant bigotry for the sale of their books.

The second part of the volume gives an account of a great work of which the author was the originator and the leader and the success of which will excuse much indifferent writing. I think it unfortunate, however, that this movement has not a better historian. An extremely interesting
tale could have been told of the rise and progress of Co-operation, the first conversions, the early difficulties and the gradual success. It is a movement that has enlisted the most ardent devotion among a number of very able men from one end of Ireland to the other, and sketches of their characters would have lightened the book with a personal interest in which it is singularly deficient.

Chapter VI. is entitled "Through Thought to Action," and here we begin to find the real man as he was known and as I hope he will be remembered. If he is not a man of great ability he has qualities which are better than talents. His enthusiasm and honest self-sacrificing love of his countrymen have enabled him to do deeds far in excess of his brain capacity. The work he has done—or got others to do—is truly remarkable; it will not be altogether lost even if the Co-operative movement gradually dwindles and disappears. There have been great faults and great omissions, but in spite of these the project on which he had set his heart flourished and spread over the country. I was myself an early disciple, and perhaps I can best describe it by recording my own experience. If I dwell on the errors more than on the successes it is partly because the former chanced to come more under my own observation, and partly because they have not been described by anyone else. Moreover, they illustrate the difficulties that were encountered and sometimes overcome, and show that the hardships and difficulties were at least as great for the practical workers, as for the promoters who stood on platforms and painted somewhat over-coloured pictures of co-operative wealth.

I went one day to a meeting at a neighbouring country house where the peasants of the parish were gathered together with the parish priest as chairman to listen to a lecture by the organizer, Mr. Hannon. He was a ready speaker, well versed in his subject, and he told a pleasant tale of agricultural prosperity under the new system. Eggs could be sold for two pence each, the value of pigs would be doubled, and the price of manure and seeds reduced by fifty per cent. I knew nothing of agriculture, but I was a student of socialism, and had always been interested in co-operation, which is akin to socialism. The two young ladies of the house were the principal promoters, and we were supported by the parish priest; we formed an Agricultural Society and a Bank, and we embarked on the work with the greatest enthusiasm. After buying artificial manures at a great saving on the former prices, we started
an egg society. As no one knew anything of the matter, we wrote for information and were sent pamphlets from the Organisation Society full of misleading generalities. We were informed that a market would be provided by the "Agricultural Agency," which had lately been started for the purpose. All the information was wrong, and the market provided spelt early bankruptcy. I knew nothing of the egg market, but I saw danger after the first fortnight, and took alarm at the prospect. I wrote to the Agency without result, and then appealed to the Organisation Society. A controversy ensued which only proved to us the more clearly that we were on the wrong track, and that our informers had not thought the matter out; in fact they knew no more about eggs than we did and talked nothing but vague generalities. We corresponded with other societies and found they were placidly moving along the same road; some were uneasy but had not yet discovered where it led. The organisers were intelligent and sympathetic but could give no real help; in fact there was no clear thinker or man of business at the head of the "Organisation Society," and matters drifted on anyhow.

Still we had taken up the job and pledged ourselves to the people, and we were not inclined to put it away lightly. We broke off from the official market; one of the ladies went to Dublin and got trade by going round the dairies, hotels and restaurants for orders every week; we also found some retail business in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow. Meanwhile I stopped at headquarters and packed and despatched the eggs.

During this time we protested in vain against the wholesale organisation of small egg societies which could not possibly pay, and earnestly pointed out the unfairness of inducing inexperienced ladies, who knew nothing of markets or accounts, to risk financial loss. It was quite clear that the societies could only succeed if they handled large quantities of eggs, and to do this in winter they must extend their operations over a large extent of country. Nevertheless the propaganda continued. At the end of a year all the egg societies in Ireland except our own and one other had lost money; some societies had lost very heavily. Moreover ours was not a fair commercial profit; it was attained only by a vast quantity of unpaid labour. We had begun the sale of pigs at an early date; the Organisation Society had made some arrangement with the Limerick bacon factories, and we were advised to send our pigs there alive and sell by dead weight. We had the
greatest difficulty in persuading the people to part with their pigs before receiving the money, but eventually they took our word for it, and two or three truck loads were sent off. When the money was received, it turned out that the best class of pigs fetched about the same prices as the pig-dealers were accustomed to give in the neighbouring markets; but the fat pigs were sold at a considerable loss. The men who were satisfied said nothing, but those who lost abused the Society from one end of the district to the other, and the whole side of the country was put against the Co-operative Society.

I was very much distressed, and went to the Organisation Society for information. Here again I found the question had not been thought out at all, and raising it only caused resentment. But Mr. G. Russell, who is a man of ability, gave me the card of a Glasgow pig-buyer, and I wrote for his prices. I found that the price of the lowest quality in Glasgow was as good as the price of the best quality in Limerick, and the other qualities in proportion. I found moreover that the Limerick factories did not want the fat pigs at any price, but in Glasgow they were used for sausages and such like purposes. If this information had been given us, we would of course have discriminated, but simple facts like these were not welcome at the Organisation office. Meanwhile the Co-operative pig selling failed everywhere.

The truth is that Sir Horace Plunkett and most of his co-adjudors at the headquarters were benevolent amateurs, all the more dangerous because they affected a thorough knowledge of agriculture and commerce, of which they had no practical experience. There were a few exceptions, or the scheme would have failed altogether, but these men were generally too busy with other work to give more than a part of their time to this vast undertaking. The central stores were nearly always very badly managed, and were serious obstacles to progress. The valuable factors that Sir Horace Plunkett put into the movement were confidence and enthusiasm; he had also the suavity of manner so useful to a leader. I am convinced that the movement could not have been successfully initiated without him; it would soon have lapsed for want of money and vitality. It is a pity he had little knowledge and less talent for details; he looked quite distressed when they were pressed on him. If there had been a man of real ability and business capacity to direct the vast mass of enthusiasm that was thrown into the undertaking, I believe it would have revolutionised the country. MAURICE MOORE.
RELIGION AND LOVE.

I have often wondered whether there is not something wrong in our religious systems in that the same ritual, the same doctrines, the same aspirations are held to be sufficient both for men and women. The tendency everywhere is to obliterate distinctions, and if a woman be herself she is looked upon unkindly. She rarely understands our metaphysics, and she gazes on the expounder of the mystery of the Logos with enigmatic eyes which reveal the enchantment of another divinity. The ancients were wiser than we in this, for they had Aphrodite and Hera and many another form of the Mighty Mother who bestowed on women their peculiar graces and powers. Surely no girl in ancient Greece ever sent up to all-pervading Zeus her natural longing for beauty to bring a lover to her side; but we may be sure that to Aphrodite came many such prayers. The deities we worship to-day are too austere for women to approach them with these longings, and indeed in Ireland the largest number of our people do not see any necessity for love-making at all. A girl, without repining, will follow her four-legged dowry to the house of a man she may never have spoken twenty words to before her marriage. We praise our women for their virtue, but the general acceptance of the marriage as arranged shows so un-emotional, so undesirable a temperament, that it is not to be wondered at. There is probably a lack of temptation.

What the loss to the race may be it is impossible to say, but it is true that beautiful civilisations are built up by the desire of man to give his beloved all her desires. Where there is no beloved, but only a housekeeper, there are no beautiful fancies to create the beautiful arts, no spiritual protest against the mean dwelling, no hunger to build the world anew for her sake. Aphrodite is outcast, and with her many of the other immortals have also departed. The home life in Ireland is probably more squalid than with any other people equally prosperous in Europe. The children begotten without love fill more and more the teeming asylums. We are without art, without literature, without those industries which spring up in other countries in response to the desire of woman to make gracious influences pervade the home of her partner, a desire to which man readily yields, and toils to satisfy if he loves truly.
The desire for beauty has come almost to be regarded as dangerous, if not sinful; and the woman who is still the natural child of the Great Mother and priestess of the mysteries, if she betray the desire to exercise her divinely-given powers, if there be enchantment in her eyes and her laugh, and if she bewilder too many men, is in our latest code of morals distinctly an evil influence. The spirit, melted and tortured with love, which does not achieve its earthly desire, is held to have wasted its strength, and the judgment which declares the life to be wrecked is equally severe on that which caused this wild conflagration in the heart. But the end of life is not comfort but divine being. We do not regard the life which closed in the martyr's fire as ended ignobly. The spiritual philosophy which separates human emotions and ideas, and declares some to be secular and others spiritual, is to blame. There is no meditation which if prolonged will not bring us to the same world where religion would carry us, and, if a flower in the wall will lead us to all knowledge, so the understanding of the peculiar nature of one half of humanity will bring us far on our journey to the sacred deep. I believe it was this wise understanding which in the ancient world declared the embodied spirit in man to be influenced more by the Divine Mind and in woman by the Mighty Mother, by which nature in its spiritual aspect was understood. In this philosophy the boundless being, when manifested, revealed itself in two forms of life, spirit and substance; and the endless evolution of its divided rays had as its root impulse the desire to return to that boundless being. By many ways blindly or half consciously the individual life strives to regain its old fulness. The spirit seeks union with nature to pass from the life of vision into pure being; and nature, conscious that its grosser forms are impermanent, is for ever dissolving and leading its votary to a more distant shrine. "Nature is timid like a woman," declares an Indian scripture. "She reveals herself shyly and withdraws again." All this metaphysic will not appear out of place if we regard women as influenced beyond herself and her conscious life for spiritual ends. I do not enter a defence of the loveless coquette, but the woman who has a natural delight in awakening love in men is priestess of a divinity than which there is none mightier among the rulers of the heavens. Through her eyes, her laugh, in all her motions, there is expressed more than she is conscious of herself. The Mighty Mother through the woman is kindling a symbol of herself in the spirit, and through that
symbol she breathes her secret life into the heart, so that it is fed from within and is drawn to herself. We remember that with Dante, the image of a woman became at last the purified vesture of his spirit through which the mysteries were revealed. We are for ever making our souls with effort and pain, and shaping them into images which reveal or are voiceless according to their degree; and the man whose spirit has been drenched with a beauty so long brooded upon that he has almost become that which he contemplated, owes much to the woman who may never be his; and if he or the world understood aright, he has no cause of complaint. It is the essentially irreligious spirit of Ireland which has come to regard love as an unnecessary emotion and the mingling of the sexes as dangerous. For it is a curious thing that while we commonly regard ourselves as the most religious people in Europe, the reverse is probably true. The country which has never produced a great spiritual thinker or religious teacher of whom men have heard, if we except the remote Johannes Scotus Erigena, cannot pride itself on its spiritual achievement; and it might seem even more paradoxical, but I think it would be almost equally true, to say that the first spiritual note in our literature was struck when a poet generally regarded as pagan wrote it as the aim of his art to reveal

"In all poor foolish things that live a day

Eternal Beauty wandering on her way,"

The heavens do not declare the glory of God any more than do shining eyes, nor the firmament show His handiwork more than the woven wind of hair, for these were wrought with no lesser love than set the young stars swimming in seas of joyous and primeval air. If we drink in the beauty of the night or the mountains, it is deemed to be praise of the Maker, but if we show an equal adoration of the beauty of man or woman, it is dangerous, it is almost wicked. Of course it is dangerous; and without danger there is no passage to eternal things. There is the valley of the shadow beside the pathway of light, and it always will be there, and the heavens will never be entered by those who shrink from it. Spirituality is the power of apprehending formless spiritual essences, of seeing the eternal in the transitory, and in the things which are seen the unseen things of which they are the shadow. I call Mr. Yeats' poetry spiritual when it declares as in the lines I quoted, that there is nothing so trivial that it is not the shadow of the Eternal Beauty. A country is religious where it is common belief that all things are instinct with divinity, and where the love between
man and woman is seen as a symbol, the highest we have, of the union of spirit and nature, and their final blending in the boundless being. For this reason the lightest desires even, the lightest graces of women have a philosophical value for what suggestions they bring us of the divinity behind them.

As men and women feel themselves more and more to be sharers of universal aims, they will each contemplate in each other and in themselves that aspect of the boundless being under whose influence they are cast, and will appeal to it for understanding and power. Time, which is for ever bringing back the old and renewing it, may yet bring back to us some counterpart of Aphrodite or Hera as they were understood by the most profound thinkers of the ancient world; and women may again have her temples and her mysteries, and renew again her radiant life at its fountain, and feel that in seeking for beauty she is growing more into her own ancestral being, and that in its shining forth she is giving to man, as he may give to her, something of that completeness of spirit of which it is written "neither is the man without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Highest."

It may seem strange that what is so clear should require statement, but it is only with a kind of despair the man or woman of religious mind can contemplate the materialism of Irish thought about life. It is not our natural heritage from the past, for the bardic poetry shows that a heaven lay about us in the mystical childhood of our race, and a supernatural original was often divined behind the great hero and the beautiful woman. All this perception has withered away, for religion has become observance of rule and adherence to doctrine. The first steps to the goal have been made sufficient in themselves; but religion is useless unless it has a transforming power, unless it is able "to turn fishermen into divines," and make the blind see and the deaf hear. They are no true teachers who cannot rise beyond the world of sense and darkness and awaken the links within us from earth to heaven, who cannot see within the heart what are its needs, and who have not the power to open the poor blind eyes and touch the ears that have heard no sound of the heavenly harmonies. Our clergymen do their best to deliver us from what they think is evil, but do not lead us into the Kingdom. They forget that the faculties cannot be spiritualised by restraint but in their noble and joyful use, and that the greatest evil of all is not to be able to see the divine everywhere, in life and love no
less than in the solemn architecture of the spheres. In the
free play of the beautiful and natural human relations lie
the greatest possibilities of spiritual development, for
heaven is not prayer nor praise but the fulness of life which
is only divined through the richness and variety of life on
earth. There is a certain infinitude in the emotions of love,
tenderness, pity, joy, and all that is begotten in love, and
this limitless character of the emotions has never received
the philosophical consideration which is due to it, for even
laughter may be considered solemnly, and gaiety and joy
in us are the shadowy echoes of that joy spoken of the
radiant Morning Stars, and there is not an emotion in man
or woman which has not, however perverted and muddied
in its coming, in some way flowed from the first fountain.
We are no more divided from supernature than we are from
our own bodies, and where the life of man or woman is
naturally most intense it most naturally overflows and
mingles with the subtler and more lovely world within. If
religion has no word to say upon this it is incomplete, and
we wander in the narrow circle of prayers and praise
wondering all the while what is it we are praising God for,
because we feel so melancholy and lifeless. Dante had a
place in his Inferno for the joyless souls, and if his con-
ception be true the population of that circle will be largely
modern Irish. A reaction against this conventual restraint
is setting in, and the needs of life will perhaps in the future
no longer be violated as they are to-day; and since it is the
pent up flood of the joy which ought to be in life which is
causing this reaction, and since there is a divine root in it,
it is difficult to say where it might not carry us. I hope
into some renewal of ancient conceptions of the fundamental
purpose of womanhood and its relations to Divine Nature;
and that from the temples where woman may be instructed
she will come forth, not in that shameful ignorance which
clergymen even wickedly praise calling it innocence, but
radiant, self-possessed, finding a heart in the heavens on
which she may lay her earthly heart and make her prayer
to it for the eternal beauty to make her body its dwelling
place and to light it up, that there may be strength in her
to resist all pleading until the lover worship in her that
divine womanhood and that through their love the divided
portions of the immortal nature may come together and be
one as before the beginning of worlds.

Æ.
IMPERIALISM.

II. (Conclusion).

The truly great and essential thing that the Anglo-Celtic political mind has contributed, or is contributing, to the world's progress seems to me to be this: instead of choosing between power and liberty as between two mutually exclusive principles, it has struck upon the pregnant idea of uniting them. It has made them the two poles upon which the whole political system swings in security. The thing would seem incredible if it had not been done. It never could have been done as a pre-conceived intellectual arrangement. It had to grow; and it has still a great deal of its growth to make. But enough has appeared above ground to enable us to distinguish the true nature of the system, and to show us that, after all, it is only an illustration, in the sphere of human institution, of a profound natural law. Every equilibrium is the result of the balance of opposing forces. Every deep truth has two apparently contradictory sides. Every great gain seems to evoke a corresponding danger or drawback, and cannot be achieved without doing so. A host of popular sayings bear witness to this quality of what may be called "polarity" in the laws which govern the evolution of natural phenomena, and that the British political organisation illustrates this quality is due to the fact that it is a natural growth, not an artificial system, and that it has developed out of, and is therefore closely adapted to, the actual needs of humanity. The need which it meets is that of a system under which the liberty and variety attained by the development of a number of small legislative and administrative centres shall be reconciled with the power, security, and peace of a great Empire. Of all political problems this is the one which seems to press most urgently for solution in the present stage of the world's political evolution, and if it is true that every nation has its definite contribution to make towards the realisation on earth of some ideal principle, then I should say that the solution of this problem is the mission of the Anglo-Celtic power which has its home in the British Islands. And as an Irishman one is glad to be able to claim a great Irishman—great in heart and great in intellect—as the first to recognise and to express the
principle on which the development of the imperial system has since proceeded. The political philosophy of Edmund Burke reflects aspects of this principle in many scattered gleams of insight; but it is in his speech on "Conciliation with America" that he has brought the principle, perhaps, most clearly into view.

"Let the colonies," he said "always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government; they will cling and grapple to you, and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience."

"Sovereign authority" and the "sanctuary of liberty"—these are the two poles on the axis of which, as I have said, the Imperial system swings. You cannot weaken one of these principles without putting the whole system awry. The authority must be absolutely free and untrammelled. It must not, as in the constitution of the United States, have any Supreme Court above it to review its decisions, and annul them if they do not accord with a written constitution. It must not be open to any conflict of jurisdiction such as that which gave rise to the American Civil War. For the safety of the Empire it must be free to act with its whole force in any manner and in any place. This is what gives the system its wonderful flexibility in its internal arrangements, and its immense strength to resist aggression from without. On the other hand, the separate communities composing the Empire must always feel assured that the power of the central authority, instead of being a menace, is, on the contrary, the surest warrant and protection of their local liberties and of the individuality of their social life. It is through obedience and union that they are more truly and securely free than they could possibly be in separation.

I do not think anyone can look back for the last hundred years of British history and fail to see running through it some such thread of meaning and purpose as I have tried to indicate. But in spite of the prescient intuition of Burke and the gleams of insight shown by other thinkers from time to time (and now multiplying rapidly), no one could claim that the thread has been consciously and consistently
pursued. Sometimes the current of development has set one way in one part of the Empire and another way in another part. Statesmen have differed in ability and insight; religious passion and historical prejudices have played their inevitable part; the Englishman's worst fault—his contempt for thoughts and sentiments and ways that were not English—has been a constant obstruction. The treatment of Hindoo sentiment which provoked the outbreak of 1855, the treatment of Irish sentiment until quite recent times, are cases in point. *E pur si muove*: we are, as I said, not in the presence of a completed system (very far from that), but we are on the road to a worthy and an attainable goal, ever growing brighter and clearer as we move. And much has been achieved already. The poet's vision of a "Parliament of Man," under whose rule the war drums shall throb no longer and the battle flags be furled, has actually been realised as regards the internal affairs of nearly one-fifth of the population of the globe, speaking a hundred languages, and comprising over two hundred separate States. Within these limits the Anglo-Celtic political genius has made law take the place of the sword as the arbiter of all disputes, and has established the most perfect freedom of action and of thought, religious, political, and industrial, ever known under any government.

To the building up and extension of this system Ireland has contributed her full share, yet nationally we stand aloof from it, taking no pride in what has been achieved, showing no sense of responsibility for the future, deliberately abjuring all the influence we might wield in British policy. We have, I think, no conception of how great, how hard, and how worthy an achievement this of the establishment of personal liberty really is. It is time indeed that we took a manlier, more intelligent, and more consistent view of things. But for the view we do take the English in Ireland are very largely responsible. Not so much the English in England; with them a great deal of harmony and good feeling is possible: they are beginning to understand. But the English in Ireland have concentrated into themselves an appalling quantity of the unloveliest characteristics of the genuine Anglo-Saxon, and have made the Irishman feel that his first object in life must be to share no idea or sentiments with such as they.

In his recent volume, "The Pathway of Empire," the war-correspondent, Mr. George Lynch, tells a most instructive anecdote. He says that on a Japanese railway, near the capital, a British attache was travelling with three
Japanese acquaintances, all of them men of high official standing, and two of them perfect masters of the English language. At a station on the line there entered a wealthy Englishman, "globe-trotting" for a holiday, with his wife. They surveyed the Japanese with evident disfavour for some moments, and then the lady remarked in strident tones, "I wonder they allow the natives to travel first-class on this line." And nothing the unhappy attaché could do availed to prevent them from discussing this enormity in all its bearings.

That is the Englishman in Ireland to the life. He may be able energetic, honest; he may even be benevolent, and sincerely desirous of spreading prosperity throughout the country—the sort of prosperity which he understands and knows how to create for himself; but he cannot endure to see the natives travelling first-class. It scandalises him—it seems a reversal of the law of nature. And as he is not accustomed to hide his emotions, he lets the native understand pretty clearly what his views as to their relative positions in the social hierarchy are. Naturally he is detested, and, what is much worse, he involves in the same detestation the political system which he claims to represent. And not the political system alone. The Englishman in Ireland is the grand force which keeps Ireland separatist in sentiment and ultramontane in religion. Anything to be in opposition to him—any flag to flaunt which will irritate him! That is the feeling which runs through Ireland. It is not a wise or commendable feeling; there is something childish, perhaps something of the emancipated slave about it. It is time we shook it off, and learned to go our own way, without thinking so much about the Englishman in Ireland; and, indeed, there are signs that we are doing so; but that the feeling should be entertained was most natural, and for a phase in the nation's history, inevitable.

Meantime, although the sentiment of the nation is more or less separatist, its conviction is obviously far other. A separatist nation would not send members to represent it in the Imperial Parliament.* Even the sentiment, when not associated with overt rebellion, is comparatively new. Elizabethan Ireland, Jacobite Ireland, O'Connellite Ireland knew nothing of it. It came up very largely when emanci-

*Not even Members like Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, who take an oath of allegiance to the Sovereign, and come back to Ireland to scold their countrymen for "toadying to a foreign king"—a really extraordinary phenomenon when one comes to think of it, and one only possible—like many other Irish phenomena—among a people who have never learned to think.
pation, or education, had begun to give the natives the opportunity of travelling first-class, and they clashed with the colonist. A new O'Connell, any trusted leader, could sweep it away again, if he chose, with a wave of his hand, and some day he will. And Ireland will then begin to come to her own.

She will understand, for one thing, what Imperialism really means and how much it works for, and not against, her own conceptions of her destiny. Imperialism is not Anglicisation. It is the very reverse of Anglicisation. Anglicisation, in the sense of imposing English institutions, customs, standards, habits of thought, and so forth, over British territory in all parts of the world would bring imperialism to swift and unlamented ruin. This is, in fact, the great and fruitful lesson which Ireland in her desperate struggle for her own national life has forced England to study, and thereby brought the conception of the British Empire as we know it into effective existence. But Ireland has still to learn this lesson for herself. She has to learn that imperialism, justly understood, is her friend and not her foe—that she would be far worse off if England were r®st of all her Colonies and Oriental possessions than she is as partner in a great imperial dominion, the working of which bears constant evidence to the truth of the very principles for which Ireland contends. And her further contributions to the development of this idea must be based on the same principles. She will not, I think, work much longer through resistance and revolt. The main result of working on these lines is that the possibility of there being in the future, any "Ireland" at all, has for the first time come seriously into question. She will, however, hold none the less firmly to the separateness of her spiritual nationality and seek to develop her own type of civilisation, knowing, that to be worth anything to the Empire and to the world she must begin by self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control.

OSSORIAN.
FEELING that he would never see Scotland again, Stevenson wrote in a preface to "Catriona":—"I see "like a vision the youth of my father, and of his father, "and the whole stream of lives flowing down there far in "the north, with the sound of laughter and tears, to cast "me out in the end, as by a sudden freshet, on these ulti- "mate islands. And I admire and bow my head before "the romance of destiny." Does not this sentence read as if it were written in the stress of some effusive febrile emotion, as if he wrote while still pursuing his idea? And so it reminds us of a moth fluttering after a light. But however vacillating, the sentence contains some pretty clauses, and it will be remembered though not perhaps in its original form. We shall forget the "laughter and the tears" and the "sudden freshet," and a simpler phrase will form itself in our memories. The emotion that Stevenson had to express transpires only in the words "romance, destiny, ultimate islands." Who does not feel his destiny to be a romance, and who does not admire the ultimate island whither his destiny will cast him? Giacomo Cenci, whom the Pope ordered to be flayed alive, no doubt admired the romance of destiny that laid him on his ultimate island, a raised plank, so that the executioner might conveniently roll up the skin of his belly like an apron. And a hare that I once saw beating a tambourine in Regent Street looked at me so wistfully that I am sure it admired in some remote way the romance of destiny that had taken it from the woodland and cast it upon its ultimate island—in this case a barrow. But neither of these strange examples of the romance of destiny seems to me more wonderful than the destiny of a wistful Irish girl whom I saw serving drinks to students in a certain ultimate cafe in the Latin Quarter; she, too, no doubt admired the destiny which had cast her out, ordaining that she should die amid tobacco smoke, serving drinks to students, entertaining them with whatever conversation they desired.

Gervex, Mademoiselle D'Avary, and I had gone to this cafe after the theatre for half-an-hour's distraction; I had thought that the place seemed too rough.

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for Mademoiselle D'Avary, but Gervex had said that we should find a quiet corner, and we had happened to choose one in charge of a thin delicate girl, a girl touched with languor, weakness, and a grace which interested and moved me; her cheeks were thin, and the deep grey eyes were wistful as a drawing of Rossetti; her waving brown hair fell over the temples, and was looped up low over the neck after the Rossetti fashion. I had noticed how the two women had looked at each other, one woman healthful and rich, the other poor and ailing; I had guessed the thought that had passed across their minds. Each had doubtless asked and wondered why life had come to them so differently. But first I must tell who was Mademoiselle D'Avary, and how I came to know her. I had gone to Tortoni, a once celebrated café at the corner of the Rue Taitbout, the dining place of Rossini. When Rossini had earned an income of two thousand pounds a year it is recorded that he said, "Now I've done with music, it has served its turn, and I'm going to dine every day at Tortoni's." Even in my time Tortoni was the rendezvous of the world of art and letters; everyone was there at five o'clock, and to Tortoni I went the day I arrived in Paris. To be seen there would make known the fact that I was in Paris. Tortoni was a sort of publication. At Tortoni I had discovered a young man, one of my oldest friends, a painter of talent—he had a picture in the Luxembourg—and a man who was beloved by women. Gervex, for it was he, had seized me by the hand and with voluble eagerness had told me that I was the person he was seeking: he had heard of my coming and had sought me in every café from the Madeleine to Tortoni. He had been seeking me because he wished to ask me to dinner to meet Mademoiselle D'Avary; we were to fetch her in the Rue des Capucines. I write the name of the street, not because it matters to my little story in what street she lived, but because the name is an evocation. Those who like Paris like to hear the names of the streets, and the long staircase turning closely up the painted walls, the brown painted doors on the landings, and the bell rope, are evocative of Parisian life; and Mdlle. D'Avary is herself an evocation, for she was an actress of the Palais Royal. My friend, too, is an evocation, he was one of those whose pride is not to spend money upon women, whose theory of life is that "If she likes to come round to the studio when one's work is done, nous pouvons faire la fête ensemble." But however defensible
this view of life may be, and there is much to be said for it, I had thought that he might have refrained from saying when I looked round the drawing-room, admiring it—a drawing-room furnished with sixteenth century bronzes, Dresden figures, étagères covered with silver ornaments, three drawings by Boucher—Boucher in three periods, a French Boucher, a Flemish Boucher, and an Italian Boucher—that I must not think that any of these things were presents from him, and from saying when she came into the room that the bracelet on her arm was not from him. It had seemed to me in slightly bad taste that he should remind her that he made no presents, for his remark had clouded her joyousness; I could see that she was not so happy at the thought of going out to dine with him as she had been.

It was chez Foyoz that we dined, an old-fashioned restaurant still free from the new taste that likes walls painted white and gold, electric lamps and fiddlers. After dinner we had gone to see a play next door at the Odéon, a play in which shepherds spoke to each other about singing brooks, and stabbed each other for false women, a play diversified with vintages, processions, wains and songs. Nevertheless it had not interested us. And during the entra'ctes Gervex had paid visits in various parts of the house, leaving Mdlle. D'Avary to make herself agreeable to me. I dearly love to walk by the perambulator in which Love is wheeling a pair of lovers. After the play he had said, "Allons boire un bock," and we had turned into a students' café, a café furnished with tapestries and oak tables, and old time jugs and Medicis gowns, a café in which a student occasionally caught up a tall bock in his teeth, emptied it in a gulp, and after turning head over heels walked out without having smiled. Mdlle. D'Avary's beauty and fashion had drawn the wild eyes of all the students gathered there. She wore a flower-enwoven dress, and from under the large hat her hair showed dark as night; and her southern skin filled with rich tints, yellow and dark green where the hair grew scanty on the neck; the shoulders drooped into opulent suggestion in the lace bodice. And it was interesting to compare her ripe beauty with the pale deciduous beauty of the waitress. Mdlle. D'Avary sat, her fan wide-spread across her bosom, her lips parted, the small teeth showing between the red lips. The waitress sat, her thin arms leaning on the table, joining very prettily in the conversation, betraying only in one glance that she knew that
she was only a failure and Mdlle. D'Avary a success. It was some time before the ear caught the slight accent; an accent that was difficult to trace to any country. Once I heard a southern intonation, and then a northern, finally I heard an unmistakable English intonation, and said,

"But you're English."

"I'm Irish. I'm from Dublin.

And thinking of a girl reared in its Dublin conventions, but whom the romance of destiny had cast upon this ultimate café, I asked her how she had found her way here; and she told me she had left Dublin when she was sixteen; she went to Paris six years ago to take a situation as nursery governess. She used to go with the children into the Luxembourg Gardens and talk to them in English. One day a student had sat on the bench beside her. The rest of the story is easily guessed. But he had no money to keep her and she had to come to this café to earn her living.

"It doesn't suit me, but what am I to do? One must live, and the tobacco smoke makes me cough." I sat looking at her, and she must have guessed what was passing in my mind for she told me that one lung was gone; and we spoke of health, of the south, and she said that the doctor had advised her to go away south.

And seeing that Gervex and Mademoiselle D'Avary were engaged in conversation I leaned forward and devoted all my attention to this wistful Irish girl, so interesting in her phthisis, in her red Medicis gown, her thin arms showing in the long rucked sleeves. I had to offer her drink, to do so was the custom of the place. She said that drink harmed her, but she would get into trouble if she refused drink, perhaps I would not mind paying for a piece of beef-steak instead. She had been ordered raw steak and I have only to close my eyes to see her going over to the corner of the café and cutting a piece and putting it away. She said she would eat it before going to bed—that would be two hours hence, about three, and all the while I was thinking of a cottage in the south amid olive and orange trees, an open window full of fragrant air and this girl sitting by it.

"I should like to take you south and attend upon you."

"I'm afraid you would grow weary of nursing me. I should be able to give you very little in return for your care. The doctor says I'm not to love anyone."

We must have talked for some time, for it was like
waking out of a dream when Gervex and Mademoiselle D'Avary got up to go, and seeing how interested I was, he laughed, saying to Mademoiselle D'Avary that it would be kind to leave me with my new friend. His pleasantry jarred, and though I should like to have remained, I followed them into the street, where the moon was shining over the Luxembourg Gardens. As I have said before, I dearly love to walk by a perambulator in which Love is wheeling a pair of lovers, but it is sad to find oneself alone on the pavement at midnight, and I thought of going back to the cafe, but instead, I wandered on, thinking of the girl I had seen, and of her certain death, for she could not live many months in that cafe. We all want to think at midnight, under the moon, when the city looks like a black Italian engraving, and poems come to us as we watch a swirling river. Not only the idea of a poem came to me that night, but on the Pont Neuf the words began to sing together, and I jotted down the first lines before going to bed. Next morning I continued my poem, and all day was passed in this little composition.

_We are alone! Listen, a little while,_
_And hear the reason why your weary smile_
_And lute-toned speaking is so very sweet,_
_And how my love of you is more complete_
_Than any love of any lover. They_
_Have only been attracted by the gray_
_Delicious softness of your eyes, your slim_
_And delicate form, or some such other whim,_
_The simple pretexts of all lovers; I_
_For other reason. Listen whilst I try_
_To say. I joy to see the sunset slope_
_Beyond the weak hours' hopeless horoscope,_
_Leaving the heavens a melancholy calm_
_Of quiet colour haunted like a psalm,_
_In mildly modulated phrases; thus_
_Your life shall fare like a voluptuous_
_Vision beyond the sight, and you shall die_
_Like some soft evening's sad serenity. . . ._
_I would possess your dying hours; indeed_
_My love is worthy of the gift, I plead_
_For them. Although I never loved as yet,_
_Methinks that I might love you; I would get_
_From out the knowledge that the time was brief,_
_That tenderness, whose pity grows to grief,_
_And grief that sanctifies, a joy, a charm_
_Beyond all other loves, for now the arm_
_Of Death is stretched to you-ward, and he claims_
You as his bride. Maybe my soul misnames
Its passion; love perhaps it is not, yet
To see you fading like a violet,
Or some sweet thought away, would be a strange
And costly pleasure, far beyond the range
Of formal man’s emotion. Listen, I
Will choose a country spot where fields of rye
And wheat extend in rustling yellow plains,
Broken with wooded hills and leafy lanes,
To pass our honeymoon; a cottage where,
The porch and windows are festooned with fair
Green wreaths of eglantine, and look upon
A shady garden where we’ll walk alone
In the autumn sunny evenings; each will see
Our walks grow shorter, till to the orange tree,
The garden’s length, is far, and you will rest
From time to time, leaning upon my breast
Your languid lily face. Then later still
Unto the sofa by the window-sill
Your wasted body I shall carry, so
That you may drink the last left lingering glow
Of evening, when the air is filled with scent
Of blossoms; and my spirits shall be rent
The while with many griefs. Like some blue day
That grows more lovely as it fades away,
Gaining that calm serenity and height
Of colour wanted, as the solemn night
Steals forward you will sweetly fall asleep
For ever and for ever; I shall weep
A day and night large tears upon your face,
Laying you then beneath a rose-red place
Where I may muse and dedicate and dream
Volumes of poesy of you; and deem
It happiness to know that you are far
From any base desires as that fair star
Set in the evening magnitude of heaven.
Death takes but little, yea, your death has given
Me that deep peace, and immaculate possession
Which man may never find in earthly passion.

Good poetry of course not, but good verse, well turned
every line except the penultimate. The elision is not a
happy one, and the mere suppression of the ‘and’ does not produce a satisfying line.

"Death takes but little, Death I thank for giving
Me a remembrance, a pure possession
Of unrequited love.

And mumbling the last lines of the poem, I hastened
to the café near the Luxembourg Gardens, wondering if I should find courage to ask the girl to come away to the
South and live, fearing that I should not, fearing it was the idea rather than the deed that tempted me; for the soul of a poet is not the soul of Florence Nightingale. I was sorry for this wistful Irish girl, and was hastening to her, I knew not why; not to show her the poem—the very thought was intolerable. Often did I stop on the way to ask myself why I was going, and what I was going to say to her; and without discovering an answer in my heart I hastened on. My quest was in my own heart. I would know if it were capable of making a sacrifice; and sitting down at one of her tables I waited, but she did not come, and I asked the student by me if he knew the girl generally in charge of these tables. He said he did, and told me about her case. There was no hope for her, only a transfusion of blood could save her; she was almost bloodless. Then he described how blood could be taken from the arm of a healthy man and passed into the veins of the almost bloodless. But as he spoke things began to grow dim, his voice began to grow faint, I heard someone saying, "You're very pale," and he ordered some brandy for me. The South could not save her; practically nothing could, and I returned home thinking of her.

Twenty years have passed and I am thinking of her again. Poor little Irish girl! Cast out in the end by a sudden freshet on an ultimate cafe. Poor little heap of bones! And I bow my head and admire the romance of destiny which ordained that I, who only saw her once, should be the last to remember her. Perhaps I should have forgotten her had it not been that I wrote a poem, a poem which I now inscribe and dedicate to her nameless memory.

GEORGE MOORE.

(To be continued.)

Lightest of dancers, with no thought
Thy glimmering feet beat on my heart;
Gayest of singers, with no care
Waking to music the still air;
More than the labours of our art,
More than our wisdom can impart
Thine idle ecstasy hath taught.
Lost long in solemn ponderings
With the blind shepherd mind for guide,
The uncreated joy in you
Hath lifted up my heart unto
The morning stars in their first pride,
And the angelic lights that glide
On wandering ecstatic wings.
“YOUNG IRELAND” AND LIBERAL IDEAS.

“What we chiefly desire is to set the people on making out plans for their own and their children’s education. Thinking cannot be done by deputy—they must think for themselves.”—Thomas Davis.

In a kindly and appreciative notice of the first number of this magazine in the United Irishman, exception is taken to the editorial statement that Davis and his colleagues “carefully skirted and stepped aside from the fundamental questions of life and thought which lay in their way.” “The men who did not hesitate,” says the United Irishman, “to oppose themselves to the power of O’Connell, to the power of the ultramontanes and to the power of the British Government in Ireland.............were not the men to dodge awkward questions through lack of moral courage.” Now it is quite clear that the vagueness of terms has led to confusion, and it is necessary to analyse them. No one will suggest, I think, that Davis and his colleagues lacked the courage to oppose the British Government in Ireland. History is their justification on that score; nor on retrospect need they be blamed for not gratuitously raising difficulties for themselves as politicians. No man is called upon to fight a dozen battles at once and a politician as politician is not to be censured for choosing the line of least resistance to attain his set end. It will be more helpful, therefore, if we begin by asking what we mean by “fundamentals” and wherein did the Young Irishlanders fail, if they failed at all, to face them.

Let us take one or two vital questions that come up for decision with thinking men to-day, as they presented themselves in the time of Davis. There is, firstly, the problem of religion, of philosophy, of man’s origin and of his relation to the external world. There is, again, the problem of political freedom, the ideal of human society, and the political system under which that ideal can best be realised. There is also a branch of political science, if indeed it be not properly the very essence, namely, the social question—the problem of the actual happiness or misery of the mass of the people.

Now if we look at the first of these questions, we find that the current religion is based upon an ancient
mythology that will not to-day bear critical examination. The story of the Creation, the Garden of Eden, the Forbidden Apple, the Fall of Adam, the Angry God demanding blood satisfaction—and all the rest—this is the basis of conventional religious belief, to-day as sixty years ago. Within the fold of those who hold these doctrines are numbers of sects at hopeless variance with each other. In point of strict fact it is the quarrelling of these sects amongst themselves which has been the cause of numberless wars in Europe, as it constitutes in Ireland at least half our political problem. To the Catholic, the Protestant is a schismatic or a heretic; to the Protestant, the Catholic is an idolator who has corrupted the pure teaching of "the Word."

In the days of the Nation men of independent mind in Europe were questioning the basis of all this sectarian and religious strife; they were protesting that Catholicism and Protestantism were not the only alternatives for the human mind; they were asking whether that was really a divine message which, instead of unity, caused endless dissension amongst men, and whether the fortunes of humanity were really bound up with the truth of doctrines of which not more than a third of humanity had ever heard. Now, in the writings of Young Ireland, I do not think one finds any very frank facing of such problems; rather is there that attitude—of which there is a good deal at the present day—of hushing them up for the sake of political unity. So that, whilst Catholics and Protestants are supposed to officially believe one another to be hopelessly wrong on essentials, they are called upon to come together and work in common for the attainment of what both officially believe to be non-essentials. For the politician, whose business it is to get something done, any political combination, of course, suffices. But no one has ever regarded Davis as a mere politician: he was a teacher, which is something more. Davis aimed at being a maker of opinion, not a broker of opinion, and on the nobler level he must be judged.

When we turn to politics as a science, there was, with some exceptions, a certain lack of breadth in the outlook of the men of the Nation. The questions, say, of Republicanism and Monarchy, of the value of democracy as a system of ensuring national interest and national responsibility, of a land reform which would sweep away landlord and serf alike—such questions as these were more or less set aside. There were, as has been said, exceptions.
Mitchel was democratic, and had a fine sweep of idea which matched his fine spirit, and Fintan Lalor preached the gospel that the land of a country belonged of right to the whole people of the country, which, under the title Land Nationalisation, is now mostly associated with the name of Henry George; though I believe it is admitted that Fintan Lalor's writings stimulated and influenced the American reformer. But for the most part "Young Ireland" was "literary" rather than scientific, idealist rather than realist, and it is as a national inspiration more than as an intellectual achievement that it is to be valued.

For instance, when we come to what is called "the social question," the men of that day scarcely touched it, which, however, is not surprising considering how it is shunned to-day. Nationalism to the majority of people in Ireland means merely the hoisting of the Green Flag in place of the Union Jack over a society resting on a basis of competitive capitalism differing in no vital or essential particular from any other such society or from our own condition now. Some of the most violent Conservatives on this issue are strong Nationalists in politics, and one may recently have noticed in the Irish industrial movement a hinted advice that Irish workmen ought to accept comparatively low wages—involving a low standard of living—in order that their Irish employers might the better be able to compete with foreign goods. Where such ideas run through the minds of some of those who loudly acclaim themselves the pioneers of the Irish intellectual renaissance of the twentieth century, it is, perhaps, hyper-critical to raise questions as to how far the Young Irelanders sixty years ago fell short of a political philosophy of human equality.

Nothing, however, on the whole, could well be more distasteful for any true Irishman than to even seem to belittle the work of Davis and his friends; that work was stimulating, it was scholarly, and it was absolutely sincere. They were interested themselves and helped to interest others in the history, language, literature, ethnology, and mythology of Ireland. If some questions which lie at the basis of our thinking were not dealt with it was not for lack of moral courage; the Young Irelanders took the course which seemed best to them for their purpose which was to create a love of things Irish and an enthusiasm for Ireland in an indifferent and apathetic people.

Frederick Ryan.

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