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THE WEAK POINT IN THE CELTIC MOVEMENT.

Perhaps one of the most genuine signs of the new awakening in Irish life of late is the recrudescence among us of religious bigotry. That we are a little behind the times in this respect is a subject about which we must make up our minds to be chaffed by foreign visitors, as well as by our own countrymen who return out of the dazzling enlightenment of the twentieth century in the United States and elsewhere, to find us here just emerging out of the seventeenth century. We make a mistake in not taking up the intellectual history of our country at the point where it was stereotyped by the Battle of the Boyne, and in recommending tolerance prematurely, and so perhaps destroying the potentialities of a really promising because spontaneous religious situation. Countries which have done anything in literature have never, after our fashion, "agreed to differ" in the matter of religion; much rather has literature, in countries like France and England, flourished for its season on a soil ploughed by religious controversy and even bedewed by the bloodshed of religious warfare. There would hardly have been a Chaucer without Wycliffe, or a Shakspeare without Philip of Spain, or a Racine without Port Royal, or a romantic movement without its precursor, encyclopedism. National literature is the by-play and interlude in the exercise of energies which manifest themselves along the whole front of national life; and never has a nation produced a literature which affected in regard to religious questions a blasé tolerance. Ireland did not even produce a Thomas Moore without producing a little before him a Father O'Leary; and in our own day a skilled historic clairvoyant would not miss a subtle significance in the simultaneous appearance of Mr. W. B. Yeats and Mr. Michael J. F. MacCarthy. An Ireland intent on threshing out religious questions for itself, and on forming a national tradition in which its thinkers could acquiesce—as after all Scotland has done—would never

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catch at the futile gospel of tolerance as preached by people who only want to save their skins; and as already said, it is a promising symptom that Ireland has recently shown a disinclination to do so. If our fathers thought these questions worth killing each other for, we surely need not mind a few nasty personal insinuations being made about us. We do wrong, then, to neglect what may be called the doctrinaire side of the Celtic Renaissance; for, rightly considered, the advantage we have in this country lies in the practically inexhaustible reservoir of intellectual energy which may be generated in an effort to bring Ireland into the inheritance of liberating ideas. What would be thought of an English or French literature which professed a lofty unconcern with national religious movements? Yet in Ireland we are asked to believe in the nationality of a literature of which the main canon is that it must not give offence by any too direct utterance on the central problem of Irish life, the religious situation. The only chance, one is tempted to think, which the Celtic school has of becoming really national, and ceasing to be merely a sodality of ladies and gentlemen, of more or less Irish extraction, with an amiable penchant for writing verses and tales, lies in bringing thought and criticism to bear on that "religious question" which meets us at every turn in Ireland. Our litterateurs should not be content to witness these brawls between parish priests and colporteurs, these mobbings of street preachers, or the closing of the Protestant ranks against a Catholic Association, without stepping down, like the Greek gods, from their Olympus, and championing their favourites. It is only in those countries whose writers concern themselves with popular movements that, on the one hand, national thought is raised to a higher plane, and, on the other, that the history of literature is woven in with the history of the nation.

It is said indeed, why try to disturb the beliefs of the people? or, it is plain that Ireland is going to remain a Catholic country whatever you may do. But this is only the petulance of that indifferentism of which we complain, or perhaps sometimes of the literary artist annoyed at any threatened disturbance in the pose of his model. What lies before humanity, whether in this island or the world at large, no one can prophesy, but we may feel pretty sure that the acquisition of Christianity, real or nominal, has not exhausted the potentialities of development in any intelligent branch of the human race. Human progress is slow, and in a line so immense that an advance of several
centuries may divide at the same moment those who are in
the van from those who linger in the rear. And those who
are in the van to-day may even to-morrow be sinking rear-
ward, while anywhere along the whole line some little
nation, some little band of enthusiasts, may march forward
and take the lead. So slow and intermittent is progress
(which is indeed denied altogether by the new Nietzscheism)
that humanity has not yet defiled past that stately edifice of
dogma reared by Thomas Aquinas over six hundred years
ago, of which the Council of Trent decided that it contained
the solution of all problems. As William Allingham
says:

"Whilst we deem
The dark and middle ages flown away,
Their population crowds us round to-day,
So slowly moves the world."

We may perhaps read in history some glimpses of a
law which ensures that humanity shall "move altogether
if it move at all," and that no man or community, no band
of enthusiasts chartered by the Holy Ghost, shall advance
very far without being reminded of the huge deadweight of
indifferent humanity lying behind. Is not the ennui which
afflicts the prosperous classes, for instance, a penalty which
they must pay for having attended too exclusively to their
own welfare? and now, instead of reaping the benefit of
their dexterity in getting beforehand, and enjoying all the
bliss of the promised land, they must simply sit waiting
in fuming impatience till the rest of humanity come up
with them, while in their hands the arts decay, and on their
lips faith perishes. Thus it is that out of the people comes
everything great and new.

An illustration of this slow, and sometimes even
retrogressive movement of humanity is afforded by an
article in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, which, though
offered as the *pièce de résistance* of the number for February,
1905, belongs intrinsically to a date anterior to 1656, the
year in which Pascal began in his *Lettres Provinciales* that
assault on the casuistry of the Jesuits from which they
have never recovered. In this article an attempt is made
to fix "the sum required for a grave theft." It appears
that one result of the opening up of the New World, and
the depreciation in the value of money in these countries
due to the importation of metals from South America, was
a startling increase in the number of artless tales of theft
poured forth in the confession-boxes. It was reserved for
the intellect of Cardinal Lugo to trace this phenomenon
to its true source. The cause, as he pointed out, was not an increase in the natural thievish propensities of the faithful, but the simple fact that the temptations to commit a mortal sin of theft (i.e. of a sum over one shilling and eightpence of our money) were enormously increased by the change in the value of coin. A simple expedient at once rectified matters: the amount required for a mortal sin of theft was raised from one-and-eightpence to five shillings—"and ten shillings for kings." The new arrangement was found to work very well for a century or so, and only that amount of thieving went on which was consistent with a fair degree of spiritual health in the various Catholic communities. Of late years, however, there seems to have been a re-appearance of the phenomenon, and thanks to Cardinal Lugo we are no longer in a quandary as to how to deal with it. In a scholarly article, crowded with official statistics and supported by arguments drawn from the works of Professor Bastable and other eminent authorities on the currency, Father Slater, S.J., works out the conclusion that the theft of any sum under one pound may nowadays fairly pass as a venial sin: one pound, as he argues, being the conventional unit of respectable subscription to charitable objects, etc., and representing, besides, a serious breach in the weekly wage of the average working-man. The King's coronation oath has perhaps put his case this time beyond the pale of consideration. If it were not that Ireland, through sheer good-heartedness, is perhaps the honestest country in the world, we might henceforth acknowledge a certain propriety in that warning posted up by the authorities at the North Wall, which has sometimes excited our patriotic resentment on landing from Holyhead, "Beware of Pickpockets!" We might feel constrained to look after our half-crowns, and even our nineteen-and-sixpences, more carefully than, in spite of the impending new regulation, we shall think needful. But how is it that a question so strictly "confidential," one might have supposed, as this, is openly discussed in an Irish magazine? When the Jesuits procured the condemnation at Rome of the Lettres Provinciales they did so on the plea that the author openly discussed therein questions which in the public interest ought to be dealt with secretly. Why then do they wink at any such risk in Ireland? Is it not because they feel that in Ireland nobody will mind? There all that savours of religious controversy has come to seem a little odious, and, in
truth, the burning indignation of the old reformers in regard to such matters is nowadays an anachronism.

But what would you have? again exclaims the indifferentist. How does it matter what the people believe? And what are you going to put in place of the beliefs you would abolish? In the same spirit people say, when the subject of national ideals is mooted, This is the freest country in the world—what more do you want? Yet that something is wanting in this country, everyone knows whose lot is cast in it. The "curse of Swift" upon the "man of genius" in this country has not yet been removed. Our geniuses, and small blame to them, move out of Ireland as quickly as they may, where the damp chill of mediævalism engenders either bigotry or cynicism. To those who tell us, This country is going to remain Catholic whatever you may do, we reply, Yes, but it will cease sooner or later to be a country of ignorant peasants! That may be a change for the worse or the better, but meanwhile we are all entitled to have our guess at the true nature of the Irish malady. Perhaps we have a Jonah on board, whom sooner or later we shall have to bring ourselves to throw overboard. Is it too much to hope that, as in the Hebrew narrative, the proposal should come, as certainly it would come most gracefully, from Jonah himself? Every nation has, from time to time, to throw over its Jonahs, and sometimes, it is true, pitch on the wrong victim. The Russian bureaucracy, for example, have thrown out the Stundists and the Jews, yet foul weather continues, and the workers at the oar of the Russian ship of state begin to cast determined eyes on what they suspect to be the true Jonah. In France they have thrown out the religious orders. In Ireland we have lately thrown out landlordism, and yet, after a century of mutinous discontent with landlordism, we are surprised to find that its abolition has made very little difference in Irish life. Perhaps we shall only discover the true Jonah experimentally, that is to say, when the crew of the Irish ship of state assumes command of its own vessel, and then Jonah, like the gentleman he is, will, no doubt, be the first to suggest what should be done with him.

Meanwhile it is clear that, however odious they may be, theological questions count for nearly as much in Ireland now as in the seventeenth century, and that the new literary movement, if it would make itself "national," must not quite ignore the fact.

John Eglinton.
WAR compels the attention. It is the touchstone that reveals alike root-brutalities and transcendent virtues of heroism and self-sacrifice. Behind the ghastly veil of agony and bloodshed we are often able to feel dimly on one of the sides some animating motive of patriotism, some high devotion to a cause, some impelling enthusiasm that drives individuals, brigades, armies even, to almost impossible heights of daring and endurance.

For the past year our eyes have been riveted on one of the most horrible wars of modern times. While both nations have displayed conspicuous courage, the Japanese have manifested a wise and yet reckless heroism, an amazing foresight, a generosity, a modesty, a courtesy that we seek for in vain in the annals of other wars. What is the vital root whence these qualities spring? Not religion, in our sense of the term, for travellers unite in reporting that the religions of Japan have only a slight hold upon the people. The fibre that is behind the Japanese arms is not spiritual but moral, and Japan offers to our astonished sight the spectacle, unique, perhaps, with the exception of Sparta, of a nation nourishing a high status of duty on the fruits of an ancient philosophy, and deriving its overwhelming force from the practice of a code of ethics.

We know but little as yet about this Japanese philosophy, this code of ethics that is called Bushido. Allusions to it in the works of travellers, stray articles in newspapers passed almost unnoticed until the object-lesson of the war compelled our interest and set us searching out for causes. And most opportunely we have come across a little book on Bushido, by a native of Japan,* which contains in small compass a luminous exposition of the principles of Bushido. The facts are admirably marshalled, and the book is written in limpid English. It is full of learning, both Eastern and Western—not unassimilated learning, which is, according to a typical Samurai saying, "an ill-smelling vegetable, which must be boiled and boiled until it is fit for use." Dr. Nitobe defines Bushido as a Code of Chivalry, or Principles of Knighthood. It is the direct offspring of Japanese feudalism, deriving, however, moral sustenance from Buddhism, Shintoism, and from the teaching of Confucius.

"Bushido: The Soul of Japan." By Inazo Nitobe.
The tripod that supports *Bushido* is, we read, Wisdom, Benevolence and Courage—courage that is moral as well as physical—the "doing what is right." "It is true courage to live when it is right to live, and to die only when it is right to die." *Bushido*, at first a military code of ethics, has filtered down through the whole nation, and the book casts many interesting side-lightson such subjects as politeness and ceremony and other striking Japanese characteristics. As homage and fealty to a superior are the distinctive features of feudalism, so loyalty is regarded as the primary human duty. As we read we are made to feel how many of the qualities displayed in the present war spring directly from this root. And yet, to quote a writer in the *Times*, "*Bushido* has no dogma, no infallibility, no priesthood, no ritual; *Bushido* is not a religion, but a philosophy." Dr. Nitobe says in this connection: "If religion is no more than 'morality touched by emotion,' as Matthew Arnold defines it, few ethical systems are better entitled to the rank of religion than *Bushido*." But that religion is not properly so defined is admitted in another place, where we are told that the Samurai, the practisers of *Bushido*, relegated religion and theology to the priests, and concerned themselves with them only in so far as they helped to nourish courage.

We pause here to ask: Can a man, can a nation, live by philosophy alone? Lofty, heroic as its fruits are shown to be, has it wherewithal to satisfy the whole nature of the individual and of the State? "What has philosophy given the world but unending words?" exclaims Mr. Fielding in "The Hearts of Men." "It is the denial of emotion, and emotion is life. . . . Hope and beauty and happiness are strangers to that twilight country." Buddhism, the prevailing religion of Japan, Mr. Fielding himself allows to consist chiefly in a rule of conduct or course of ethics.

Hope and beauty and happiness. Think back for a moment on our conception of Japan before the war. Beauty and happiness were integral parts of the picture. We imagined a people of whom the lowest rag-picker was as refined in thought and manner, as cultivated as the highest aristocrat; travellers told us tales of rickshaw-men stopping to draw one another's attention to the sunset; we saw photographs of the great festivals of the flowers, the blooming of the cherries, the blossoming of the irises, and read how the masses crowded to these with a quiet rapture that knows no parallel in our western world. Beauty and
happiness! Surely this land of philosophers is no twilight country bereft of these. The war has shown the nobility of Japan to consist in the fulfilment of duty, and to be rooted in ethics. But the happiness of Japan springs from another source, and perhaps we are not too daring if we suggest that this source is the worship of the beauty of the world. Does not Maeterlinck say: "The soul may well be no more than the most beautiful desire of our brain, and God himself be only the most beautiful desire of our soul."

It would be hard to say whether a high moral law gives us insight of vision into this beauty,—whether to see all things clearly without impediment springs from being inwardly good and pure; or whether, on the other hand, the love of lovely things purifies and elevates until the highest moral law becomes a necessity of being. A' Kempis holds to the first sequence, while a perfect Bengali poem of the people, quoted by Sister Nidevita, prefers the second:

"Oh Mother Earth, Father Sky,
Brother Wind, Friend Light,
Sweetheart Water,
Here take my last salutation with folded hands;
For to-day I am melting away into the supreme
Because my heart became pure,
And all delusions vanished
Through the power of your good company."

But at any rate, that the moral law, and the worship of the beauty of the world, both rightly understood, are interdependent and complete one another, and may in time come to fulfil all the aspirations of humanity, is barely open to question. Kant saw this when he linked together in one memorable sentence "the Moral Law and the starry heavens."

Stray men of the West have felt through the ages awe and ecstasy before the beauty of the world. Chaucer, when he rose before sunrise to see the daisy open "Kneeling alway till it unclosēd was, Upon the smalē swetē softe gras," was in close kinship of soul with the Japanese who throng in unquestioning delight to see the flowering of the irises. "When the Creator himself is pictured as making new resolutions in his heart upon smelling a sweet savour (Gen. viii. 21)," says Dr. Nitobe, "is it any wonder that the sweet-smelling season of the cherry blossom should call forth the whole nation from their little habitations?" Fiona Macleod tells of an old Gaelic peasant who stood unbonneted at sunrise, and who answered, when questioned,
"Every morning like this I take off my hat to the beauty of the world," Wordsworth feels in the light of setting suns and the round ocean and the living globe

"A motion and a spirit that impels
"All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
"And rolls through all things,"

and W. B. Yeats sees "In all poor foolish things that live a day, Eternal beauty wandering on her way . . ."

But these are stray men scattered here and there; and we look with wondering eyes to a whole people for whom in times of peace the great events of the year are the blossoming of the flowers, and who nourish their heroism on philosophy, and their happiness on Beauty.

D. N. D.

SHADOWS.

How shallow is this mere that gleams;
Its depth of blue is from the skies;
And from a distant sun the dreams
And lovely light within your eyes.

We think our love so infinite
Because the Lord is everywhere;
And love awakening is made bright
And bathed in that diviner air.

We go on our enchanted way,
And deem our hours immortal hours,
Who are but shadow kings that play
With mirrored majesties and powers.

A. E.
Thus the central interest in each novel is the heart and mind of a girl, and her behaviour and sufferance in varying fortunes.¹ Round this girl are grouped lover or lovers, parents, friends, rivals, enemies, sisters, brothers, the crowd; and all live and move in our sight, unconscious of our presence, with strange verisimilitude, as we look back through ninety years. A little area of clear light rescued from the darkness of the past! The historian of fashions, of manners, no doubt finds material in Miss Austen to occupy him. But still more the psychological student may find here material and field of work. Human is human, however external circumstances vary, and Miss Austen’s truth is such that one may study life in her pages as in the real world. *Mutatis mutandis,* Dr. Johnson’s stately eulogium of Shakespeare is applicable within the tiny microcosm of her creation,

“This therefore is the praise of Shakespeare, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecstacies, by reading human sentiments in human language, by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions.”

From the first her instinctive ideal was Truth. She felt that the foolish sensibility of the day was a false thing, and that the foolish romance brought in by Mrs. Radcliffe was false also. These she opposed with delicate humour and real feelings—the real sorrow and real joy which she perceived around her. Then her genius lifted her far above a petty warfare with any one or two of the myriad fallacies which beset and hamper human thought and action, into a creative effort which comprehends, embodies, and portrays thought, emotion, and action.

Of Miss Austen’s fools, Whately long ago observed that they are not the least of the proofs of her greatness. They are very numerous, very amusing, and absolutely distinct. The words of one of these fools cannot be placed

¹ Nowhere in the six little novels does Miss Austen attempt any dialogue “in which men only are present.” W. F. Pollock, in *Fraser’s Magazine.* January, 1860,
in the mouth of any other. It has been said that madness may be studied with scientific accuracy in Shakespeare, and the psychology of Miss Austen's Fools deserves hardly less warmth of praise.

The characterization of her heroines is fine and true. Perhaps the most marvellous studies of delicate, high-bred, feminine thought and emotion are those of the heroic Elinor in *Sense and Sensibility*, and of Anne in *Persuasion*, both of them in love, and hopeless. Fanny Price, in *Mansfield Park*, was the favourite of Sydney Smith. From that long drawn out delineation of painful hopes, and tender fears, Whately conjectured that Miss Austen herself had some sad experience like Fanny's. Mr. Austen Leigh wrote that the conjecture "was wide of the mark. The picture was 'drawn from the intuitive perceptions of genius, not "from any personal experience;"' but he is mistaken, she had her pang of heart break, her brief day of romance.

In this paper much of real interest, of course, remains untouched. Any one of the novels is material for a delightful study in itself, in each there is such a full throng of really living and breathing men and women, in each the irony, the management of plot, the colour, the animation, the style are so admirable! An effort to mark their place in a series in the author's life, and to touch on some characteristic of differentiation among them as they pass, is all that has been possible in our evening. Their power to afford wholesome and keen delight has been felt by the world more and more during the past century, and the pleasure they give to every reader grows with familiarity, an important "accidental" note of a classic. The English is always good, sometimes in the later novels beautiful. A few casual examples will be pleasant hearing, pleasant reading. But no extracts, not even whole dialogues, or chapters, (here impossible), could satisfy those who know the books themselves—who have felt the architectonic, the composition, of those perfect works of art.

John Dashwood had just compunction enough for having done nothing for his sisters himself, to be exceedingly anxious that everybody else should do a great deal.

*Sense and Sensibility*, xxxiii

Mrs. Ferrars was not a woman of many words; for, unlike people in general, she proportioned them to the number of her ideas.

*Sense and Sensibility*, xxxiv.

"There is nothing," says Montaigne, "that is so certain, resolute, disdainful, contemplative, grave, and
serious, as the ass." May this be permitted to introduce a fragment from the immortal Mr. Collins:

My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh’s footstool, that she said, ‘Mr. Collins, you must marry! A clergyman like you must marry!—Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman for my sake; and, for your own, let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her, allow me by the way to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favour of matrimony. Pride and Prejudice, Chapter xix.

Mr. Goldwin Smith has said that “the hand which drew Miss Bates,” in Emma could have drawn Mrs. Quickly. However this be, is not the following wonderful passage very nearly akin to a monologue by Mrs. Quickly?

“Now, Susan,” cried Mrs. Price in a complaining voice, “now, how can you be so cross? You are always quarrelling about that knife. I wish you would not be so quarrelsome. Poor little Betsey; how cross Susan is to you! But you should not have taken it out, my dear, when I sent you to the drawer. You know I told you not to touch it, because Susan is so cross about it. I must hide it another time, Betsey. Poor Mary little thought it would be such a bone of contention when she gave it me to keep, only two hours before she died. Poor little soul! she could but just speak to be heard, and she said so prettily, Let sister Susan have my knife, mamma, when I am dead and buried. Poor little dear! she was so fond of it, Fanny, that she would have it lie by her in bed, all through her illness. It was the gift of her good god-mother, old Mrs. Admiral Maxwell, only six weeks before she was taken for death.
Poor little sweet creature! Well, she was taken away from the evil to come. My own Betsey (fondling her) you have not the luck of such a good god-mother. Aunt Norris lives too far off to think of such little people as you."

Mansfield Park, Chapter xxxvii.

The sun's rays falling strongly into the parlour, instead of cheering, made Fanny still more melancholy, for sunshine appeared to her a totally different thing in a town and in the country. Here its power was only a glare: a stifling, sickly glare, serving but to bring forward stains and dirt that might otherwise have slept. There was neither health nor gaiety in sunshine in a town. She sat in a blaze of oppressive heat, in a cloud of moving dust, and her eyes could only wander from the walls, marked by her father's head, to the table, cut and notched by her brothers, where stood the tea-board never thoroughly cleaned, the cups and saucers wiped in streads, the milk a mixture of motes floating in thin blue, and the bread and butter growing every minute more greasy than even Rebecca's hands had first produced it. Her father read his newspaper, and her mother lamented over the ragged carpet as usual, while the tea was in preparation, and wished Rebecca would mend it.

Mansfield Park, Chapter xlv.

Harriet, tempted by everything, and swayed by half a word, was always very long at a purchase; and while she was still hanging over muslins, and changing her mind, Emma went to the door for amusement. Much could not be hoped from the traffic of even the busiest part of Highbury—Mr. Perry walking hastily by, Mr. William Cox letting himself in at the office door; Mr. Cole's carriage-horses returning from exercise; or a stray letter-boy on an obstinate mule, were the liveliest objects she could presume to expect; and when her eyes fell only on the butcher with his tray, a tidy old woman travelling homewards from shop with her full basket, two curs quarrelling over a dirty bone, and a string of dawdling children round the baker's little bow-window eyeing the ginger-bread, she knew she had no reason to complain, and was amused enough; quite enough still to stand at the door. A mind lively and at ease can do with seeing nothing, and can see nothing that does not answer.¹

Emma, Chapter xxvii.

Anne's pleasure in the walk must arise from the exercise and the day, from the view of the last smiles of the year upon the tawny leaves, and withered hedges, and from

¹ Contrast—I question things, and do not find
One that will answer to my mind.

The Affliction of Margaret.
repeating to herself some few of the thousand poetical descriptions extant of autumn, that season of peculiar and inexhaustible influence on the mind of taste and tenderness. . . . The sweet scenes of autumn were for a while put by, unless some tender sonnet fraught with the apt analogy of the declining year with declining happiness, and the images of youth and hope and spring, all gone together, blessed her memory. . . . After another half mile of gradual ascent through large enclosures, where the ploughs at work, and the fresh made path, spoke the farmer counteracting the sweets of poetical despondence, and meaning to have spring again, they gained the summit.

_Persuasion, Chapter x_.

Prettier musings of high-wrought love and eternal constancy could never have passed along the streets of Bath than Anne was sporting with from Camden Place to Westgate Buildings. It was almost enough to spread purification and perfume all the way.¹

It is high praise of a writer to say that as the world grows older a still widening circle derive rightful, durable happiness from reading and re-reading her books. It is a great thing to increase the healthful permanent pleasure of life. All apparatus of criticism and analysis is of value, just as it finally subserves that end. May this paper perhaps send a few readers afresh with heightened interest to the novels of Jane Austen? And here we take leave of our subject and of each other for a while.

T. W. Lyster.

¹ _Persuasion_, chapter xxi. See _Macmillan's Magazine_ Vol. 51, 1884, page 84, _Style and Miss Austen_, by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, a good paper. Mr. Justice Madden mentions that the late Provost, Dr. Salmon, must be added to the roll of great men—among whom are Scott, Whately, Coleridge, Southey, Newman, Mackintosh, Macaulay, Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, Sydney Smith, Whewell, Lord Holland, Warren Hastings, of whom it is recorded that they have found pleasure in Miss Austen. The best criticism of this perfect artist which I am acquainted with, is in Professor Walter Raleigh's book on the _Development of the English Novel_.
In a recent number of the *New Ireland Review* there appeared a very interesting article by Mr. A. Synan, entitled "The Irish Silence," which seems to me to deserve somewhat more notice than it has received. The article consisted of an examination of the causes of that absence of out-spoken discussion of vital things which, all special pleading apart, is a characteristic of modern Ireland. Freedom of speech, as Mr. Synan says, has in our day become an axiom. "It has come to be perceived," he writes, "that though it is desirable that mankind should hold right opinions, yet, on the whole, the best way for each one, whether state or individual, to promote this end is by giving full liberty to the expression of those views which they consider wrong." That is well said; though Mr. Synan may fairly be reminded that his philosophy is that of the modern mind, which seeks the safeguards of truth in the comparison of different views, and trusts in the long run to human intelligence and human freedom. It is not the philosophy of the orthodox mind, which finds truth already "revealed," stereotyped, and therefore not requiring any discussion to elucidate. It was, we believe, a witty American who said that if he were to be damned for not believing the Bible to be the inspired word of God, he would prefer to believe without reading, for he was not sure he would be able to believe afterwards. When we start out with the need for "belief" in a prescribed doctrine, discussion is useless. At the best it can only confirm what was not supposed to require any rational confirmation; at the worst it may completely upset the orthodox dogma. *Credo quia incredibile* is the formula of faith. Who, indeed, is not familiar with the oft-stressed point in orthodox apologetics that there is a special virtue in believing without proof? Credulity has always been held up as sanctified, whilst any doubting or examining or verifying—anything in fact that stood for the exercise of the mental faculties—has been immemorially banned as impious.

The fact remains, as Mr. Synan's article incidentally testifies, that neither the Catholic Church nor any other Church has ever encouraged free speech or free inquiry when such could be effectually crushed. The claim that Protestantism did so will not stand examination, the
Reformers being as ready to persecute those who dis- 
sented from them as the Inquisition ever was at its height. 
All that can be said for Protestantism is that, incidentally 
and unconsciously, it made for the break-up of vast 
ecclesiastical systems, and therefore gave greater play to 
individual freedom. But Calvin treated Servetus just as 
the Inquisition treated Bruno.

The truth is the philosophy of free inquiry and un-
fettered speech only began to gain ground when the old 
dogmas were palpably breaking up; it is a philosophy not 
even yet by any means accepted in Ireland. It necessitates 
a broadened and courageous mind. The view, for instance, 
that a just deity could be no more angered with honest 
scepticism than an earthly father could be angered with the 
unintentioned mistakes of his children, was a view that 
only emerged with Diderot and the Encyclopaedists.

As far as Mr. Synan’s diagnosis goes, I think it is 
fairly and obviously correct, though at times, on his own 
showing, one would suppose there was not much to 
diagnose. Thus, in view of the miles of speeches and letters 
from our political leaders, like Mr. O’Brien, Mr. Davitt, 
Mr. Dillon and others, for which there is the most untram-
melled publicity, it is difficult to make out that political 
discussion is seriously handicapped. The quality, after all, 
of the political argumentation is a subsidiary matter; what 
we are here concerned with is its chance of a hearing, and 
that chance is, all things considered, not appreciably less 
than political appeal may always be expected to have to 
take anywhere. I am here speaking solely of popular 
politics. In Ireland, naturally, there are always temptations 
to silence in the shape of official patronage which have to be 
reckoned with. Mr. Synan’s paradox, however, is that it 
is not the spirit of criticism in religion that is banned, but 
the spirit of criticism in politics. “To the expression of 
all the more extreme forms of irreligious or agnostic 
opinion,” he writes, “very slight objection is made. In 
Grafton Street you can buy all the more shallow anti-
Christian productions... Their offspring, the respect-
able and increasing class, that is becoming known as 
sixpenny rationalists, are suffered to go about their business 
quite unmolested.” That, I suppose, must be allowed to 
pass as the inevitable piece of flippancy one has always to 
expect from any good “believer”; though the gibe about 
“sixpenny rationalists,” in view of the fact that Father 
Gerard is calling out, as Mr. Synan would say, for a 
“sixpenny Catholicism,” is peculiarly empty. But in
point of fact the whole argument is nonsense within the knowledge of everyone of observation who reads it. The pretence that the press of Ireland will readily give publicity to Agnostic articles, but will refuse articles, say, on the "Hungarian Policy," can hardly be intended seriously. It may of course be answered that the people do not want Agnostic articles, no more than they want those "liberal Catholic opinions," for which Mr. Synan seems to bespeak a hearing. But the people never want any innovation, and the question under discussion is the ease or difficulty with which new views, political or religious, may be brought before them. If we wait until everybody desires the new truth we shall wait for ever. The fact remains that in Ireland the spirit of criticism, to whatever aspect of life it is applied, has a greater force of inertia to overcome than in most European nations, that inertia standing largely for apathy, the apathy in the last analysis being explicable in terms of political and economic conditions.

In so far as this apathy is displayed specifically on the problems of the intellectual life, some people, including, I think, Mr. Synan, would appear to regard it as a happy circumstance. The suggestion often made with complacency, that nobody here is interested in whether or no their dogmatic creeds be true, is supposed to stand for some high and noble trait in the national character. Infidel foreigners may waste their time discussing whether widely-accepted dogmas really correspond with fact or not; our noble selves are above such weakness, Omniscience having graciously preserved us from being as the French or the Germans. The grey truth of the matter, however, is that our alleged steadfastness in the faith merely stands for ignorance and lack of interest. The beliefs which people hold with most conviction are those which they are most ready to discuss. In Ireland the people are not really interested in their religious beliefs at all. With all the gush talked and written about the so-called stubborn faith of ours, it is a fact that that faith mostly displays itself in ritual and ceremonial, with the very minimum of mental and moral interest. So that, as Father O'Donovan pointed out recently,* notwithstanding the clerical school system in Ireland, the Irish immigrants in America show less acquaintance with Catholic doctrine than those of any other Catholic country. It is, therefore, surprising to find an observer like Mr. Synan taking a kind of pleasure in the indifference of the people to inquiries.

* See article "The Churches and the Child" in Independent Review February, 1905
which should appeal to them if they were really touched by their creed.

What, however, is the cause of it all? It is assuredly, as the writer in the *New Ireland Review* points out, the long political war. Whilst that war lasts all domestic interests, intellectual and economic, must suffer. But the war cannot end, and ought not to end, whilst we remain without political freedom. It would be infinitely better if we were in a state of peace; but no man or nation can choose his or their environment. I at least have no sympathy with the simple Unionist who bewails the loss of time and energy spent on the political fight in Ireland as if it were needlessly spent, and benignly asks us to give it up. Such Unionists, if they really care for the higher interests, can most easily show their sincerity by joining the people in their demand for that liberty which is an essential condition of all internal progress.

But it may at the same time be suggested that the efficiency of our political agitation is in no way lessened by the cultivation of the spirit of free inquiry. An educated nation will not be less likely to win freedom than an ignorant one. And whilst the great debate on political tactic goes on continually, those of us who urge the need of independent thought and expression are doing nothing to impede and everything to help the national cause. Mr. Synan agrees in this, and even maps out a region of legitimate controversy. But he studiously leaves out of his survey anything concerning those fundamentals which really help to mould all our other thoughts. The Rationalists are to be dealt with, not by answering, but by ignoring them. With him, broad and critical as he is, religion is the one thing that is not to be discussed—save perhaps by "liberal Catholics." It is to be guarded from all criticism, cultivated in a special University "atmosphère," nursed with all care and assiduity—but withal people must not pry into it too closely. Has not Father Finlay told us with a frankness which beggars comment, that Professor Haeckel in half-an-hour would undo months and months of Catholic teaching? So let us cover the sacred thing from the light of day and the free air of heaven. Who knows but if it were once exposed it might evaporate!

It is a characteristic of "faith,"

IRIAL.
THE TRAMP.

The tramp's first appearance in history is unrecorded. As an institution, he is old as the hills, and his origin, whatever it may be, is as obscure as "the mystery hid under Egypt's pyramid." If we but knew it, the Stone Age probably had its own particular variety of Neolithic tramp, who shambled about the world in a stolen wolf-skin, armed with a stolen flint axe which he was too lazy to chip for himself, and exacting toll at cave doors in flesh and roots from hapless female troglodytes, on pain of instant annihilation. Ishmael, we learn, took to the desert and wandered about, a genuine tramp in that his hand was against every man and every man's hand against him. Since those remote times many generations of men have feared and hated the tramp, have wished him gone, but have been powerless to hasten his going. Laws have been made and amended and annulled and remade, all with a view to suppressing him, or at least to protecting society from his encroachments, but the tramp has hitherto defied them all, and still goes upon his way, dirty and degenerate, and, worse still, rearing up a crop of dirty and degenerate children, the tramps of the coming generation.

So far, at least, the vagrant has proved ineradicable. He maintains his position tenaciously, a position to which he has no just claim, since he gives nothing to society in return for his subsistence. Economically, he is unproductive. He contributes nothing to the wealth of the country, upon the resources of which he is a constant and increasing drain. When not directly dependent upon the rates in the casual ward of a workhouse, he is making out a living by begging or stealing from the ratepayers, at whose expense he thus lives in either case. He is a genuine parasite, living at the cost of his host. He maintains no household, pays no taxes, recognises no obligation to support or educate his children, and disregards every social law. He lives, in fact, the irresponsible life of a savage, and his roving habits often enable him to break the laws with impunity.

Again, in spite of his general incapability, the tramp is a danger to society, for in his own way he is a power in the land. Anyone who has lived in the country will know how the visits of well-known tramps strike terror into the hearts
of farmers' wives and cottagers living in lonely places. The tramp comes along, demands food and drink, and the housewife refuses at her peril. Her husband, too, will think twice before refusing entertainment to a tramp. If rash enough to do so, he may wake to find his hay burnt and his cattle dead, and the cause of the disaster only to be guessed at. Then a claim for malicious injury is set up, the sum is levied off the county, and society once more pays heavily for the privilege of preserving His Highness the tramp, who is meanwhile smoking a quiet pipe under somebody else's hayrick twenty miles away. As a disseminator of diseases the tramp, too, is unrivalled, and most of the recent smallpox epidemics have been ascribed to the fact that infection was carried broadcast over the country by vagrants.

No complete statistics of vagrancy are available, but it has been estimated that the number of tramps in the British Isles may be anything from 30,000 to 50,000. At any rate the number, whatever it may be, has been steadily increasing since 1900, both in England and Wales, and so serious is the problem there that a Departmental Committee was appointed last Autumn to consider the question in all its bearings, especially with regard to the establishment of Labour Colonies. In Ireland too, the statistics of vagrancy are on the up-grade, a serious matter to a country whose population is diminishing. In the year ending 31st March, 1903, the average weekly number of casuals relieved in Irish workhouses exceeded by 160 the average number of the preceding year.

Under the English law, vagrancy is no longer a crime, but persons may be imprisoned for begging or sleeping in the open. But the police do not care much for bringing up charges of this kind, partly from a feeling of sympathy for the prisoner (often shared by the magistrate), and partly from the difficulty of proving the charge. The only State provision for coping with vagrancy is the casual ward of the workhouse, where admission cannot be refused to anyone declaring himself to be destitute. Of remedial measures against the tramp evil we have none, for his brief detention in the casual ward, with a certain amount of enforced labour and possibly the added horrors of a bath, only cause him some passing discomfort, while insuring him a shelter on wet or frosty nights. Moreover, as there is no uniformity in the treatment of casuals in different unions, the tramp soon learns which workhouse to avoid and which to use as a cheap hotel.
It is often instructive to compare our systems with those adopted by our continental neighbours. In the matter of vagrants we find that we stand almost alone. Germany, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland, acting on the stern dictum of St. Paul: "If any would not work neither should he eat," have chosen the system of Labour Colonies, and some such system will eventually have to be adopted in this country, perhaps in the form of a Forced Labour Farm like that established at Witzwyl in Switzerland.

This farm covers about 2,000 acres of what was formerly a tract of water-logged soil, subject to inundations. But since 1895, when the farm was established, much of the land has been reclaimed and is now under cultivation and producing excellent crops. The place is under police control, and receives persons sentenced by the criminal courts to terms of imprisonment up to 3 years. The number of inmates is about 150, some 40 or 50 being men convicted of habitual tramping with refusal to work, work-shy ("Werkscheu"), as the Germans quaintly term it. The work of the farm is all done by the inmates, who labour in gangs of 10 or 12, under the supervision of an officer who himself takes a share in the work, stimulating the men by his example. On admission, all the men are put to field work, but some are subsequently transferred to the various workshops attached to the farm. Good conduct may bring a remission of one-third of the term of detention, and good work brings a bonus. The guiding principle of the institution is "to improve the land by man and man by the land." The first object has plainly been attained, since what was once a swamp is now a fertile country. As regards the second, Swiss experts believe, first, that most crimes are the result of a disinclination to work—"Müsiggäng ist aller Laster Anfang," says the proverb—and secondly, that farm work is the best for "work-shy" people. To such as these the establishment is a terror, but industrious men get on well there. On discharge every effort is made to find work for the men; some remain on the farm at a fair salary, others go to the Free Labour Colony at Tannenhof, whilst others again obtain employment through the Society for the Aid of Discharged Prisoners.

1 For a further account of Swiss methods of dealing with vagrancy, see Mr. Preston-Thomas' interesting Report (from which my information is derived) to the English Local Government Board. This Report (No. Cd. 2253) can be obtained for 2d. from Mr. E. Ponsonby, 116, Grafton Street, Dublin.
The institution described is a fairly typical example of the forced Labour Colony, of which there are many on the continent. There are also voluntary Labour Colonies both for men and women. Even in England a few of these have been established by charitable bodies, notably the great farm at Hadleigh in Essex, conducted with remarkable success by the Salvation Army. It must not, however, be overlooked that the Swiss, while adopting these stringent measures for the correction of the habitual tramp, have organised a large union for the relief of poor travellers. Thanks to it, every decent man, travelling in search of work, can obtain food and shelter at any of the stations of the union, which has now extended its work over more than half of Switzerland.

The idea of the Labour Colony has met with a good deal of opposition in England, but public opinion is being slowly brought to regard it with more favour. No doubt many tramps are incurable vagabonds, and Germany has even developed a regular type of “Koloniebummler,” but at the same time the Labour Colonies save many men who have not yet sunk to the lowest depths of vagrancy, or who are not hereditary tramps. The Colonies also do much towards keeping the streets free from beggars and the highways free from tramps, and they are a welcome refuge for discharged prisoners who find it hard to obtain employment elsewhere. After paying off initial expenses, the Colony should be almost self-supporting, and at the same time the labour of the inmates might be employed for the reclamation of much valuable land.

It has been said that the only way to solve the problem of the Highland “tinker” is through his children, and the same is true of the tramp. The case of the tramp child is grievous and calls loudly for alleviation. It would be difficult to conceive a life more calculated to injure a child, in body and soul, than that of the habitual tramp. Dragged about in all weathers by its parents, to whom it is a valuable asset for begging purposes, the poor little tramp grows up amidst unspeakably awful surroundings, illiterate and ignorant, a homeless wanderer on the face of the earth. These are the children who, needing the State’s protection most, get least of it. The home-dwelling man must send his children to school or suffer the penalty of the law; he must also have them vaccinated or answer for the consequences, but the irresponsible tramp does neither; if trouble arises he simply shambles out of town with his child dragging by his coat-tails, and is seen no more for a
season. A Bill at present before the House of Commons aims at the protection of vagrant children. It makes it an indictable offence to tramp children about habitually, and provides for the punishment of the responsible party (namely, the parent), and for the proper care of the children until they reach a mature age. The Bill which, however, does not extend to Ireland, is a step in the right direction. If all habitual tramps could be confined in Labour Colonies and forced to repay, in some degree, their debt to society, and if all their children could be decently brought up by the State instead of by parents who, through their conduct, have forfeited all the so-called parental "rights," we should undoubtedly find a reduction in the numbers of tramps in the next generation. A big State School is certainly not an ideal place for the up-bringing of children, but it is a Kingdom of Heaven in comparison to the haunts of the habitual vagrant. The power of heredity is strong, and a good many children would probably revert to their vagabond habits in after life, but on the other hand many, no doubt, would turn out to be valuable citizens instead of social derelicts of no use to anybody.

It is only by some strong measures such as these that any effective blow can be struck at the root of vagrancy, which now flourishes in a rank growth, and spreads out its poisonous branches on every side.

Laura Stephens.

TO A LADY WHO WONDERED "WHY ALL IRISH POETRY WAS 'REBEL.'"

Who could commemorate in lasting song
The triumph of the mighty o'er the weak?—
Or could the pens that through the ages seek
To dress the balance of sword-handed wrong
Forsake the vanquished few to aid the strong?
In this eternal cause no voice can speak
The haughty victor in half tones or meek—
Or to his blast blow not a note more long.
So comes it that the poets of our Isle
Its scattered triumph-songs can only wake:
The conquered have no weapon save this file
To notch the sword, and when all else forsake,
The Bard still fronts the victor with a smile
And breaks in song the chains nought else can break.

Roger Casement.
Mr. Ryan's article, in the February number of "Dana," calls for some criticism, on the ground that he has not noticed what is perhaps the most interesting point connected with the question. Church Establishment in France does not merely mean that a particular form of religion is recognised and supported by the State. I set aside as more suited to other pens the proposition put forward on the clerical side: that the salaries, etc., granted by the concordat are only a part repayment of the debt incurred by France, when the Church was robbed of its property at the outset of the great Revolution.

There is a deeper side to the problem. For the State in France does not stand to the Church simply as an external power. It represents: (1) The lay element in the Church. (2) The National Church in its relations with Rome. The situation created by M. Combes involves, possibly, the surrender, in the near future, of the last remnant of the ancient claim of the Gallican body.

It is usually assumed, through a superficial reading of history, that the struggle, in the seventeenth century, between the French bishops and the Holy See, was really a struggle between the Pope and Louis XIV. And the conclusion is drawn that freedom from Papal rule meant slavery to the King.

There is an element of truth in this, for the two powers, co-operating with one another, had reduced the French hierarchy to a shadow of its former greatness. But that it is not the whole truth, and that it is not a fair statement of the situation may be seen in the enumeration of the main facts.

The modern situation became inevitable when, in 1516, a concordat was signed by Leo X. and Francis I. Up to that date the French Church had rested its claims on ancient canonical traditions—traditions which often stood in the way, not only of Papal but of Royal ambition. In 1438 a kind of agreement had been come to with the State under the name of the Pragmatic Sanction, based on the decrees of the councils of Constance and Basle, and limiting the powers of the Holy See in the ecclesiastical affairs of France. The foundation, at that time, had been theological and traditional, and had thus issued in a state of things,
inconvenient to both Pope and King. Leo X and Francis I put an end to this in 1516. The negotiations which led up to the transaction were once described to the present writer, by a well-known German theologian and historian, as a treaty, by which one party agreed to give up what did not belong to him in exchange for what did not belong to the other. In the result the Gallican Church was given over, bound hand and foot to the two powers who have since been apt from time to time to quarrel over the partition of the spoils.

This happened in 1682, when the four articles were drawn up and adopted by the majority of the hierarchy supported by Louis XIV. And it happened again in 1789, when the Constitutional Church was set up and maintained by the National Assembly in defiance of Rome. But though the French Church was bound, it was by no means dead. This was seen when the civil constitution of the clergy lapsed on the fall of the King (Aug. 10th, 1792). The bishops and clergy, who had accepted the arrangement, continued to exercise their functions in defiance of both Rome and Paris. Indeed one of the former, Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, distinguished himself by opposing, from his place in the Convention, the atheistic wave of the Autumn of 1793. Under the directory, when the storm had blown over, a national council was held and the public exercise of the Catholic religion was re-organized.

Perhaps, had Rome intervened at this point, and made peace with a body of men, who had shown their worth by going through the ordeal of the Revolution, France might have spared her present impasse. But the Directory died in giving birth to Bonaparte, and, with him, came the concordat of 1801. Since then the struggle has been chronic, and it is probable that the final break down will, sooner or later, be inevitable.

But it must be remembered: (1) That the Church, though bound, is not dead. (2) That many things necessary to its vigour have been divided between the two powers in such a way that the renunciation of one of them will mean the absolute domination of the other. The old Gallican Church claimed rights (1) as against the Holy See; (2) as against the State. The Republic is now in possession of the first, the Pope of the second of these rights. The problem is complicated, but on its solution depends a great human interest.

William MacGowan Drive.
A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

A new collection of essays by Ernest Renan is certain to prove of great interest. *Mélanges Religieux et Historiques* continues the series of volumes of miscellaneous essays published under various titles by the writer himself; it contains papers which belong to widely differing epochs in the life of Renan; several date from his early youth. It is worth noticing that several passages in this volume are found also in works already published, generally in a very different context. These form in themselves a priceless document on Renan's manner of composition, showing how he worked unceasingly upon his idea, endeavouring to attain absolute truth, until he had expressed it in all its nuances. These essays are most penetrating and illuminating; their range of subject is very wide; among them is one called "Les Études Classiques au moyen âge pendant la période carlovingienne," which contains a brief estimate of the great Irishman Erigena. During the long period preceding the Renaissance, the Carlovingian is the most curious, marking the definite establishment on the Continent of the culture that till then had exclusively flourished among the Anglo-Saxons and the Irish.

"In this illuminated age Erigena is the most original figure; by virtue of his philosophical range, his philological attainments, his knowledge of Greek, he forms a unique exception. ... It has often been said he had little influence, he has not even once quoted by the learned men who came after him. His original work made less stir than his translations, which like all those of the Middle Ages were grossly literal. He is rather a philological than a philosophical phenomenon; bad as many of his derivations are, those of Plato and Varro are worse. In reality he did not understand Greece; he had all the more passion for Hellenism that it was in his eyes always wrapped in mystery, to him it was a religion: quotations from the Greek were nearly as dear to him as from the Bible, merely because they were Greek, and like every philologue, he adores his object, and brings it in on every occasion."

The second part of *Ériu* is now ready: it contains an exhaustive tracing out of the analogies in the verbal
system of modern Irish, by Mr. O. J. Bergin, who is now working in Berlin with Professor Zimmer. Doctor Strachan contributes a long study of the infixed pronoun in Middle Irish, and a careful text with translation of the Rule of Comgall, founder and first Abbot of Bangor, [517-602], which he judges from internal evidence to be not later than 800 A.D. A text and translation of the Rule of Patrick is the work of Mr. J. G. O'Keeffe, and Mr. M. E. Byrne has prepared a text and translation of a short metrical prayer addressed to the saints who preside over the seasons. Dr. Kuno Meyer has provided a translation of the Boyish Exploits of Finn, which contains the beautiful May-song made by Finn "to prove his poetry." Until quite recently the manuscript available broke off immediately after the beginning of the lyric, and the discovery of the fuller text is matter for rejoicing, as more than one-third was lacking to a delightful piece of literature. A first instalment of an edition of the Táin Bó Cúailgne by Dr. Strachan and Mr. O'Keeffe is printed as a supplement. Eriu is produced by the University Press: its printing and appearance are worthy of the highest praise.

In June, 1904, an association was formed in Dublin to promote the establishment of efficient libraries at all suitable places throughout the country. The committee propose to issue a quarterly journal, the first number of which has appeared. I think it was a mistake to make it free to members, and offer it for sale at six shillings; at a low price, say sixpence or a shilling, it would have obtained many sympathetic readers who will never purchase it at the present rate. It gives the text of the various Public Libraries Acts in full, with a list of towns and districts which have taken advantage of these provisions; there is a detailed exposition of the aims of the Association, which hopes not merely to promote the establishment of libraries but also to point out to those engaged in library work their great opportunities and responsibilities, and to help them to deal with these in the best and most useful manner. Another object is to encourage and facilitate the study of bibliography in Ireland, on which subject Mr. E. R. M'C. Dix publishes an instructive essay. Mr. John Condon contributes the first part of what promises to be a valuable Short Bibliography of Irish History; it is not meant to be exhaustive, but to give all the works of any importance to the student, or essential to the formation of a useful library. Great pains have been taken to give the titles of the
books accurately, a point in which many bibliographers fail. Among the many distresses of Ireland one of the most deadly is the dearth of books which imposes intellectual starvation on those who have little money, and do not live in the cities. Readers of DANA will remember Miss Barlow's paper in the number for last December, "Where Time Hangs Heavy," a plea for the bookless and desolate places. Her suggestion was that a van should make excursions far and wide carrying a library of carefully chosen books, but, though an excellent scheme in its way, this would offer only a partial remedy for the trouble, which is very real, very oppressive, and almost fatal. Not to know is not to be alive: worse still, ignorance is no mere passive evil, but terribly active and far-reaching in its effects: any attempt to combat the present condition of things in Ireland will need to be strenuous, patient, and both unflinching and untiring in courage. Mr. Fox in a terse and very interesting paper shows that Thomas Davis was our first great library enthusiast, contemporary with Edward Edwards, though the two men were working independently, and neither had any support or public sympathy. Mr. T. W. Lyster's, Essay "Ireland and Public Libraries," is worth close attention; he points out that the penny rate produces very small sums in little Irish towns, and pleads that the limit should be left to the good sense of the community. He reminds us that we aim at teaching every child to read, and that it is our duty to see that wholesome food is provided for mind and imagination where before there was none, or bad. He emphasises the importance of newspapers, for they are an epitome of life, and the broadening influence of reading papers whose points of view differ. Children's books should not be forgotten, and arrangements could easily be made for lending books to schools. Among other things he urges the indirect benefits to a society of a public library: it is theirs, they are responsible for both its merits and its defects. "In fact, the management of a library is, in itself, a liberal education to a community." The love of libraries is the love of knowledge. The existence of a library, however elementary, is a silent protest against that "violent and vehement operation of ignorance" which, age after age, has helped to blunt the efforts and sadden the hearts of good and wise lovers of their kind.

The Committee of the "Cumann na Leabharlann" meets in Kevin Street Library, the subscription is ten shillings a year for members, half a crown for Associates.

F. M. Atkinson.
Mr. Seumas O'Sullivan's work first appeared in book-form last year, in the little volume of selections from younger Irish writers called "New Songs," edited by A. E. He has now put together these verses, and some which were printed in Dana and other Irish papers, and many others that have never before appeared, and published them under the title of "The Twilight People."

It is a book of delicate lyrics of a wonderful grace and charm, with curious rhythms that are not always convincing, and lines full of strange combinations of murmurous vowel sounds. It is never strenuous or passionate, though at times the verse, as in "The Fawn," rises to a stately dignity. One feels in these poems, written in so many diverse metres, the striving of an exceptionally sensitive ear to discover the metrical vehicle best fitted to express its perception of the everlastingly elusive beauty that haunts the quiet places of the earth, and gleams momentarily on white hands and brows, or from the depths of luminous deep-set eyes. One also notices the curious contradiction between these outbursts of rejoicing in the living beauty that floods the world for those who have eyes to see, and the lamentations for the departed beauty of the ancient world that is gone forever, and which the modern world seeks in vain to regain.

There are undoubtedly traces in these verses of that distinctive element characteristic of what is somewhat vaguely designated the Celtic school, and which might possibly be ascribed to the influence of individual writers whose work has already become well known, but which I think it would be more correct to say is due to the influence of that general quickening in the country which is stirring so many diverse minds to a certain unity of expression. One remembers how Shelley foresaw criticism of this nature in connection with his "Revolt of Islam" and provided an answer in the preface to that poem; and as the principles he enunciated on that occasion are equally true in this case I will transcribe the passage. "I have avoided" he says, "the imitation of any contemporary style, but there must be a resemblance, which does not depend upon their own will, between all the writers of any particular age. They cannot escape from subjection to a common influence which arises out of an infinite combination of circumstances belonging to the times in which they live; though each is in a degree the author of the very influence by which his being is thus pervaded."

But although Mr. O'Sullivan has evidently felt and
responded to present day influences, there is more than enough in this little book to prove that he is possessed of a marked individuality of his own. The three short lyrics alone, entitled "Praise," "Homage," and "The Sedges," the first of which I will quote, are sufficient to prove this.

**PRAISE.**

Dear, they are praising your beauty,
   The grass and the sky;
The sky in a silence of wonder,
   The grass in a sigh.

I too would sing for your praising,
   Dearest, had I
Speech as the whispering grass,
   Or the silent sky.

These have an art for the praising
   Beauty so high.
Sweet, you are praised in a silence,
   Sung in a sigh.

This is in its own class as distinctive and beautiful work as one could wish for, and the writer is a decided acquisition among modern poets. There breathes through it a radiance of a strange and subtle spirit who has discovered the ecstasy that lies hid in the silent adoration of beauty, and who with loving and patient toil seeks for the words that will reflect aright the inexpressible rapture of the sense of unity of the adorer and the adored. This feeling of hushed reverence pervades most of these poems. He has rightly named his book *The Twilight People*, for his mood is the silence and the magic of the twilight, and the truest thing that can be said about him is that he has caught as no one else of our time has, "from grey lips grown articulate, twilight-kissed," the mystery and the wonder of living.

T. K.
THE IRISH NATIONAL THEATRE.

The Irish National Theatre Society made its second appearance at the Abbey Theatre on February 4th, when Mr. J. M. Synge's new play, "The Well of the Saints," was produced, and repeated to rather small audiences for the following six nights.

The author has founded his play on an incident which, for most modern minds, is regarded as a huge improbability, viz., the restoration of sight to a blind man and woman by a priest through the means of holy water. The fact that he makes the action take place one or more centuries ago does nothing to render it either more or less improbable. One grants, of course, an author the right to use any incident he pleases, and only asks that he should give it an adequate and suitable treatment; and it cannot be denied that Mr. Synge has certainly done this. But, nevertheless, the very fact of a play being based on an incident of this nature precludes it in a measure from any vital connection with the tendencies and developments of modern life and thought. This, for a writer so realistic in his treatment as Mr. Synge, seems rather an incongruity, and from the nature of the subject it seems to be particularly inappropriate in Ireland just at present. As we all know, there are thousands of people in this country who believe implicitly in the possibility of such a miracle taking place in this particular manner, and if the play should ever happen to be produced in rural districts, it would most likely tend to strengthen this belief, and in so far as it did so, would be allying itself to the already too numerous forces in the land opposed to intellectual progression. The pre-eminence of the Church as a miracle-worker and as the chief authority in the lives of the people is assumed right through the play. It is true that in the last act the priest receives but scant courtesy from the blind man, whom he wishes to restore to sight for a second time; but to the average spectator the feeling of the villagers on this point is decidedly the predominant feeling of the play, and they so strongly resent his sacrilegious acts and words that they are hardly prevented by the priest from mobbing him. And at the end the curtain goes down on this man, who has refused to submit to the jurisdiction of the Church, as he is being driven away from the district, an outcast and a vagabond.
And yet I am bound to admit that the whole tone of the play is one that has little sympathy with credulity of this nature. Indeed, a little more tenderness on the part of the author for the foolishness of belief would possibly have added a touch of tenderness here and there that would not have been at all amiss.

There is the unflinching, almost emotionless, presentation of what is sordid and almost revolting that denotes a mind that will not turn aside from fact because of its ugliness, but in the fixed pursuit of a non-moral and non-partisan art, sets itself to present what actually exists exactly as it is, and because it is in keeping with a predetermined, definitely thought out intention. The scheme of the play is quite simple. Its bounds are strictly limited, but within these bounds it moves with a precision and regularity due to workmanship of a very high order. To put it plainly, the whole play is devoted to the development of one character, Martin Doul, in connection with a definite set of circumstances. This is done exceedingly well. His selfishness, coarseness, hypocrisy, his feeling for beauty and capacities for idealization, and the vehement fluency of his maledictions, make him as striking and as interesting a figure as one could wish for, and induce a curious feeling of almost resentful eagerness as we watch the progress of his pitiful career.

The play can never be popular. Its appeal is chiefly to those who can feel the joy which its literary skill evokes, the delight of the mind in the brilliant and subtle dialect, and the quick keen strokes which exhibit the whimsical, blustering, pathetic old blind man warring against the invincible facts which have so suddenly and ruthlessly destroyed his long-cherished vision of beauty.
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