

AN IRISHMAN'S PLEA.

BY E. K.

Foul is the stain on the fair fame of Erin,
Heralded far is the tale of her shame;
Villains, conspiring for vilest dishonor,
Infamy shed on a glorious name.

Bright was the past of the glories of Erin,
Honor and valor and freedom allied,
Long ere the Viking swooped down in his warship,
Long ere the Sassenagh came in his pride.

Saintly and brave were the bold men of Erin;
Saintly or brave can we call them no more,
Using the knife of the secret assassin,
Lurking in ambush, or reeking in gore.

Noble of old were the brave men of Erin,
Women in safety might pass through the land;
Now (shame to tell it) a lady of Erin
Falls by an Irishman's dastardly hand.

Brave as renowned were the Fionns of Erin,
Fair to their foemen and true to their friends;
Now the foul traitors who claim that fair title—
Fonians they call themselves, fendish their ends.

Grateful of old were the brave men of Erin,
Mindful of kindness, forgetful of wrong;
Now while the kindness is ever forgotten,
Wrongs are the subject of speech and of song.

Not long ago were free benefits scattered,
Pardon for past from a generous foe;
Now all the hopes of a nation are shattered,
Shattered for ever by one fearful blow.

Blame not that crime on the true men of Erin,
Think not they favored the miscreant band;
They felt the blow of the secret assassin
More than the victims who died by his hand.

SUSPICIOUS AND DISTRUSTFUL.

If Rousseau may be said to stand almost apart and alone in bad eminence, as a man morbidly suspicious and inveterately distrustful, there were times and seasons, or moods and tenues, in the life too of his great contemporary and fellow-countryman, Voltaire, when that mocking spirit seemed nearly as far gone in the same baleful direction. Witness what Carlyle writes of him during his second visit to Berlin in 1751-52, when ill-health, discontent, vague terror possessed him, and "suspicion that dare not go to sleep; a strange vague terror, shapeless, or taking all shapes;.... fear, quailing continually for nothing at all," yet passing often enough into "transient malignity, into gusts of trembling hatred." Here however the disease was acute rather than chronic. That is more than can be said of a later philosopher, the pessimist Schopenhauer, of whom we are told how easily angered he was, how suspicious and irritable; how the slightest noise at night made him start and seize the pistol that lay ready loaded; how he would never trust himself under the razor of a barber; how he carried a little leathern drinking-cup about with him if he dined in a public place, to avoid possible contagion, and how he carefully locked away after use his pipes and cigar-tips lest another person should touch them; how he never entrusted to his native language any accounts or notes regarding his property, but wrote his expenses in English, his business affairs in Greek or Latin; how he concealed his valuables in the strangest places, and even labelled them with deceptive names to avert the suspicion of thieves; how he hid bonds among old letters, and gold under his inkstand. This inborn nervousness is said to have caused him much torture, and to have been bitterly regretted; but it appears to have been quite unconquerable, however unworthy of a philosopher. Sir Walter Scott records in his diary how, on meeting Thomas Moore in 1825, and comparing notes with him about "poor Byron," his previous impression was fully confirmed that, like Rousseau, their late friend was "apt to be very suspicious," especially resenting the slightest notice of his personal deformity, and suspecting every glaze of gazing at it. Suspicion, however necessary it may be to our safe passage, as Johnson says, through paths beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has always been considered, when it exceeds the common measure, as a token of depravity and corruption. He who is overrun with suspicion and detects artifice and stratagem in every proposal is always liable to the imputation of having derived his judgment from the consciousness of his own disposition, and so of attributing to others the same inclinations which he feels predominant in himself. An unlovely portrait is drawn in the *Rambler* of the man—a young one withal—who comes into the world with scruples and mistrusts, makes a bargain with many provisional limitations, hesitates in his answer to a common question, lest more should be intended than he can immediately discover, considers every earnest as an act of hypocrisy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection for the tenderness of his friends, because he believes no one to have any real tenderness, but for himself. As no torture is said to equal the prolonged prohibition of sleep, so in effect is it with the man who dares never give rest to his vigilance of distrust, but regards himself as encompassed by secret foes; and suspicion is, on the moralist's showing, not less an enemy to virtue than to happiness, he that is already corrupt being naturally suspicious, while he that becomes suspicious will quickly be corrupt. To apply a passage from Shakespeare, "a noble spirit ever casts such doubts, as false coin, from it." Goethe makes a suspicious disposition the bane of Torquato Tasso, for whom Leonora's sighful wish is, "Oh that he would

Model his temper as he forms his taste,
Cease to avoid mankind, nor in his breast
Nurture suspicion into hate and fear."

Later in the play a less charitable critic asks, in discussing and disparaging his character,

What's his suspicion but a troubled dream?
He thinks himself environed still by foes.
Oft with complaints he has molested thee.
Notes intercepted, violated looks,
Poison, the dagger—all before him float.
Thou dost investigate his grievance—well
Dost aught appear? Why, scarcely a pretext!
No sovereign's shelter gives him confidence,
The bosom of no friend can comfort him.

In De Montfort is depicted by Joanna Baillie in sombre tints a tragically pronounced type of this untoward temperament. His old servant protests in the opening scene of the tragedy,

I've been upon the eve of leaving him
These ten long years; for many times he is
So difficult, capricious, and distrustful,
He galls my nature.

So with Byron's Werner, whom it would not be easy to persuade, Josephine assures Gabor, "of your good intentions." "Is he so suspicious?" asks Gabor. And the sorely tried but ever loyal wife replies—

He was not once; but time and troubles have
Made him what you behold.

GABOR. I'm sorry for it.
Suspicion is a heavy armour, and
With its own weight impedes more than protects.

In rebuke of Boswell's tendency to despondently distrust his great friend's friendship if he did not answer a letter off-hand, Johnson called such distrust "a mode of melancholy, which, if it be the business of a wise man to be happy, it is foolish to indulge; and, if it be a duty to preserve our faculties entire for their proper use, it is criminal." Suspicion, the doctor went on to say, is very often a useless pain. From that, and all other pains, in winding up his letter, he wished Boswell free and safe—being most affectionately his, Sam Johnson. It stands on record of and against John Dennis that throughout his life the violence and suspiciousness of his temper were such that he rarely made a friend or an acquaintance in whom his distempered vision did not soon discover an enemy in disguise. His quasi-namesake, Dionysius the elder, could scarcely have outdone him in this ugly demerit or defect—one however only too compatible with royalty, be it as bad an emperor as Domitian, or as good a one as Hadrian. Of the Emperor Claudius the record of Suetonius is that in nothing did he show himself so fixed and consistent as in suspicion and distrust; from the commencement of his reign he was afraid to be present at any great feast, unless accompanied by his body-guard of spearmen, and with his soldiers to act as waiters at table, instead of the usual attendants. If he ever went to see a sick person, the sick-room was first searchingly inspected, the very bolsters and counterpanes being closely examined and jealously shaken. Those who came to pay their respects to him were liable to have their clothes at large and their pockets in particular subject to a minute scrutiny; and highly exasperating to any Roman, with a particle left in him of self-respect, were the ignominious liberties taken by these inquisitorial experts. None of his councillors or secretaries might approach Cæsar's person before their steel pens were taken from them—the steel pen of that age being still more formidable to Imperialism than in another sense it has been in our nineteenth century. Domitian was laughed at by his imperial sire for being shy of mushrooms at supper, as though, if his destiny was to die by either cold steel or poison, mushrooms were more to be dreaded than the sword. But Vespasian's laughter tended to confirm Domitian's habit of distrust than to cure him of it; and, as emperor, the moody youth showed himself incurable, fearful and anxious, moved by the faintest suspicion to extravagant precautions and stratagems of self-defence. Take again the instance of Kaiser Rudolf II. Persuaded by his astrological prognostications that his life would be endangered by one of his own blood, his naturally distrustful temper all the more severely alienated him from his brothers and kinsfolk. He never made his appearance in public, nor attended the worship of the Church. He caused covered galleries to be built, with oblique windows, that he might pass from his apartments to his stables and gardens without being exposed to the peril of assassination. While his dominions, as we read in the history of the House of Austria, were ravaged by the Turks, or desolated by civil war, while enemy on enemy was rising against him, he secluded himself in his palace at Prague, absorbed in gloom and suspicion, or haunted by all the apprehensions which prey on weak, indolent, and superstitious minds. Thus he became, in Archdeacon Coxe's words, "hypochondriacal and impatient, irritable almost to frenzy, refused to admit foreign ambassadors, drove even his confidential ministers from his presence, and strangers who were induced to visit the Emperor of Germany could not otherwise gratify their curiosity, than by introducing themselves into his stables in the disguise of grooms." Prescott, in his history of the conquest of Peru, finds occasion to remark that a suspicious temper creates an atmosphere of distrust around it that kills every kindly affection—which occasion is found in the case of the Viceroy Blasco Nunez, with whom to suspect was so inveterately habitual, such habit being second nature, that to suspect was also to be convinced. It made him place himself in a false position with all whom he approached, and wrought deplorable mischief

all round. In Ellis Bell's weird romance of repulsive realism, Heathcliff's one good councillor takes him to the glass, and bids him mark the two lines between his eyes, and those thick brows that, instead of being arched, sink in the middle, and that couple of black fiends, so deeply buried, who never open their windows boldly, but lurk glinting under them, like devils' spies. He is urged accordingly to wish and smooth away the surly wrinkles, to raise his lids frankly, and change the fiends to confident, innocent angels, suspecting and doubting nothing, and always seeing friends where they are not sure of foes—else he will get, and retain for life, the expression of a vicious cur that appears to know the kicks it comes in for are its desert, and yet hates all the world as well as the kicker for what it suffers.

The younger Dacre, as portrayed in one of Lord Beaconsfield's earlier fictions, if ardent, was also morose; if unwary, was also suspicious; every one who opposed him was his enemy; all who combined for his preservation were conspirators; his father, whose feelings he had outraged, and never attempted to soothe, was a tyrant; his brother, who was devoted to his interests, was a traitor. These were his living and his dying thoughts. "He was one of those men who, because they have been imprudent, think themselves unfortunate, and mistake their diseased mind for an implacable destiny." In morbid excess of distrust and perverse misgivings, the type is of that class of which Jean Jacques Rousseau is so distinctively a representative man. Examples less note worthy or less notorious abound in literature and life. Gibbon writes in his *Journal* an estimate to this effect on the Abbé Montgon, whose suspicious temper peopled his haunted mind with imaginary enemies. Cardinal Fleury's cabal against the abbé, for instance, Gibbon takes to have been chimerical; why should the cardinal have been the abbé's enemy? The abbé did not deserve to be the object of his vengeance, still less of his hatred or jealousy—yet, to hurt this man, the cardinal during five years employs concealed and almost invisible instruments, and transforms into rogues or cowards an archbishop, a duchess, a marquis, and a count, who, all of them, on the abbé's own showing, had formerly been very honest people. John Locke, in his correspondence, imputes to Sir Isaac Newton an unhappy predisposition to this habit of mind: "He is a nice man to deal with"—in the old grammatical sense of "nice," not in the now prevalent young-ladylike one—"and a little too apt to raise in himself suspicions where there is no ground; and thereby hangs a tale of the quarrels of authors, or at least of misunderstanding and estrangement for a while between men of letters. Beethoven in his darker mood was but too ready to see only collusion and treachery where friends were proposing to do him a service. Turner ultimately became so suspicious and sensitive that he mistrusted the motives of all with whom he had to do. So nearly may the greatest of musical composers and of landscape-painters be reduced to the level of a Mr. Guppy, when that pretentious young fellow came to suspect everybody who entered on the occupation of a stool in Kenge and Carboy's office of entertaining, as a matter of course, sinister designs upon him; when he was clear that every such person wanted to depose him, and, if ever asked how, why, when, or wherefore, shut up one eye and shook his head; and when, on the strength of these profound views, he in the most ingenious manner took infinite pains to counterplot when there was no plot, and played the deepest games of chess without any adversary. Suspicion, Owen Feltham warns us, for the most part proceeds from a self-defect; and then it gnaws the mind. "He who knows he deserves not to be considered ill, why should he imagine that others should speak him so?" We may observe how a man is disposed by gathering what he doubts in others." A habit of mistrust Sir Arthur Helps may well describe as the "torment" of those whose love and friendship it taints—who take up small causes of offence, expecting their friends to show the same aspect to them at all times, which is more than human nature can do; who try experiments to ascertain whether they are sufficiently loved, and which narrowly by the effects of absence, and require their friends to prove to them that the intimacy is exactly upon the same footing as it was before. Granting that some persons acquire these distrustful ways from a natural difference in themselves, for which they are only loved the more—a result they might find ample comfort in, if they could but believe it—the unwelcome truth remains that with others these habits arise from a selfishness which cannot be satisfied; and of these the endeavour should be to uproot such a disposition, not to soothe it.

ECHOES FROM LONDON.

It is now thirty-six years since the House of Commons sat on a Derby Day.

A West End parson is credited with such a strong business instinct that he makes a charge of a pound a year to ladies who want spiritual advice.

THERE is a rumor that the more advanced Liberals who may secede from the Reform Club are to join together and start a new club, to be built in Northumberland avenue. The cost of such an undertaking on such a site would be fabulous.

THE Brighton Aquarium was honored by the birth of a porpoise the other day. This is said to be the first experiment of this kind in England. The small porpoise retired from business as soon as it had entered it.

MISS E. FARREN'S benefit at the Gaiety Theatre on Monday afternoon might have been mistaken for a great floral show, as the stage was continually being covered by bouquets. The Prince of Wales was present.

AN hotel has been commenced in Northumberland avenue. It will be called the Hotel Métropole. Everything in this locality is on a magnificent scale to secure a profit, and the Métropole will not be an exception.

A SINGULAR and elegant effect was produced the other evening by a gentleman in the stalls slapping his bald head instead of clapping his hands. It sounded very loud. No doubt it will become the fashion, as so many of our gilt youth have a great deficiency in this part (of course, of hair).

MESSRS. Sotheby, Wilkinson, and Hodge have received instructions from the Duke of Hamilton to sell by auction the magnificent libraries of printed books and manuscripts from Hamilton Palace. The first sale, forming the first portion of the Beckford library, will commence on Friday, June 30th, and will continue during the eleven following days.

M. VERARD DE SAINTE-ANNE is the author of a scheme for a bridge across the channel, and the picturesque plans he has already shown to the President of the French Republic, while he proposes to confer the like honor on Mr. Gladstone, after which he hopes to form a company and raise funds. The proposed bridge will be twenty-three miles in length, and parts of it will be tubular, some iron framework open to the elements and other parts solidly resting on viaducts of masonry.

THE lady to whom Mr. Bigger is engaged was escorted by that gentleman through the House of Commons the other day. Mr. Bigger, hat in hand, brought them through the lobbies, and pointed out Mr. Forster taking his luncheon at the bar. Their attention was also drawn to Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Toole, the comic actor, who happened to be in the lobby, as also many other illustrious persons, including Mr. Bradlaugh, "Dear Mr. Broadhurst," Mr. Gibson, and also Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, and Mr. Warton.

A FREQUENT visitor to the House of Commons is Prince Teck. He is there nearly every night now. It is said commonly that he has been appointed Reporter Extraordinary and Special Correspondent to Her Majesty, vice Prince Christian, who held that post during the late Parliament, but who got tired when foreign politics passed away from debate. Prince Christian used to come and go in silence, bowing here and there. Prince Teck delights members by his affability and freedom. The former saw more of the progress of debate; the latter hears most of the gossip.

MR. FRITH has almost finished his picture representing the private view at the Royal Academy, and it will appear on the walls of Burlington House next year. It is, of course, a picture of "portraits"; a selection of representative men and women has been made for it, and each of these has separately sat to the painter. Viewed alone from this point, some idea can be gleaned of that excessive labor and patience expended on such a work. The group of persons is of a mixed order. There are Sir Henry Thompson and Mrs. Langtry, George Augustus Sala and Henry Irving, and other well-known town celebrities, down to Oscar Wilde, whose celebrity is at the moment somewhat under a bushel.

THE presentation at the London University College of the eleven young ladies who had come up to receive the degrees awarded them took place last week. The ceremony was an interesting one. The donning of the academical robe was a novel feature of the solemnity. The two young ladies who obtained the degree in Science "with honor" wore the long black gown with hood, lined with russet brown. The nine other successful candidates who had carried off the degree in Arts wore hoods lined with yellow. The square college cap is found to be unbecoming, unless the hair is curled low down in the neck and frizzed upon the forehead, and then the result produced is charming—at least, so it was declared in the case of one of the young ladies who had evidently studied the effect more closely than her comrades had done. But the modern dress of many flounces in front seemed sadly out of keeping beneath the sober garb of learning, and the huge papillon which protruded below the waist of one of the new doctresses, giving the idea of a hump-back and round shoulder in the case of the wearer, was productive of great laughter on the part of the rival students, who gave way to much unbecoming criticism on female vanity—all in Latin, however, which somewhat softened its harshness.