

IRISH CHARACTER.

"Irish Character, by an Anglo-Hibernian," the October number of the *Dublin University Magazine*, is written by a very good natured person, who contrives to object with force to much that has been put forward by others, without adducing any thing new or valuable himself. The paper is chiefly interesting as a commentary on some opinions of certain persons who have had opportunities, at least, of making observations. The following extract will serve as a specimen of the writer's quality:—

No doubt the common vulgar notion in England concerning the Irish is, that they are a wild, frolicking, harum-scarum set of people—exceedingly fond of fun and fighting, and kicking up a row. And this, perhaps, is not a very erroneous view of the public character of the lower orders of Irish, especially in the great English towns. But that which is much more extraordinary and interesting, and not less true, in the character of the Irish Peasantry is, their patience and resignation in the midst of such misery and desolate distress as would almost drive an Englishman mad. I believe it is true that in times of famine many of the poor people "die and make no sign." Deep mournful dejection takes possession of them—the fierceness which possesses them in more pleasurable times passes away—crossing their hands upon their breasts, they submit to the agony of hunger as the will of God and then sink down and are no more. An author of much sensibility, who wrote from the "far west," ascribes this in some degree to a spirit of indolence inherent in their disposition. Speaking of the comforts which a little more active industry on the part of the peasantry of the west coast might obtain for them, this writer says—"sure it was too much trouble entirely" reconciles them to the smoke which darkens their little cabins, and the rain that patters through the unthatched roof; and the same feeling inclines them to lie down and die, when Providence has blasted their potato crop and deprived them of the fruit of their labours. Hard as was the task, it was sometimes necessary to refuse that relief which could not be extended to all in full proportion to their wants; but never was the refusal met with a murmur or a reproach. On one occasion, "God help us!" was the answer of the poor man, with an expressive movement of his shoulders, "God help us, then; for if your honour can do nothing for us, there is no one that can." There is something peculiarly touching in this submissive patience, and clamorous and reiterated supplication is much more easily repulsed than the "God bless you, sure it can't be helped!" The same writer then comes to a more specific instance of this patience, in the following narrative:—"I went yesterday to see a woman who had been lately confined of her seventh child. I found her in what you would call the lowest ebb of distress; but still she uttered no complaint, and the prevailing expression of her countenance was contentment, even to a striking degree. Her cabin was without a window, the halves in the door were filled with rain-water, and of the two opposite

doors one was open to give light to the room, the other, off its hinges, rested against the frame-work, and but partially protected the woman from the effect of a thorough draught of air. It was impossible not to recollect the comforts with which even the meanest of your English cottagers are surrounded, at this trying moment, and to compare them with the privations endured uncomplainingly by this poor creature. Her scanty bed of straw was spread upon the damp floor; a single blanket her only covering, while her head was literally supported by a block of wood. Yet she asked for nothing; and her eyes glistening with tears of gratitude while she thanked us with a profusion of blessings for the trifling assistance she had received. 'Indeed, then, I was loth to be troubling your honour, after all you have done for me and mine,' was her reply when I reproved her for not having sooner apprized us of her illness. The amiable writer of all this subsequently states his opinion that this woman's supineness in health, and patience in sickness, were both attributable to the wants of an active and industrious disposition. The conclusion is a very reasonable one, but it must also be allowed that there is a certain grace and poetry of feeling about this Irish supineness which makes it a different thing from mere English laziness. I do not say that it is less to be deprecated, but it is not so odious, nor should it be treated in the same way as mere unwillingness to work. In short, this supineness and submission have some connexion with piety, though they are very irregular and pernicious offshoots. A page or two farther on we find another anecdote of this same woman which throws some light upon the matter. "I shall not easily forget," says the writer, "the expression in the poor woman's countenance after she had seen her little ones dressed in the clothes provided for them by English benevolence. I happened, unobserved, to see her, after she had left the house, kneeling down in the path, her children in each hand, her eyes raised to heaven, praying aloud. Are not such the prayers which rise like incense to heaven? Are not such the prayers which fall back in blessings upon the heads of those for whom they are offered?"

The English reader will perhaps say that the woman was acting, and was aware that she was not "unobserved." Now it may be that she thought she might, perhaps, be observed, and that something of the spirit of the actress entered into her pious performance. But even the best emotions are apt to be dashed with some mingling of that which is of the earth, earthly. There may have been some acting in the attitude and manner of the poor woman's prayer, but I doubt not that there was also a great deal of pure devotion and ardent gratitude in her breast, apart from the merely human craft.

A Jew, aged 29, originally from Gibraltar, and enrolled in the infantry of the municipal guard of Lisbon, has lately abjured Judaism, to enter into the bosom of the Catholic Church. The company to which he belonged was present at the ceremony of abjuration.

IDOLATRY IN INDIA.

We lately had occasion to animadvert on the singular position in which the toleration, not to say the encouragement, of idolatry in India, placed the first member of a certain post-pretorial copartnership yeleft "Church and Queen." A letter taken from *The Record*, in which Lord Auckland was accused of publicly paying homage to an idol, was cited by us. Our contemporary has another document on the same subject in its impression for Thursday last; which we think it right to lay before our readers, together with the introductory remarks of the editor:

The following letter from an East-India proprietor of high respectability will have the effect, as we trust, of quickening the sensibility of the British public to the shameful countenance given by public authorities in India to heathen idolatry. Lord Auckland's marked position, as chairman of the London University College, might have led us to anticipate great laxity of conduct in regard to religious subjects, although we could hardly have anticipated that he would have carried his Latitudinarianism so far as to join in offerings to idols, and thus make himself a participator in the abominations of the Hindoo worship:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE RECORD.

SIR,—Not having seen the letter of "E. D. W.," in *The Record* of the 19th September, I leave it with confidence to its writer to meet the inquiries of "E. A." and "Goodill," which appear in *The Record* of the 2nd October instant, in such way as he may consider best; but in the meantime, I may perhaps as well say, for their information, and that of the public, that no fact can be better established in India than that of his lordship having, in his memorable progress as Governor-General, offered homage at the temple of idols; for not only did the statement appear at the time, in every newspaper of India, but it was afterwards published through England in the valuable and correct periodical of our own entitled the *Asiatic Journal*. The impression naturally excited by it in this Christian country was expressly adverted to by me in my place at the General Court of East India Directors and Proprietors, where I read from that journal the statement in question, and publicly called upon the Directors to deny it if they could. The answer I received (as in all similar cases) was, that "the Court had no information upon the subject; and both my question and the Director's answer appeared in all the morning papers of the following day: so that Lord Auckland and his friends had the full opportunity of disproving it if they could. This fact, Sir, can give no man the slightest surprise who has read his lordship's despatch to the Directors, on his lately settling up, for all time, the awful money payment of 6,000*l.* per annum to the idolatrous temple of Juggernaut (printed by the House of Commons.) It is true that this payment (in addition to the landed endowment of that temple, of which nobody complains) had for some time previously been made by the Bengal government; but it is not true, as suggested by his lord-

ship; that the slightest reason can be given for its having been ever made at all, in consequence (as his lordship supposes) of any original pledge or compact for that iniquitous and uncalled for money payment. I have equally—in my place in the east India court, since that mistaken despatch, which the Directors did not hesitate to confirm,—called both upon them and his lordship for one shadow of evidence, either for establishing or continuing this disgraceful payment; but no such evidence existing, of course it could not be produced, and "*de non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio.*" Indeed, it must be obvious to every man of common sense, that if any conqueror of the ceded territories in India had assumed the right of keeping up one idol temple—until the native endowment for its support—such pledge would have been void *ab initio*, as contravening that first, and every subsequent, charter of our Christian monarchs, expressly providing for the propagation of *Christianity* in India. I believe it is not without reason that some persons suppose that not only the heathen priests and their concubines, but European collectors and their families, are benefited by this payment: certain it is that the grim and monstrous idols themselves consume none of the provisions with which they are so abundantly supplied by the Christian abettors of idolatry.

It was my hope that the Bishop of London, who has already acted so vigorously and successfully in respect of the idolatry till then so long countenanced and supported by the Co'y. would have brought that particular question before parliament; but I conclude that he was hindered by his many other important avocations. I know it to be the feeling of all the bettermost part of India, that this money payment must be abandoned, in spite of the despatch of Lord Auckland and the decree of the Directors; and whenever this desirable object shall take place, there can be little doubt that the Dagon of Juggernaut will fall prostrate too.

Pray pardon the *decursus* into which I have been led but which may not be without its use. I willingly leave my name in your hands.

And remain, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
AN EAST-INDIA PROPRIETOR.

Protestant Ascendancy in Newfoundland.—On last Sunday, not only was a British man-of-war used for the purpose of the newly-created Bishop of this island, but a military guard of honor was actually commanded to accompany him to the wharf: thus intimating that not the British navy only but the British army too, shall be subservient to the colonial prelate. We strongly protest against this, and we care not whence the order for it comes; but except the same marks of respect and attention be paid to the head of the Catholic Church—to the head of the Presbyterian, Independent, and Wesleyan congregations, we shall raise a shout against it that shall not fail to awaken the echoes of Scotland, England, and Ireland. Here we have no State Church—all religions stand on the same footing, and we shall not tamely bear that the minister of any is placed in the ascendant.—*Newfoundland Indicator.*