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THE IRISH IN ENGLAND.

(From the Dublin Review.) (CONTINUED.)

Speaking of the women street-sellers of London, Mr. Mayhew thus describes the state of religion among them:—

As regards the religion of the women in street trades, it is not difficult to describe it. The Irish women are Roman Catholics. Perhaps I am justified in saying that they are all of that faith. . . . The poor Irish females in London are for the most part regular in their attendance at mass, and their constant association in their chapels is one of the links which keeps the street-English women so much distinct from the street-Irish. . . .

It was necessary to write somewhat at length of so large a class of women who are professors of a religion, but of the others the details may be brief; for as to the great majority, religion is almost a non-entity. . . . A few women street-sellers, however, do attend the Sunday Service of the Church of England. . . .

The testimony of this writer, who has certainly had great opportunities of arriving at the truth, will further corroborate what we have said (upon grounds altogether independent of his work) with respect to the difficulties and trials of poor Irish servant girls, in their endeavors to attend to their religious duties:—

There is, however, another cause which almost compels the young Irish girl into the adoption of some street calling. A peevish mistress, whose numerous family renders a servant necessary, but whose means are small or precarious, becomes bitterly dissatisfied with the awkwardness or stupidity of her Irish handmaiden; the girl's going, or 'teasing to go,' every Sunday morning to mass is annoying, and the girl is often discharged or discharges herself 'in a huff!'. . . .

Here is the account of one of these street-sellers, who had been in service:—

Some of my places were very hard, but sure, again, I met some as was very kind. I left one because they was always wanting me to go to a Methodist chapel, and was always running down my religion, and did all they could to hinder my ever going to mass. . . .

As to the morality of the Irish women, the testimony of Mr. Mayhew confirms in a remarkable manner all that we have asserted. Of the women and girls who sell fruit in the streets, he says, that they 'present two characteristics which distinguish them from the London coster-women generally—they are chaste, and unlike 'the coster-girls,' very seldom form any connection without the sanction of the marriage-tie. . . .

Again—the amusements of the street Irish are not those of the English costermongers, tho' there are exceptions, of course, to the remark. The Irish fathers and mothers do not allow their daughters, even when they possess the means, to resort to the 'penny gaffs' or 'the twopenny hops' unaccompanied by them. . . .

The difference in the street traffic, as carried on by Englishwomen and Irishwomen is marked enough. The Irishwomen's avocations are the least skilled and the least remunerative, but as regards mere toil, such as the carrying of a heavy burden, are by far the most laborious. . . .

The single women in the street callings are generally the daughters of street-sellers, but their number is not a twentieth of the others, excepting they are the daughters of Irish parents. The costermongers' daughters either help their parents, with whom

they reside, or carry on some similar trade; or they even form connections with the other sex, and easily sever the parental tie, which very probably has been far too lax or far too severe. . . .

In making the following extract we do not of course intend to justify the wild anger and the semi-barbarous revenge of a half drunken and ignorant man, but we use it as a remarkable illustration of the popular sense of the degradation brought upon all the members of a family, when one of the girls goes wrong. . . .

The Irish servant whose testimony we have quoted with respect to the difficulty which people in her position find in attempting to attend Mass, gives to Mr. Mayhew the following scene from her early life. Her father, she says, died from the effects of a broken leg. . . .

Mother wasn't long after him, and on her death-bed she said, so low I could hardly hear her, 'Mary, my darling, if you starrave, be virtuous. Remember poor Ellen's funeral.' . . .

It is unnecessary to adduce the testimony of Mr. Mayhew to corroborate our assertions with respect to the mutual charity of the Catholic poor towards one another. The fact is universally admitted, and is often the subject of conversation among the English poor, who although as we have said, frequently extremely kind and charitable to their neighbors, have no bonds of association which keeps them together, and makes them ready to submit to pecuniary sacrifices for their still poorer brethren, as we find among the Irish. . . .

But we should not do full justice to this division of our subject if, before turning to the less pleasing side of the picture, we did not say a few words about the known fidelity of the people to the Catholic religion. It is difficult for those who are not in the same class of life to estimate, in a true measure, the sufferings to which the poor are exposed every day, and every hour of their lives, on account of their faith. . . .

It debars them not merely from advantageous positions and profitable employments, but frequently from the very means of subsistence. The Catholic servant is either driven to a street life, because her conscience will not permit her to conform to the oppressive requirements of her situation, or she is subjected in retaining it to a series of petty and harassing persecutions, the hardship of which can with difficulty be estimated by those who are not acquainted with all the facts of the case. . . .

The Catholic religion is everywhere spoken against, and the poor have to realize, in all its sternness, the cross which the Faith has commanded them to carry. 'Ye shall be hated by all men for my name's sake.' . . .

missionaries, the Protestant curates, and the benevolent gentlemen of the Evangelical Alliance, if he merely hinted a secret-distrust of his Church, and offered to listen to Protestant instruction.—The poor know this well. England stands before them with a loaf in one hand and in the other a scroll, with the word Apostasy in large characters written upon it. . . .

The Irishman's faith. He will sometimes, alas, permit himself, under the pressure of grinding want, to be carried to the verge of open apostasy; but we believe that the instances are comparatively rare in which he actually oversteps the boundary line. . . .

Nor can it be said that the steadfastness of the Irish to the Catholic religion is the result of national sympathies and national prejudices; that it is a political as fully as much as a religious feeling; and that the Celtic dislike of Protestantism has its foundation in a Celtic antipathy to the Anglo-Saxon race. . . .

Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes Intulit agresti Latio. 'They would build churches, plant missions, make known the mysteries of the faith, and win

back to the Catholic communion a race which had once been one of its brightest ornaments.—And this we are convinced is the only revenge, as it is the sweetest and holiest, that they would wish to take. . . .

It is with a heavy heart that we turn from the more agreeable picture of the Catholic poor, to fulfil our promise of stating plainly and honestly all that is to be said against, as well as all that is to be said for the Irish in England. . . .

other offences belong to the class perpetrated by those who are expressly termed 'sneaks,' namely, those who pilfer bread, oats, beans, rags, &c., &c. In addition to these there is a small class of boys who have stolen smallwares from their employers; but these, adds Mr. Mayhew, are most inexperienced offenders, and belong to a class who at least have been engaged in industrial occupations, and who should be in no way confounded with the young habitual thieves. . . .

Further, there is a considerable number who are confined for offences that not even the sternest-minded can rank as crime, and for which the committal to a felon's prison can but be regarded by every righteous mind, not only as an injury to the magistrate concerned, but even as a scandal to the nation which permits the law-officers of the country so far to outrage justice and decency. . . .

Mr. Mayhew makes the following sensible remarks upon Irish juvenile delinquency; and as we have stated the fact upon his authority, we are contented to accept also his own explanation of the fact:—

A large proportion of the London thieves are 'Irish Cockneys,' having been born in London of Irish parents. This shows, we believe, not that the Irish are naturally more criminal than our own race, but simply that they are poorer, and that their children are, consequently, left to shift for themselves, and sent out to beg more frequently than with our people. . . .

We have before remarked, that the greater number of the professional thieves of London, belong to what is called the Irish-Cockney tribe; and at the boys' prison at Tothill-fields we can see the little 'Irish' juvenile offenders being daily selected for the experienced thief. . . .

As to what may be the cause of crime in Ireland we are not in a position to speak, not having given any special attention to the matter; but the reason why there appears a greater proportion of Irish among the thieves and vagrants of our own country, admits of a very ready explanation. . . .

It is grievous to contemplate the fearful loss