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IRISH LEARNING

The opening of the summer Session of the School of Irish Learning took place on July 10 at the University College, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. Very Rev. Father Delaney, S.J., LL.D., presided.

Dr. Kuno Meyer delivered an interesting lecture on "The Making of the Irish Language." He said that in opening this third session of the School of Irish Learning his first duty must be to thank those who had co-operated in its work—those who by donations or subscriptions had contributed to their funds—the Treasury for the grant which the sympathy of Sir Antony MacDonnell with the objects of the School had secured for them; the governors and officers of the School, the authorities of the University College for their hospitality, the scholars who from the outset had generously placed their learning at the disposal of the School; Dr. Henry Sweet and Dr. Strachan, on whose shoulders the teaching, and with it the success of the School, rested in the first instance. He should also address a word of thanks to the students, without whom all their endeavors would be in vain, who, if anybody, were the School.

Those who had watched their work would, he felt sure, agree with him that the hopes and wishes expressed when the School was founded had not been belied, and that at last, for the first time in the history of modern Ireland, a centre had been established where the native as well as the foreign student could, without much expense, acquire and pursue the knowledge of the ancient Irish language and literature under able masters and in such a way that he would be equipped to take his part in the great work before them—the resuscitation of ancient Irish literature. This work of theirs did not clash with that carried on by other institutions in Dublin or throughout the country—such as that of the Gaelic League or the Royal Irish Academy, or the School lately founded in Connacht.

Being genuine academic and scholarly work, it should, of course, some day find its place within a National University; but until that was founded he thought they should keep their independence. There were several features which distinguished this session from those previously held. For the first time they had been enabled to grant Scholarships for the attendance of the School on a larger scale and not only had students from various parts of Ireland availed themselves of this opportunity, but they welcomed that day among them from the first time students from the Highlands and from Wales, and even from distant America. Many of their first and second years' students had already contributed valuable work to the pages of their young periodical Eriu. This work of theirs was the best test of the knowledge they had acquired and would in their school take the place of examinations.

The origin of the Gaelic people, who for so long a time held undisputed sway in Ireland, their struggles with other peoples, whom they conquered, till they were in turn conquered—indeed, their whole history was reflected in that language throughout the length and breadth of Ireland. The language spoken by them from the old stone monuments of Ireland, from the place names of the country, which without its knowledge must remain altogether meaningless, from the surnames of the majority of the people; it gave color to the English spoken by the majority of the people, and in it there was enshrined a marvellous mediaeval literature second in interest to no other. Gaelic was the westernmost of all Aryan languages. The science of comparative philology had long ago assigned to it a place within the great Celtic

group of languages which were once spoken throughout the length and breadth of Europe, with the exception only of the Far East and the peninsulas of Scandinavia, Greece and Southern Italy.

The Celts came into possession of Europe by conquest of the original inhabitants, on whom they imposed their language. The original inhabitants in learning to speak a foreign language would naturally carry into it much of their own idiom, both as regards the pronunciation, vocabulary and structure of the Celtic language, and, as the Celts were numerically inferior to the subject races, they themselves gradually came to adopt the altered idiom. The lecturer referred to the introduction of dialects among the Celtic-speaking peoples of Europe and to the coming of the Celts to Ireland. It was a long-standing point of controversy between a group of Welsh scholars and himself by which route the Celts arrived in Ireland. Professor John Rhys was the chief representative and protagonist of the theory that they came in the first instance to Great Britain, whence they were driven across to Ireland by a succeeding wave of Celts—the Britons. The truth was that all the various settlements of Celts in Wales, as elsewhere in Britain, took place in the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era from Ireland. They were the result of those very raids and conquests of which the Roman historians of that age had so much to tell them, when the Scots or Irish and Picts descended upon the coast of Britain. He believed no Gael ever set foot on British soil, save from a vessel that had put out from Ireland, and that the Gael arrived in Ireland not via Great Britain, but from the Continent, probably from Gaul.

The previous inhabitants were subjugated by the Celts, and made to speak the language of the conqueror, or which it might be supposed that they left the impression of their own speech. There could be no doubt that the Roman alphabet had reached the Irish before the coming of Christianity. The conversion of the Irish to Christianity, which began perhaps as early as the second century, was the most important fact and factor in the early history of the Irish language, no less than in that of the nation. With Christianity came the art of writing on parchment. The Irish language was now fixed in writing with the help of the ordinary Latin alphabet, and it was enriched by a large vocabulary expressive of new ideas. In the monastic schools libraries were formed representing both the theological and secular lore of the age. Manuscripts were busily copied, and the attention of the scribes turned early to native literature, and Irish songs and poems were for the first time written down. They now approached the golden age of Irish learning and literature, extending from about the sixth to the ninth century. If they had no evidence at all of the influence which Christianity exerted on the life of the whole nation, they should be able to gauge its extent and intensity from the language alone.

He knew no other language which was so permeated with words and expressions derived from Christianity as Irish. If they desired a living example and proof of the intensely national character of the early Irish Church, they would find it in the religious literature of ancient Ireland. With a few exceptions that literature was entirely in Gaelic. While other nations on their conversion to Christianity abandoned the vernacular for the purposes of religious literature, and for this and all other religious and educational purposes adopted almost exclusively the Latin language, the Irish early set themselves to develop Gaelic so as to express all the new ideas and thoughts of Christianity; and while the clergy in other countries declared the national language too rude and barbarous to be made the vehicle of religious thought and poetry, the Irish employed it almost exclusively for these purposes. The lecturer also referred to the influence of the Norse invasion and of the subsequent English invasion, in moulding the Irish language, and he dealt with the struggle between the Irish and English languages for supremacy in the country.

He said that the full history of that struggle had never been written. Indeed the only one who had ever given an account of it was Dr. Douglas Hyde (applause) in the last chapter of the "Literary History of Ireland." The main result which stood out clearly for Dr. Hyde's investigations was the fact that in spite of statutes and laws designed to restrict and exterminate it, the Irish language stood its ground well throughout the land, and even within the Pale, till the seventeenth century. Even many of the children of Cromwell's soldiers in Ireland were not able to speak anything but Irish. He hoped that the time would not be distant when members of the Gaelic League or of that School would take up the investigation of the language during these later centuries, an investigation which must necessarily throw much light on the character of the Irish language of to-day.

Father Delaney, in expressing the thanks of the audience to the lecturer, alluded to Dr. Meyer's references to a National University, and said that the institutions of learning which had been established in Ireland by an alien Government did all they could down to recent times to stamp out amongst the Irish people that which next to a man's religion ought to be the first passion of his heart—the knowledge of his language, his race, and the traditions of his race.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to the Revised Statutes of Ontario, chapter 129, that all persons having claims against the estate of Alicia Baynham, late of the City of Toronto, in the County of York, spinster, who died on or about the 24th day of June, A.D., 1905, are hereby required to deliver to the undersigned, solicitor for the executor of said estate, on or before the 18th day of August, 1905, full particulars of their claim, duly verified by affidavit, and that after said date the executor will proceed to distribute the proceeds of the estate among the parties entitled thereto, having regard only to the claims of which he shall then have notice.

Dated this 9th day of August, A.D. 1905. W. T. J. LEE, Solicitor for Executor, Dineen Building, corner Yonge and Temperance streets, Toronto.

The QUIET HOUR

THE LOVE FOR GOD.

We flatter ourselves when we say that our love for God is very great. For often when we pray we do not say: "My God! I love Thee with all my heart?" Perchance these words come not from the heart, but are empty utterances of the mouth, the noise of a tinkling cymbal.

How, then, are we to test our love for God? What should be the measure of our love? Most ungrateful and ungenerous would we be did we measure out our love to God. The measure of our love for Him should be the measure of His goodness to us. This measure we can never hope to fill. But according to our weak nature our measure should be "God measure—pressed down and overflowing."

But there is a way by which we can tell whether our love for God is sincere and unselfish. There is a test by which we can know its value. We love God if we think of Him unceasingly. "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also." The soul is not where it lives, but where it loves. We love God if we often talk with Him. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Moses and the prophets, the apostles and martyrs, talked with God, as did all His saints.

If we are zealous for God's glory, we love Him. When God visits us with affliction, love of Him silences our murmurs, it lifts up its voice to praise His goodness. Do we love God's word? Then do we love Him. Christ's delight was to be with the children of men, and we should rejoice in His messages to us, found in the gospel.

We love God if we love to obey Him. "If any man love me, he will keep my commandments." We love Him if we love our neighbor—if we seek his good in all things.

If thou wouldst know the strength and the value of thy love, test it; then thy own heart will answer thee.

WHAT THE MASS MEANS TO CATHOLICS.

Protestants, who do not understand the ceremony of the Mass, often wonder, says St. John's Quarterly, what there is in it to attract such close attendance. To them preaching and hymn-singing is the accepted form of public worship.

It would therefore be well to tell our non-Catholic friends that all the ceremonies have a meaning, and relate to the Passion of Christ. When, for instance, the priest begins the function, he kneels at the foot of the altar, and there he represents Christ in the bloody sweat in the Garden of Gethsemani. Then he goes up the steps and kisses the altar, and we are reminded of the kiss with which Judas betrayed the Master. Then he goes to one side of the altar and then to the other, and back to the centre of it, and we recall how our Saviour was led before Annas, and Caiaphas, and Pilate, and Herod, and back to Pilate, and finally to the hill of Calvary.

The priest washes his hands, and we think of Pilate doing the same and declaring that he is guiltless of this innocent blood. When the consecration takes place, and the Host is raised above the priest's head to be seen by the congregation, we behold Jesus nailed to the cross and lifted up to die.

And so the sacred drama goes on—He dies, He is buried, He rises again, He ascends into heaven, and the Holy Ghost comes down to bless the Church and abide with it forever.

With that blessing, given by the priest, the words are heard, "Go, for Mass is over," and the people having taken part in offering the Holy Sacrifice, depart in peace, thanking God for the grace of their presence at such celestial mysteries.

CONVINCED BY MIRACLE.

The following extracts from a letter received by Dr. J. V. Gallagher from Dr. A. P. Scully, of Cleveland, Ohio, who is at present travelling abroad, give a very interesting account of his close view of the miracle of the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius. Dr. Scully, says the Catholic Universe, of Cleveland, writes from Rome:

"I had a particular mission to Naples for Saturday last, viz. to see the miracle of the liquefaction. As you know, Dr. C. and myself have talked these things over quite often in a somewhat skeptical strain. Like the man from Missouri, I had to see for myself. I got all the privileges extended me... and was as close to the vials of blood of St. Januarius as you are to this letter when you are reading it. I was the first to see and examine it when it was removed from the treasury. I followed in procession, next the chief of police, over a mile through the streets of Naples, never lost sight of the receptacle, got into the Church of St. Clara and on the altar with the Bishops and Cardinals, and was looking at the blood when the terrible moment of suspense arrived. It did not look as though it would liquefy. The Bishops and Cardinals prayed—but not yet. The wild, wild outburst of the Italians in the church beneath, the police and soldiers with drawn swords, all filled me with fear and awe. The Cardinal now read the life of the saint, when, lo! and before my eyes the very finger of God Himself seemed to descend from heaven, for slowly but surely the hitherto solidified mass began to slip from the sides of the vial and liquefy! I rejoiced with the others, for I had witnessed a miracle. As I said before, I was a skeptic, but now I am a converted one, for I know of nothing that could produce the change at that particular moment but the hand of God. You can tell my friends, and particularly Dr. C., who quotes White, that neither he nor White can get over it. Everything was open and above-board; government officials held the keys the very same officials who have investigated fully. It's no 'fake.'"

LIVE WELL.

An old painter of Siena, after standing for quite a long time in silent meditation before the canvas, with hands crossed meekly on his breast, and head bent reverently low, turned away, saying, "May God forgive me that I did not do it better."

Many people as they come to the close of their life, and look back at what they have done with their opportunities and privileges, and at what they are leaving as their finished work to be their memorial, can only pray with like sadness, "May God forgive me that I did not do it better!"

If there were some art of getting the benefit of our own afterthoughts about life, as we go along, perhaps most of us would live more wisely and more beautifully. It is often said: "If I had my life to live over again, I would live it differently. I would avoid the mistakes which I now see I have made. I would not commit the follies and errors which have so marred my work. I would devote my life with earnestness and intensity to the achievement and attainment of the best things." No one can get his life back to live it a second time, but the young have no occasion to utter such an unavailing wish when they reach the end of their career.

SUPERSTITION.

It is a common saying among those who understand little of Catholic doctrine or practice that Catholics are superstitious. These same people may have the most absurd notions about religion. Many of them swallow at a gulp the foolish teaching of Mrs. Eddy or "Prophet" Dowie. Others profess no religious belief whatever. They proclaim themselves skeptics in religion and yet regulate their actions according to what they regard as "lucky," or "unlucky," signs to which a reasonable person would pay no attention whatever. Others again consult in all seriousness fortune-tellers and other charlatans who make a living by deceiving the credulous. The fact that such fakirs can advertise so extensively proves that they find plenty of victims. There is more superstition in our large cities to-day, in spite of our boasted enlightenment, than has existed for centuries.

It does not go under the name of superstition. It is called clairvoyance, palmistry or some other modern name, but it is, for all that, but the rankest superstition. There may be some Catholics who are so ill-informed or so credulous as to be deceived by the same or similar foolish practices. The reason is not in their religious training, but rather in the lack of it. Catholics who know their religion are not affected by this sort of mild insanity, which, with some outside the Church, passes for a religion. They have firm religious beliefs based upon adequate reasons. Only irrational belief can be classed as superstition—Omaha True Voice.

SAINT RUMOLD'S SHRINE.

Saint Rumold, founder and patron of the diocese of Malines, was an Irishman, and a native of Dublin. He preached the Faith in Flanders and Brabant, about the middle of the eighth century, and was slain at Mechlin by two assassins on the 24th of June, 775. The magnificent Gothic cathedral, which bears his name, is one of the finest in Belgium; and is, at once, a lasting monument of the deep veneration in which Irish saints are held by foreigners. Its steeple, which strikes the eye of the traveller long before he reaches Malines, is 348 feet high. And in the interior, among the numerous and priceless works of art presented by the piety of the faithful to the church of St. Rumold, not the least striking is the carved pulpit representing the conversion of St. Paul, the masterpiece of Verbruggen, the greatest of Flemish sculptors in wood. It also contains Vandike's Crucifixion, which Joshua Reynolds pronounced to be "on the whole, one of the finest pictures in the world."

In the olden town of Mechlin There stands a hallowed pile; And through Brabant, its belfry towers high. Are seen full many a mile—The Flemish burghers built it, Beside the Dyke's dark wave, To mark the spot where Rumold Of Erin found a grave.

For he had brought their Fathers For he had brought their Fathers The Gospel's living ray, What time the good Count Ado, In Mechlin towns, held sway— But their townsmen basely slew him; (Repeat their dark souls sting him, And 'neath the gore-tinged waters, His sacred corpse they flung.

Nor long their crime lay hidden— The Dyke gave back the dead, And the murder fiend pursued them Where'er from wrath they fled— And sore grieved was Count Ado, And tear-dimmed many an eye, That far from friends, the martyr Should, thus, amongst them die.

And still, tho' full ten centuries, And more have rolled away Since Rumold lived in Mechlin town, You'd deem it scarce a day— For 'en the very children there, Still speak the bishop's words; And point to strangers where he fell, Pierced by the murder's swords.

And tell how the cathedral Grew up, beside the tide— That on the very Baptist's day, With Rumold's blood was dyed— And how Verbruggen's chisel traced That wondrous change of Saul's, And Vandike's pencil Christ's last hour To place within its walls.

Once knelt I down within them, Before the jewelled shrine That held the stranger's relics— Whose home-land's also mine— And, as I blessed the altar, Who built that glorious pile, Begg'd I one prayer from Rumold For the poor down-trodden Isle.

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