

who has struck them—they simply wish to get at once and forever away from such a person; and if they do stay with him, detesting him all the time, he is nevertheless in no danger from smouldering resentment—they do not wish to do anything to him, but simply to have as little as possible to do with him. Under extreme provocation, some of them are capable of a sudden murderous rage, in which they care not a straw for their own necks; but that is a very rare thing indeed. When treated like gentlemen they behave like gentlemen.

They are, in fact—I speak for my own acquaintance among them; others may have a different experience—gentlemen. They show instinctively a simple refinement and careful breeding. In my own home we have in more than a dozen years had only two cooks, handsome young fellows from the same village; and in all these years, spent under the same roof, in the isolation of a country house, I may say that I have had pretty fair opportunity to know these boys. And I have found them both essentially gentlemen. I have never seen a European foreigner of their humble class who approached them in refinement, simple dignity, and unflinching sense of propriety. I do not know how many of our own boys could go to a foreign land and carry off such a position so well. In a somewhat cruder way, the farmhands that I have seen much of show the same native refinement and propriety, though they are often bashful and awkward. And I do not doubt that they all have been, in fact, carefully bred in their simple homes by painstaking parents. When they become certain that you intend no ridicule, and will listen with entire respect, they will tell you a little about their homes, and from their fragmentary accounts it is easy to get an idea of the plain, honest, and temperate peasantry from which they come; and it is an idea that must give one a sincere respect for them.

The Chinaman is, within my experience of him, freer from the vice of pilfering than any other labourers we have. Indeed, my observation is, that, while absolutely unvarnished, the Chinese are the most honest of our foreigners. They will lie with perfect serenity and the clearest conscience in the world; but I question if they are not, class for class, one of the most honest of races. The Chinese merchants bear an excellent name for integrity; and the answer of an educated Chinese gentleman to the question, "What impressed you most in the United States?" was "The want of a sense of honour."

Perhaps the most glaring contrast between the Chinaman of platform invective and the Chinaman of my personal knowledge is in the matter of cleanliness. I do not know a race on earth, not even the Anglo-American, whose labouring class is so cleanly. What other labourers would, at the end of a hard day's work, go half a mile for water, bring home a cask of it on a staff across two men's shoulders, and wash their bodies thoroughly before getting their supper; and this day after day? Nor have the Chinese labourers under my observation been exceptional in this, for I have heard farmers from other sections speak of it as a common practice. Their clothes are kept very clean, their bedding frequently washed and sunned, the rooms they occupy kept scoured and tidy. Moreover, to my surprise, I have found that our cooks exhibit a fastidiousness and daintiness about matters of cooking and cleaning that even surpasses our own—and we chance to be a fastidious family. A suspicion about the age of the meat, or of the eggs, faint enough to be overlooked by the housewife, will bring from Wan a vigorous protest against cooking them, and if it is done, you may be sure no morsel will pass his lips; bandages and messes that have been in a sick-room, milk-pans that have not been sufficiently scalded, leaky drains, or slops thrown on the ground, he regards, apparently instinctively, with all the emotions a modern sanitarian would desire to see. I have learned to repose with a most comfortable confidence on the blameless past of all that comes to my table, so long as Wan presides, for I cannot outdo him in fastidiousness. This cleanliness must be, I think, a very common trait among even the city Chinese; for notwithstanding all the lurid tales of Chinatown's filth, it is noticeable that the health-rates are high among them.

Again, any candid mind must be moved to respect for a labouring class which, under such a struggle for existence as theirs has been for generations, could develop a kindly and generous temperament, and a love of books. We are in the habit of thinking that a hard grind and necessity of close economy for a single generation will make a man close-fisted; and we have seen the effect of such conditions in Yankee and Scotch farmers. But the Chinese that I have known, and that my acquaintances have known, are generous; they help each other with money; they make presents of great value in proportion to their means. It is considered axiomatic here that they hoard everything, spend nothing that they can help, and take all their money to China at last. Those that I know do not. They almost always have their passage money to pay back (and for all the talk about "slavery" and "coolieism," this is the only lien that any one has had on any of the Chinamen I have known—they spend their money exactly as they please, though with great respect for the claims of relatives), and they pinch themselves till this is done; they also have often to support parents or children in China; but after these claims are paid, they like to use their money—to make presents, to buy watches and nice clothes and American notions, to engage in small speculations in truck-gardening. They take failure in these speculations very well, and I have seen them laugh as bravely as an American when the savings of two years had gone down in one of them. They can give away, and they can lose in legitimate business, but they cannot endure to be cheated, and there is more tumult over five dollars lost by misplaced confidence than over five hundred lost by a miscalculation of the cabbage market. As to their kindliness, it is noticeable: they are fond of domestic animals, and especially fond of and good to children. Considering that their nation is officially cruel, and keeps up judicial torture, one would expect to find in

them the stolid cruelty that they are accused of. And certainly it is in them, but it is in reserve; their dominant character is kindly. When they feel called upon to be cruel, they can be so without a shiver; but they have no wanton cruelty about them. It is exactly the quality one would expect in a people kindly by nature, yet practising judicial torture. It is probably one of the many instances in which the union of Chinese and Tartar produces incongruities in them. The pure Chinese character is, I judge, more of the Japanese type—gentle, refined, intellectual, honourable, and very capable of progress; the Tartar, from Mongolia to Turkey, cruel, stolid, and unprogressive. As to the love of books, it is very usual to find your Chinese servant devoting his spare time to reading—and not merely to the acquisition of our language, but to their own literature and science. Wan explained to me his views on this point: "I think one man no like read books, no got anything to do when he no work, bimeby he go round, he gamble, smoke opium, no good; pretty soon he get like Wing" (a broken-down Chinaman of his acquaintance). "One man he like read, he stay home, he read all time, no like to gamble, he stay pretty good, he get smart, no get sick."

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed: EDITOR OF THE WEEK
5 Jordan Street, Toronto.
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MR. GOLDWIN SMITH ON THE IRISH CRISIS.

To the Editor of The Week:

SIR,—In THE WEEK for December 31 there is a statesmanlike article on the Irish crisis, by the only man of world-wide fame on this side of the Atlantic who has the moral courage to speak the truth about Ireland.

It is doubtful whether there is any country where the right of a man to keep his own property is more strongly upheld than in the case in Canada. Hence we attract British capital, for it is well known that such investments are safe. What is wanted in Ireland is English security (as distinguished from Irish insecurity) for life, person, liberty, and property. The Celtic nations require a stronger rule than the Teutonic nations. Practically in Ireland they have had in past times and still have a weaker rule. The present state of insecurity is driving capital out of the country. The endeavour of true Irish patriots (if there are any) should be to attract British capital to develop the resources of a half-developed country. If English security had prevailed there uninterruptedly for the last forty years there would have been at least an additional two hundred millions sterling of British capital invested in Ireland, which, on the low reckoning of wages and expenditure being only five per cent., would mean ten millions sterling additional annual income to the Irish population. Instead of that, English and Scotch capitalists will invest anywhere else in the world except in Ireland, for they know that there it would be unsafe to do so.

The *Economist*, the leading English financial journal (Liberal in politics), states in its issue of December 26: "One of the first effects of the recent success of the Nationalists at the polls has been to cause capital to leave Ireland in alarm, and depreciate the value of Irish property." In December, 1884, the Bank of Ireland stock stood at 336½; on December 23, 1885, at 260; being 37½ lower than the lowest value during the past ten years. And all other stocks have depreciated.

Mr. Goldwin Smith long ago truly observed that we have no more right to take twenty per cent. from the landlords to give other people than we have to deal in a similar manner with dry goods, groceries, cash at banks, or any other description of property. Having obtained twenty per cent. from the landlords of farms—the remaining eighty per cent. being dealt with on patriotic "don't-you-wish-you-may-get-it" principles, backed by Irish moral force—Mr. Davitt has now inaugurated a movement to deal in a similar manner with house property in towns, and if the Irish get a real Irish Parliament this movement will be successful. That done, trades and business will next be tampered with, and utter ruin will be the result. What men will invest or improve with such an outlook?

In the weekly edition of the London *Times* for Dec. 25, page 8, it is shown that in the contested county elections in Catholic Ireland (excluding Ulster), notwithstanding all their terrorizing, the Parnellites, with priestly aid, could only force to vote for them sixty-one and two-thirds per cent. of the voters, and that the enormous proportion of thirty-one and one third per cent. staid away, the majority of whom, had it been safe, would have voted for the Unionists.

Mr. Goldwin Smith, speaking of Mr. Gladstone, truly observes "what calamities has this man's incapacity for government, combined with his dazzling gifts and imposing qualities, brought upon the nation!" Lord Palmerston always said that if Mr. Gladstone became Premier it would lead to great disasters, and his prophecy was a true one. The history of Mr. Gladstone's dealings with Ireland is very strong proof of what Mr. Goldwin Smith has well described as the evils of Partyism. Numbers of the Liberals have, as is well known, voted for their party in opposition to their real sentiments, upon the Irish Land Act as well as on other matters, at the bidding of Mr. Gladstone.

Whatever may happen, of this we may be sure, that tampering with the eighth and sixth Commandments will not lead to prosperity.

Yours,

LIBERAL.

Toronto, January 8, 1886.