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(CONTINUED.)

"We may here observe that those who have been brought up in the Protestant religion, and have afterwards received the singular and wonderful grace of reconciliation to the Church, will be the very first to admit that in certain points an hereditary has the advantage over an acquired Catholicity. The latter is in many instances distinguished for its great fervor, its spirit of sacrifice, its courageous severance of worldly ties for the love and the truth of God, its abilities, its practical energy, and its accurate knowledge of the temper and character of the people of this country; but there are finer and deeper traits of Catholicity, the growth of years, and the result of the earliest training, in which it must ever feel its own deficiency. Such traits, for example, are simplicity and an absence of self-consciousness, a certain habitual quietness and gentleness of tone, a greater caution in permitting itself to speak about its neighbor, a good kind of scrupulousness, and this instinct of reverence for the priest, not because he is clever, or attractive, or gentlemanly, but because he is a priest of the Church. In an acquired Catholicity there is very often a remarkable kindness and a remarkable courtesy towards the priests, and there is no want whatever of outward respect. Sometimes, indeed, there is much more of genuflection, and of such external forms, than you find even among the Irish. But along with all this, personal qualities and adventitious circumstances have unconsciously a greater influence on the minds of the latter class than of the former. There are no doubt many exceptions to this rule on either side, but still we think that we have stated what is true. The reverence for the priestly office, founded not on personal qualities, but on the theological dogma, will be found more indigenous in the old Catholic than in the convert; except, indeed, in those cases where the former is corrupted by a cowardly and unworthy assimilation to Protestantism. But no such assimilation can be found among the Irish poor. Although they are on all sides hemmed in by various sects of Protestants; although both here and in their own country, almost every conceivable effort has been made, and is still making, to change their Catholic fervor into Protestant stiffness, they are, notwithstanding, totally devoid of the least taint of Protestantism. It has not been able to make the smallest impression upon them. It is completely and altogether alien to their thoughts, feelings, and habits. In spite of all the Protestant schools which have been opened for their children, and of all the Protestant missionaries who have been sent to enlighten their darkness, and of all the Protestant tracts which have been distributed at their houses, they are as utterly unconscious of a single Protestant idea as those happy peasants of Italy, to whose simple minds the Protestant is some rare and ungainly species of infidel. In the Irish poor, therefore, you will find this quality of an ancient and hereditary Catholicism.—You will find them, indeed, with their likings and dislikings, like all the rest of the world; but deeper than these transitory feelings, you will find a genuine reverence for the priest of God, as such, in full vigor and energy, as a living portion of their wonderful faith.

"It is another effect of the influence which religion holds upon their minds, that they will often make incredible exertions to hear Mass and attend to their duties. Many are the hardships to which poor servant girls expose themselves thro' their endeavors to go out on a Sunday morning to hear Mass. And unknown or unnoticed by any human eye, many a silent tear is shed by the Irish domestics of the lowest class of Jewish tradesmen, because their mistress treats them with more than usual harshness upon the Christian Sunday, and rarely can they steal even half an hour in the early morning to make a brief and hurried visit to the nearest chapel. In the country men and women think nothing of walking many miles to hear Mass. They will walk nine, ten, and even twelve miles, that they may be present at Mass in the nearest Catholic chapel, and be regular in doing this on every five Sunday throughout the year. In this respect they resemble the Presbyterian peasantry of Scotland, who will also walk a great distance through the desire to hear a sermon. But we have never heard of any Presbyterian walking many miles without food, whereas it is a matter of every week's occurrence with the Irish, even those who are advanced in years, to walk long distances fasting, in order that they may go to Communion.—And as they are thus assiduous in their exertions to assist at the holy sacrifice, so are they especially careful to secure baptism for their children, and the last sacraments for themselves and their relatives. Very few Catholic natives of Ireland pass from this world without the last sacraments. They send for the priest even upon the most trivial occasions. If they have a pain in their finger, or an unusual attack of lowness of spirits, whatever be the hour of the day or night, the

priest is summoned to the bed-side, and frequently discovers—almost to his disappointment—that there is nothing whatever the matter with them. This eagerness in sending for the priest is doubtless the excess of a right principle, and is attended sometimes with serious inconvenience to those to whom every moment of time is precious; but it is an excess on the right side; and it is far better that a priest should now and then be put to a vexatious annoyance, than that the people should become careless in a matter of great consequence to the salvation of their souls. As to baptism, it is very seldom that an Irish Catholic neglects to secure the baptism of his children.—This is a point about which even the most negligent Catholics are careful. Those who are married to Protestant husbands, and whose children are often baptised by the Protestant minister, will bring their children privately, and without the knowledge of their husbands, to the Catholic priest, that they may be conditionally and rightfully baptised. And many a little saint now in heaven owes his salvation to the faith and the piety of some poor Irish servant, who procured for him a blessing which his own parents despised or neglected.

"It has been often remarked that the poor make far greater sacrifices to assist one another, and are more liberal and charitable than the rich. This, as a general rule, applies to the poor of all religions, and is, in its measure, as true of the Protestant as of the Catholic. Examples frequently occur, even among the English poor, of great kindness to their neighbor in the hour of sickness and distress. We have known instances in which the greatest tenderness and attention was shown to sick neighbors, by the English poor, attended even with imminent risk to their own lives; and where acts of affection and charity were performed which were worthy of a Catholic people. But the Catholic poor from Ireland are without question pre-eminent for their charity and benevolence one to another. They will never send away a poor man from their doors without giving him something for the love of God. They lend each other money in their necessities, and that too, when the lender can ill afford to part with it. They lend each other not only money, but clothes—bonnets and gowns, and shawls, and even shoes, in order that the borrower may be able to go decently to Mass.—They make great sacrifices, by living sparingly and denying themselves many a little comfort which they might otherwise enjoy in order to lay up money for the purpose of sending assistance to parents, brothers, sisters, and cousins. Incredible sums of money are annually sent by the Irish from England and America to their poor relatives at home. They hold 'raffles,' not for the sake of amusement nor of gain, but in order to make up a collection when one of their neighbors is about to get married, or has hired a new house and wants money to fit it up, or wishes to try his fortunes in America, or to return back to Ireland. In these, and in many other ways besides, they are continually aiding and supporting each other, giving of their penury, redeeming their sins, and laying up for themselves treasure in heaven. And it is in this way that their alms and charities are often not only far more abundant, but likewise far more meritorious, than those of the rich. There are many rich Protestants, and many rich Catholics, who give liberally and abundantly to what they consider to be calls of charity. But it is very hard for those who are 'clothed in purple and fine linen, and who fare sumptuously every day,' to realize in any practical way the wants and the distresses of the poor. They set aside a certain portion of their yearly income—and it may be a liberal portion—and they distribute this in works of charity. But they can have little actual acquaintance with the daily condition of the poor, and they can hardly be called on to make the constant and self-denying sacrifices which the poor make every day for the sake of one another.—They do not know what it is to come home after a long day's hard work, and to be suddenly called upon to share an already too scanty meal with a hungry stranger. They do not know what it is to deprive themselves of absolute necessities of food and raiment, that they may help a sick parent, or assist a more needy neighbor. Nor can they know what it is to part with the very clothes from off their own backs, that they may clothe those still more naked and destitute. O there will be a wonderful change of position when rich and poor meet together in heaven. *Deposuit potentis de sede, et exaltavit humiles.* The high and the noble, and the rich and the 'respectable,' will have to give way, and to take a place lower than those who are here the offscouring of the earth. It will be a great revolution.

"But the charity of the Irish Catholic poor is not restricted to aiding the necessities of their poorer relatives and neighbors. From their scanty and precarious earnings they give largely and liberally to the service of religion. They support our priests and build our churches. Speaking relatively, they give far more than the rich in contributions for masses, and in other acts of alms-

giving. Mr. Kelly, writing to the editor of the *Weekly Register*, with reference to his new church in the Commercial Road, says, 'With a few trifling exceptions in remote years, added to the amount received from benefactors the last two or three years, it may be truly said that the purchase of the ground, walling in, and law expenses, and the building of the church, up to the present time, have been paid for by the pence of the poor.' And the Catholic priest of Alderney, writing in the same paper, informs us that altogether there are 500 French Catholics in his mission, yet they contribute nothing to the Church. He is supported entirely by the Irish poor. The same testimony, we are confident, will be given by all those priests who have knowledge or experience of the Irish poor. Many will remember instances in which the poor have hoarded up money, amounting sometimes to large sums, that they might have it laid out in the adornment of the Altar of God, or bestowed in some other way in promoting His glory; and no greater affront could be offered to them than a refusal to accept these gifts. In fact, the greatest blow and heaviest discouragement which could befall the Church in this country, would be the withdrawal from it of the Irish poor. It is very well to have rich people; they are of great utility, if they are really good and generous, and their reward hereafter will be abundant; but after all, it is the poor who constitute the real bulwark of the Church. They support it by their prayers, by their faith, by their patience, by their sacrifices, by their sufferings, and by their generous offerings from scanty and hard-earned wages.

"In noticing another effect which the Catholic faith has impressed upon the Irish poor, we desire to advance nothing that is in any way exaggerated or beyond the strict limit of experience and of fact. Human nature is the same, whether it be found in Catholics or in Protestants, its desires, its passions, its evil inclinations, are the same, and the temptations to commit the common sins of uncleanness act as powerfully upon the one as upon the other. No greater theological mistake can be committed than that of representing the Catholic Church in some such light as the Donatists imagined the ideal community to which they applied its name. The Church is as a net cast into the sea, which gathers of every kind. It will be without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, when it has put off its present mortality, and entered upon its state of glory in heaven;—but so long as its members are composed of flesh and blood, a corrupt nature, and a weak will, it will be grieved and troubled by the presence of sin within its fold; it will have to lament the crimes and the scandals of its children, no less than to rejoice in the virtues and graces of its heroes. We shall therefore find among the Catholic poor, as well as others, too numerous and too painful cases of sins against chastity and purity. A certain proportion of those unhappy creatures, who disgrace the streets of our large towns by the public profession of the most degrading form of impurity are, alas! lost children of the Catholic Church, and natives of Catholic Ireland; although what proportion these poor women may bear to the entire number of the same class we have been unable to ascertain.—All we can say is that they form a minority; and as far as we have been able to learn, they have fallen into this miserable life, from one or other of the following causes. Sometimes they are Irish, born in England, and they have been driven into the streets, in consequence of the cruelty, the neglect, and the mismanagement of their parents. Sometimes it is a step-father or step-mother who refuses to give them support; and as Irish girls often find it difficult to get places, they are thus thrown upon the wide world, without a home, or friend, or even a piece of bread to keep them from starving. Sometimes, simple and ignorant girls come over to this country in the vain hope of an honest livelihood; and they are immediately entrapped into some loathsome den of vice by those demons in human form who trade upon the ruin of the souls and bodies of their fellow-creatures. This at least is the experience of those who have had the best opportunities of forming a correct judgment upon the matter. 'They send them,' we have been informed in a private communication, 'over to this wicked city ignorant and simple to look for work, and they seem to get into mischief from want. There is, however, with them a foundation of faith and religion, however dormant, which once roused, easily leads them to make any atonement for the past.'

"In estimating then the purity of the Irish poor, we are bound in justice to make a fair deduction for those cases of scandal and of sin which do really exist among them. But when we have made this deduction, the genuine and the sincere purity of the Irish people will still be the most remarkable feature in their character. Purity is the rule; impurity the exception.—There are certain kinds of sin which are almost wholly unknown among them. A young woman dreads nothing so much as bringing disgrace upon herself and upon her family. Mothers in gene-

ral take great care of their daughters in this respect. Their elders and companions in the same court or village, counsel, advice, and watch over them, should they be living with strangers and apart from their immediate relations. They will endeavor to keep them at home in the evenings, restrain them from frequenting the low theatres and other places of amusement, and caution them against keeping company with the loose 'English' around them. Rarely does it happen that an Irish girl forms any improper connection previous to her marriage; and more rarely still is there any infidelity in the married state. In a word, before an Irish Catholic girl has lost her self-respect, and plunged into vice, she must have broken through some of the most powerful restraints, both of religion and of association.—She must long have neglected the ordinary duties of the Catholic life—her prayers, mass, confession, and communion. She must have exhibited an obstinate and disobedient spirit towards her parents, joined with a contemptuous disregard of their admonitions and authority, not very usual with the Irish. She must have disconnected herself from all her well conducted associates and companions. She must have done no little violence to her own deep-seated knowledge of duty and sense of right; and she must have had the effrontery to fly in the face of that 'public spirit,' which on all these matters exists to a very high degree among the Irish Catholic poor. So long as an Irish girl is in any way true to herself, she has everything to keep her from going wrong.—Her own religious feelings, and those of her relatives and friends, alike contribute to preserve her from vice. However little instruction she may have received, at least she has learnt to entertain a fear of this one sin. Often and often are these poor creatures exposed to great and violent temptations. Want, and poverty, and wretchedness, and misery, are in general no good school wherein to acquire and to preserve the unearthly jewel of a pure heart, and yet, where is the poverty greater than that of the Irish?—They come over to this country, searching for the means of subsistence. Unknown and friendless, almost every door is closed against them.—'No Irish need apply' is the motto and the rule of many a Catholic, as well as Protestant family. Friendless and houseless, not unfrequently their only home is the open canopy of heaven, and their only bed the cold pavement of the street. Not unfrequently worn with care and disappointment, they cast themselves down at the inhospitable gates of some city union, or take rest for the night in some deserted barn in the country; but in the midst of their desolation, the Hand of Almighty God is over them, and His angels cover them with an invisible protection, as they shielded Agnes and Agatha in the times of old. An evil thought, or an unholy suggestion, is not suffered to approach them; the midnight spirit of impurity passes them by, leaving them unassailed, and the shadow of the Almighty shelters them from harm. '*Scuto circumdabit te veritas eius; non timabis a timore nocturno. A sagitta volante in die, a negotio perambulante in tenebris; ab incursu, et a demonio meridiano; Quoniam angelis suis mandavit de te; ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.*'

"Nor can it be maintained that this remarkable purity of the Catholic poor can be ascribed to causes which are purely natural. We are sometimes told by those who cannot deny the facts, and yet strive to avert their force, that this absence of impurity in the women of Catholic Ireland, is the result of a natural coldness of temperament in the character of the race. But nothing can be more preposterous than such a hypothesis. It is destitute of the faintest support in experience or fact. For, in the first place, human nature is always substantially the same, and to no sins is it more naturally inclined than to the sins of the flesh. And secondly, the Irish are an imaginative, an irascible, and, as is often said, an unstable people; and surely, these are the very qualities which, more than any others, predispose to sins against purity. Lastly, the Irish are, virtually, the same race as the Welsh. They belong to different branches of the same Celtic stock; and yet the Welsh are known to be the most immoral people in Europe, excepting, perhaps, the Swedes. No. It is no difference of race or temperament which has created this remarkable feature in the Irish character. It is not radical or national. It is religious. It is the Catholic Faith which makes them, as a body, chaste and pure. It is the tone of mind formed by the Catholic religion, the restraints imposed by her teaching and control, the innocence cherished by her sacraments—and it is this, and this alone, which makes the Irish coster-girl of London differ from her Protestant companions in trade, and the Irish women in general, simple and pure, in the midst of surrounding vice and filthiness.

"What has been advanced already we have no hesitation in asserting, can be corroborated by almost any one who has any real acquaintance with the Irish in England. There are priests in London, and other large towns throughout the

country, men of long experience, who have labored for years in the poorest parts of those towns, who will testify to the accuracy and truth of all that we have said. But we prefer to call in the aid of a witness, whose testimony is beyond all suspicion, because he is neither an Irishman nor a Catholic, and because the interests involved in his publications are in no way promoted by the descriptions he has given of the Irish in England. There are those who would like his works all the better if they contained some round abuse of the Catholic poor, and if they magnified and dwelt upon their faults and failings, without any mention of their good qualities. We cannot, therefore, refer to a more unexceptionable, and a more trustworthy witness, than Mr. Henry Mayhew, a Protestant gentleman, who has made the condition, the habits, the prejudices, and the opinions of the poor in London his particular study. This witness has the further advantage of being already well and favorably known to the public. Almost every one is acquainted with his extremely interesting work on *London Labor and the London Poor*, which was reviewed a few years ago in this Magazine, and from whose pages we shall now make a few extracts, already perhaps familiar to our readers, but which they will not be reluctant to peruse a second time, in confirmation of the opinions we have advanced.

"In his inquiries into the condition of the Irish poor, Mr. Mayhew found that—

"Almost all the street Irish are Roman Catholics. . . . I found, he says, 'that some of the Irish Roman Catholics, but they had been for many years resident in England, and that among the poorest or vagrant class of the English, had become indifferent to their creed, and did not attend their churches, unless at the great feasts or festivals, and this they did only occasionally. . . . One Irishman, a fruit seller, with a well-stocked barrow, and without the complaint of poverty, common among his class, entered keenly into the subject of his religious faith when I introduced it. He was born in Ireland, but had been in England since he was five or six. He was a good looking, fresh-colored man, of thirty or upwards, and could read and write well. He spoke without bitterness, though zealously enough. 'Perhaps, Sir, you are a gentleman connected with the Protestant clergy,' he asked, 'or a missionary?' On my stating that I had no claim to either character, he resumed: 'will, Sir, it don't matter. All the world may know my religion, and I wish all the world may know of my religion and bether min in it than I am; I do indeed. I'm a Roman Catholic, Sir, (then he made the sign of the cross) God be praised for it. O yes, I know all about Cardinal Wiseman. It's the will of God, I feel sure that he's to be established here, and it's no use ribblin' against that. I've nothing to say against Protestants. I've heard it said, it's best to pray for them.' 'The street people that call themselves protestants are no religion at all at all. I serrave Protestant giatlemin and ladies, too, and sometimes they talk to me kindly about religion. They're good customers, and I have no doubt good people. I can't say what their lot may be in another world for not being of the true faith. No, Sir, I'll give no opinions—none.'

"This man gave me a clear account of his belief that the Blessed Virgin (he crossed himself repeatedly as he spoke) was the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and was a mediator with our Lord, who was God of heaven and earth, of the duty of praying to the holy saints, of attending mass—('but the priest,' he said, 'won't exact too much of a poor man, either about that or about fasting')—of going to confession at Easter and Christmas times at the least—of receiving the body of Christ, 'the rare prize' in the holy Sacrament—of keeping all God's Commandments—of purgatory being a purgation of sins—and of heaven and hell. I found the majority of those I spoke with, at least as earnest in their faith, if they were not as well instructed in it as my informant, who may be cited as an example of the better class of street-sellers.—P. 107, vol. 1

"Mr. Mayhew encountered a less favorable specimen of an Irish emigrant in the person of 'a very melancholy looking man, tall and spare, and decently clad,' who gave him a correct account of his faith, but with hesitation, and who evidently felt rather spitefully than otherwise against Cardinal Wiseman. Had he been a gentleman he would have been a moderate Catholic, and a devoted admirer of Dublin Castle and 'the Lord Lieutenant.'

"Mr. Mayhew next describes the religious zeal of the Irish whom he visited.

"As I was anxious to witness the religious zeal that characterizes these people, I obtained permission to follow one of the priests as he made his rounds among his flock. Everywhere the people ran out to meet him. He had just returned to them I found, and the news spread round, and women crowded to their door-steps, and came creeping up from the cellars through the trap-doors, merely to curtsy to him. One old crone as he passed cried: 'You're a good father. Heaven comfort you,' and the boys playing about stood still to watch him. A lad in a man's tail-coat and a shirt collar that nearly covered his head—like the paper round a bouquet—was fortunate enough to be noticed, and his eyes sparkled as he touched his hair, at each word he spoke in answer. At a conversation that took place between the priest and a woman who kept a dry fish stall, the dame excused herself for not having been up to take tea, 'with his riverence's mother lately, for thrade had been so busy, and night was the fullest time.'—Even as the priest walked along the streets, boys running at full speed would pull up to touch his hair, and the stall-women would rise from their baskets; while all noises—even a quarrel—ceased until he had passed by. Still there was no look of fear in the people. He called them all by their names, and asked after their families, and 'once or twice' (the father was taken aside, and held by the button while