

IRISH RACE DETERIORATION.

The startling theory that the people of Ireland are deteriorating rapidly in mental and physical vigor was set forth at the recent conference of the Hierarchy at Maynooth. It was stated by the Right Rev. Dennis Kelly, D. D., Bishop of Ross, in what may be called an indirect appeal to his countrywomen to save their race. Some of his statements were:

"I am forced by the weight of evidence to arrive at the gloomy conclusion that the population of this country is deteriorating to an alarming extent in physical and mental vigor and energy; and I fancy that any one that examines and thinks out the questions as I have been trying to do for some years past, will arrive at the same conclusion. Is then all gloom and despair? Is the old Celtic stock going to die of inanition, and will this country be recolonized by Germans and other foreigners? I do not think so.

CAUSES OF DETERIORATION.

"Some of the most serious causes of this deterioration are easily and immediately perceptible; and if they are not prevented it will be our own fault. The food of the people has undergone a great change. Forty years ago the staple articles of food of the population—I speak of the smaller peasantry and working classes who form the vast bulk of our population—were milk, potatoes, oatmeal, stirabout, whole-flour bread, eggs, butter and a little meat. Now, while this diet may not have been the best conceivable for full grown people, it was the very best that could be found for children and growing people. It contained all the necessary and most useful elements for building up boys and girls into strong, healthy, vigorous men and women.

CHANGE IN FOOD PARTLY RESPONSIBLE.

"Within the last thirty years the milk, oatmeal, whole-flour, and to a large extent the potatoes, have been replaced by tea and baker's white bread. Now, these articles of diet, while not the best for full-grown people, sustain their health and strength very well. But a diet consisting mainly of tea and white bread is absolutely ruinous for children and growing people. It does not contain the essential elements to form blood, bone, brain, nerves and other vital organs. Nature is set the task of building up the body of the child into that of the man or woman without being supplied with the necessary materials for the construction. The result is a jerry-built house that tumbles down at the first shock.

"A week ago the superintendent of the Cork Asylum read for the committee his annual report, in which he said:

"The admissions show an increase of adolescent insanity; the present generation appears less capable of battling with the severe competition in life, and at a critical epoch in life breaks down.

"Another preventable cause of physical and mental deterioration is this:

OVERSTUDY IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

"For thirty years under the results system class hours in the national schools were entirely too long, and for some months before the examination the children were detained from nine to half past nine in the morning until four, five or even six o'clock in the evening, frequently without food, and then in rural Ireland had to walk home one, two or three miles. No more ingenious procedure could be devised for the physical and mental ruin of a population. Things are somewhat better now under the new system, but even still there is much room for improvement.

"This country requires men of healthy and vigorous intellects in sound and strong bodies; and it has no business for the literary lunatics and brainless wrecks that the national and intermediate schools had been manufacturing by overstudy.

IRELAND'S LOW BIRTH RATE.

"To further emphasize the imperative necessity of making every endeavor to preserve the lives and

health of our existing population, it is well to add that the birth rates in Ireland and France for the last ten years are the lowest in Europe; that in Ireland and in France, being 23 per 1,000 inhabitants. In most of the other countries the birth rate runs from 30 to 43 per 1,000. The marriage rate in Ireland is distinctly the lowest in Europe, being for the last ten years exactly 5 per 1,000 annually. In most of the other European countries the marriage rate was from 7 to 9 per 1,000. However, we have still this point in our favor that the number of children in each family is the largest in Europe. That encouraging circumstance arises mainly from the exceptional purity of morals of the Irish people.

MARRIAGE AGE INCREASED.

"The statement that the marriage rate has fallen to 5 per 1,000 does not convey an adequate idea of the situation. The question of the population is affected by the age at which women marry quite as well as by the number of marriages. Here the facts are still more cheerless, and will, no doubt be more surprising. Of all the females registered in Ireland in the census of 1901 between the ages of 15 and 45 years, only one third were married. Of those under 45 years of age who were in the married state, only one twelfth were under 25 years of age, one-half under 35 and the other half between 35 and 45 years. These figures show that the marriage age has been high, and it is doubtful whether Ireland shall retain the proud pre-eminence of having the largest families in Europe."

The Bishop advised that the clergy in their capacity of school managers see to it that teachers are appointed who will know how to teach the little girls hygiene and housekeeping, and who can reorganize neighborhood classes in those matters for the grown-up women; and that they impress upon the young women the virtue of humility, because without doubt it is the waiting for a match of certain social or monetary status that keeps them unmarried so long.

A GIRL'S OWN BROTHER.

"But he's my own brother."

Is that any reason why you should take his courtesies for granted and never say "thank you."

Is that any reason why you should not try to make an evening at home pleasant for him, instead of forcing him by your selfishness to seek his happiness somewhere else?

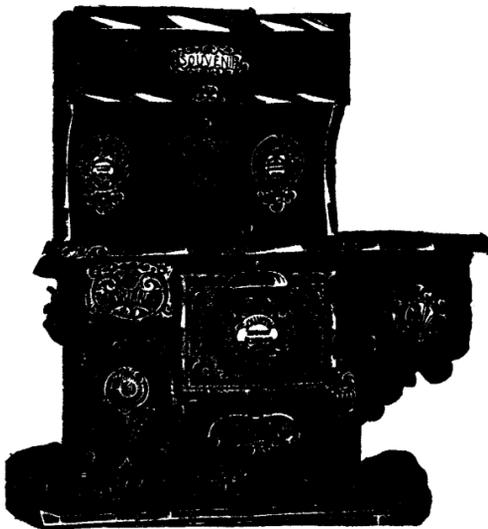
Is that any reason why you should not think his opinion of your frocks, your bonnets or your looks worth consideration?

Is that any reason why you should appear before him in a clumsy wrapper, and with your hair in papers?

Is there any reason why you should push him to the wall except when you need him, and then claim his attention as your right?

Because he is your own brother, you ought to be tenfold more considerate of him than of the brothers of other girls. Because he is your very own brother, you ought to study his tastes, and cater to them; read the books that he likes, and suggest others to him; study the songs he fancies, and be glad to make new ones known to him. In this way you will make your brother your very own, and to him "sister" will be the most delightful among girls. Are you your brother's keeper? Yes; in a way. But you do not keep him by fetters formed of ill-temper, untidiness and lack of courtesy, but by one made of every feminine grace and brightened up by a sister's love.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND IMMIGRATION.
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Winnipeg, Aug. 8th, 1904

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