

ject or the obscurity of style in the writer might make some comment acceptable, every one should essay to supply the elucidation for himself. The effort may require thought, but once made it will leave the inquirer stronger than before. Be sure that it is better for a reader to make the salutary effort at grasping the meaning of an author, in himself worth listening to, unaided by paraphrases in the senuous process of which much of the original author may be lost, while much may be acquired from the transcriber, not always to be considered gain.

10—"That 'the beginning is half of the whole' is a proverb as old as Hesoid. I hope the saying holds true of the Irish Literary Society recently started in Dublin and in London, by the tireless efforts of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy and other notable and patriotic Irishmen. The new associations were founded to encourage the study and support of Irish literature, art and music. They propose to leave politics take care of themselves, and to centre the attentions of their members on literature, music and art. The sister societies can already boast of such notables among their most active members as Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, the Rev. Stopford Brooke, M.A., Mrs. Bryant, Dr. Sc., J. G. O'Keefe, F. A. Fahy, D. J. O'Donoghue, Barry O'Brien, Dr. John Todhunter, T. W. Rolleston, W. B. Yeates, Alfred P. Graves, M.A., and last, but not least, John Augustus O'Shea. Lectures, open to members, are delivered once a month in both institutions. A number of such addresses have been delivered already before audiences steadily increasing in size and interest. Through the esteemed kindness of an obliging friend, to whose good nature I frequently stand indebted for valuable literary favors, two bound copies of the most impressive of those lectures now lie on my table. One of the pamphlets has for its title *The Prospects of Irish Literature for the People*, and is made up of a polished address delivered before the Irish Literary Society, in London, by Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, the capable president of that praiseworthy assembly. The other publication contains a masterly lecture on *The Need and Use of getting Irish Literature into the English Tongue*, by the learned Stopford

A. Brooke. As both gentlemen were intimately acquainted with every detail of their respective subjects, and as the subjects themselves deserve the attention of all lovers of literature, I shall make no apology for quoting copiously from the two lectures.

Sir Charles G. Duffy opens with the remark that it was nearly a year since he related to the Irish Literary Society the design of inducing young Irishmen of the present generation to take up anew a task which famine and political disaster interrupted among their predecessors—the task of teaching the Irish people to understand their own country. After this allusion to the brilliant band of young Irishmen who made the old Nation newspaper of 1842-48 such a force, the speaker dropped some words of cheer. A year may seem a long time, said he, to have employed in preliminary arrangement: but it was not wasted. There were many difficulties to overcome, and they have been overcome. In September our first volume will be offered to those who desire to welcome it. Then Sir Charles, warming to his subject, continues: When I say we do not understand Ireland, I do not mean merely that we are imperfectly acquainted with its history, its literature, its art, and its memorable men; but which of us studies Irish statistics till he understands them as he does a current account with a tradesman or a banker? Which of us studies the topography, the political and commercial geography, the geology, the resources and deficiencies of the country, so as to qualify him to handle its interests, in a parish or in a parliament, if that task should present itself? Of all studies, that which a nation can least safely dispense with is a study of its own history. Of politics, if it were only the politics of a parish, what can we know worth knowing unless the lamp of history lights the misty way? And the great problem of all—for what special career do the gifts and deficiencies of our race, their position on the globe, their past and present career, best fit them?—only a familiarity with their annals will enable anyone to say. Another use of historical study is to enable us to vindicate our race from unjust aspersions. This is no sentimental gain, but one eminently practical;