

tongue as indispensable as English coin in the commerce of men, they find in the Gaelic language also, in the more sacred home-life of the Irish community, treasures of devotion and affection, a balm for bruised hearts, a music of old times such as no Irish heart will ever find in equal luxuriance in the chilly English speech."

Two of the most gifted writers of English to-day hold, evidently, the same view as that just quoted. From one of them (Father Sheehan), a striking passage has already been cited, and it is only necessary to mention the other (the Reverend Dr. Barry) as the author of "The Wizard's Knot,"—a work pronounced by critics, to be his best, largely, it is added, because of the Celtic element that dominates it, in both style and matter. It is, by the way, dedicated to the president of the Gaelic League, and under a date-form literally *Irisiú*. Of course, it may be urged that neither of these authorities speaks or writes Irish himself. Granted, although we cannot reject the opinion that each has a sufficient knowledge of the old tongue to save him from the plight of the man mentioned in Thomas Davis's essay, who when asked for the title of the familiar air, *Tu me a cullagh, agus na dhousan me* (I'm asleep, and don't waken me), seriously replied, "Tommy M'Cullagh made boots for me." At any rate, we may be certain of one thing, and that is that both these distinguished writers are, as respects their literary work, Celts in thought and in expression, and as such splendidly illustrate the value of such an acquaintance with the old tongue and its masterpieces as enables the student to appreciate their informing spirit, and, if he be of the race of which these masterpieces are the characteristic expression, to seek in that direction the natural and, because the natural, the highest development of his powers.

As Mr. William O'Brien pointed out in the lecture from which we have already drawn, the lost art of delineating the Irish peasant, as he should be delineated, will never be restored until writers who know his language as well as his other characteristics. Almost the only example of such an achievement that we have is Griffin's "Collegians,"—a work which, besides giving to English literature one of its sweetest, though, alas, one of its saddest,