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FRENCH NOTES ON IRELAND.

(From the Dublin Telegraph.)

Not the least pleasing and interesting result of the Great Industrial Exhibition in Dublin has been the inducement held out to intelligent foreigners to visit our country, to judge for themselves, and transmit the fruits of their observation to their fellow-countrymen on the Continent, amongst the great mass of whom the most signal ignorance or misinformation had so long existed in reference to Ireland. We have already, in the *Telegraph*, introduced to our readers some of the experiences of M. Savoye, whose accomplished pen has set us right as to our industrial resources, and the energy and genius of our people, in the columns of the *Siecle*; and we now propose to give some sketches from the picturesque pencil of M. Felix Belly, whose eloquent descriptions have given new interest to the pages of the *Constitutionnel*, one of the most influential papers in France, and, as we understand, the favorite journal of the French Emperor. The series of M. Belly are entitled "Studies on Ireland."

After alleging that the best opportunity for visiting Ireland is that now offered by the Great Exhibition, the writer comes to the

JOURNEY TO HOLYHEAD.

"As to the preliminaries of this journey nothing is, at the same time, more simple and more rapid; you need only twenty-eight or thirty hours to proceed from Paris to the gates of Merion-square. A special train starts from London at nine or ten in the morning, cuts slantingly through all England, arrives at Bangor, on the margin of the Menai Straits, passes the arm of the sea through a cast iron tube, thrown over the abyss by Stephenson the engineer, and stops in the evening at seven or eight o'clock at the further end of the isle of Anglesea, in the little port of Holyhead. Here the boat is steaming, which is to land you next morning in Kingstown, in presence of Dublin itself. Ten hours have sufficed to traverse England, five or six will be sufficient for crossing the Irish Sea; and, truly, few journeys will have been so well employed.

"From London to Holyhead stretches a vast English garden of an uniform aspect, but one satisfactory to practical minds. Meadows and flowering woods, canalised rivers, not a drop of whose waters is lost to irrigation; groups of red houses peering through curtains of verdure, railways and gravelled alleys; a landscape smoothly labored, neat, dull in coloring, made sombre by the smoke of factories but furnished up like a dainty piece of ornament, and breathing of general comfort. At Bangor one feels a momentary sensation of fear at seeing the train proceed with great rapidity towards a precipice.—But the tubular bridge reveals itself upon the brink, with its double wide-mouthed orifice and its square mass, formed within of iron ribs. Thirty wagons are engulfed in this aerial tunnel, without causing an oscillation. The boldness of man has conquered nature. Here is England, within her and for her—admirable agriculture and prodigies of industry."

KINGSTOWN HARBOR.

"This harbor, which could shelter a thousand vessels, is deserted. Three or four cruisers or pleasure yachts only ride at the entrance to the jetty of Kingstown. This is the point of debarcation; but no symptom of activity could be recognised. Some men alone present themselves to carry the baggage to the railway station, which can be observed from the vessel. Here you have Ireland caught in the fact. The malady which destroys her is ascertained at the first glance. Ireland does not work, because Ireland has nothing to do. The social regimen to which she has been subjected has rendered barren the munificence of nature."

KINGSTOWN.

"Kingstown is quite a city, formed, like Anteuil, of a succession of country houses, framed in gardens—with this difference, that its interminable street stretches along the sea shore, whose elevated banks give to those charming villas an admirable horizon. Kingstown has thus become, in a few years, the favorite sojourn of a large number of the wealthy inhabitants of Dublin, and the rendezvous of promenaders in the summer season. It is here that John O'Connell, son of the Liberator, himself formerly a member of the House of Commons, opens wide the doors of his modest dwelling to all that come from France. Here, too, almost all the foreign consuls have their family residences, to escape the injurious influence of the humid climate of the capital. They enjoy here a buoyant and healthful atmosphere and a view which recalls, on certain days in summer, the scenery of the Bay of Naples—less, always, the smoking summit of Vesuvius, the Italian animation of Parthenope, and the myriads of latteen-rigged craft which furrow its blue waters."

DUBLIN.

After comparing the accommodation afforded to travellers on the English and Irish railways—greatly to the advantage of the Irish directors, whose third class carriages are equal to the English first, which again are not so comfortable as the French second—the writer sets foot in Dublin:—

"But if the traveller be at once surprised and charmed at his first initiation into Irish life, his surprise becomes still more lively on entering Dublin.—He had expected a Gothic city, half in ruins, miserable as the country of which it is the metropolis.—He discovers a noble city of 300,000 inhabitants, with streets drawn in a level line, wider than our Rue de la Paix, with quays like those of Paris, with monuments of imposing aspect, with squares which are veritable parks, and a Park (the Phoenix), which is regarded, even in England, where there are so many of them, as a wonder. To speak candidly, I only write here of the appearance as a whole, and of the first impression which a stranger receives; for, if there be any where the reverse of a picture, it is in Dublin. Every palatial edifice bears upon it its own stigma, its own fatality. The most beautiful of all, in my eyes—the Bank—was heretofore the sanctuary of the national representation, and every Irishman who paces before its half Ionic, half Corinthian peristyle, curses in his heart that Act of Union which ravished from him his Parliament. The Custom House is silent, and its offices unoccupied. One would designate it as mystification of England, erecting on one hand a true temple to Irish commerce, and on the other, rendering that commerce impossible by her laws. St. Patrick's, become the Protestant metropolitan, from being the Catholic cathedral, as it was at first, can but recall, like Christ Church, the terrible epoch of the religious wars, and the confiscations of the Reformers. One cannot take a step in this land of martyrs without finding therein the vivid traces of spoliation or of violence. But to resume—laying these considerations aside, Dublin strikes a person, on first acquaintance, by its grandeur, its regularity, by the splendor of its edifices and of its marts and warehouses, which give it, more than is the case with London itself, the due relative conditions being observed, the attitude of a capital.

"The city is built on both banks of a small river called the Liffey, whose muddy waters discharge themselves into the Bay. There is a great difference, without doubt, between this unknown rivulet, good at most for fishing smacks, and that magnificent arm of the sea, the Thames, in which the vessels are counted by thousands, and what seems to be the great commercial artery of the world. But at London the Thames is invisible to its inhabitants, unless from the bridges which span it. Two mean-looking borders of private houses bathe their basements of rotten wood in the slime (vase) driven in by the reflux, and it is now calculated that it would require not less than £50,000,000 sterling, and an age of labor, to free the river from this hotbed of infection, and inclose it in a befitting bed. In Dublin, on the contrary, the Liffey is flanked on both sides, for a space of three miles, with quays of granite, whose beauty has never been surpassed. London, besides, has no street so wide as Sackville-street, and reckons few public edifices of so imposing an effect, and of a style so correct, as Trinity College, the Bank, the Post Office, and the Custom House. Unfortunately in Dublin, as in London, the inclemency of the climate, and the prevailing use (*l'abus*) of coal, impart to the walls a dark and unenlivening color, and pencil the pillars of the edifices in a manner sometimes strange. From a distance one would suppose those appearances to be photographic proofs unsuccessfully 'brought out.'"

IRISH MORALS, MANNERS, HABITS, &c.

After some more etchings of Dublin, its streets, and houses, the writer describes the loneliness of the capital on an early Sabbath morning, referring to the closed shops, so unlike to those of Paris, and drawing a vivid picture of the squalid mendicancy which sits despairing and houseless the life-long night, in some of our grandest streets. He then comes to the social relations of the inhabitants:—

"There are in Ireland two distinct races, two religions, two characters, two systems of manners, two natural physiognomies. In some cities, as in Dublin and Belfast, the English physiognomy prevails, and English manners regulate the law. There, as in London, they ride their hobby on the ridiculous formality of presentations; they eat roast beef, and drink tea; strike redoubled and furious blows upon the door-rapper, at the risk of being taken for a laquey; they find it inconvenient and improper to wear a beard of a night's growth, yet dine without a napkin; they accommodate themselves philosophically to detestable cookery, and to customs the most disagreeable; they pass every day two hours at table, after

the ladies have retired, gravely engaged in imbibing port, sherry, or punch made from whiskey, the fire-water of 'Erin the Green.' But, by the side of those British usages, which the tyranny of habit has preserved, one meets in the cities, as well as in the country parts of Ireland, a purity and an amenity of manners, which contrast with the hollowness and stiffness of English habits. Nothing affected, I have already said, in the hospitality which greets the stranger. Nothing so admirable as the respect of all for the laws which govern the family. This is the peculiar sentiment of Ireland, which makes itself felt even amongst those upon whom fathers have been imposed against their will. This genius, by its special characteristics, makes of the indigenous people a population apart, just as Ireland herself is an exceptional country. I purpose attempting to describe both as I go along, such as I have glimpsed at them through the vista of miseries which have overshadowed the race, and the inevitable degeneracies of six centuries of oppression."

THE IRISH RACE—ITS CONFORMATION—ITS SOCIAL PURITY AND MORALS—BEAUTY OF THE IRISH FEMALES.

The writer, in a subsequent letter, draws a striking picture of the scenery, olden memorials, rich resources, and natural wonders of Ireland. This he does with the pen of a poet and a painter. We question if the reader has ever seen the natural beauties of any country more briefly, yet more clearly, described, or its teeming resources more comprehensively and interestingly brought to light. But our space warns us to hurry to the accomplished foreigner's attestation to Irish social virtue, and his graceful appreciation of Irish female beauty. Our fair countrywomen will owe us good wishes, for awhile to come, for bringing them and our gallant French friend thus *tete-a-tete*:—

"But the most remarkable element, the richest and certainly the most full of life of this land so life-full, is the population itself. No European race, that of the Caucasus excepted, can compete with it in beauty. The Irish blood is of a purity and a distinction, especially amongst the females, which strikes all strangers with astonishment. Every body knows that the beggars of green Erin wear that they have all issued from noble and some from regal blood. This pretension is explainable, up to a certain point, by the series of catastrophes of which the history of Ireland is composed, and by the aristocratic particles—O's and Macs—prefixed to almost all their names. But what justifies the pretension still more, and in a manner almost irrefragable, is the perfection of their forms, and the patrician beauty of their race. The transparent whiteness of the skin, that absorbing attraction which in France is but the attribute of one woman in a thousand, is here the general type. The daughter of the poor man, as well as the fine lady, possesses an opal or milky tint, the arms of a statue, the foot and hand of a duchess, and the bearing of a Queen. (La fille du pauvre, comme la grande dame possède un teint d'opale ou de lait, de bras de statue, un pied et une main de duchesse, et un port de reine.) Rags, misery, and manual labor have no effect upon those native endowments. Even beneath the thatched cabin of the poor peasant, in the midst of the potato field, which yields the sole nourishment, those traits at times develop themselves with unmistakable vividness. In the most wretched streets of the olden quarters of Dublin, the most ideal tintings of the pencil would grow pale before the beauty of the children; and in the compact crowd which each day occupies the galleries of Merion-square, there is certainly the most magnificent collection of human beings it is possible to meet.

"One of the special characteristics of this Irish beauty, and its liveliest charm, is its variety. In England, all the women are sisters, and all the men resemble each other. The uniformity of the soil and of manners has penetrated even their countenances. One same equivocal shade of hair, the same whitish but faded hue, the same unmelodious tone of voice, the same well-fed condition, an equal subjection to the same movements, as to the same habits of stiffness and of pride, make of John Bull an unique original which you find in all his copies. In Ireland there are as many different physiognomies as there are individualities. The common basis of the national beauty is the delicate pearly whiteness of the skin. But all the favorite shading of hair, from that which glistens beneath the gilded buckle to the tresses imprisoned by the jewelled circlet, here combine with the richest colors of the eyes. Blondes, with black eyes, and brunettes with blue, are by no means rare. Nothing sorry, besides—nothing worn out in this opulent nature. The race is as strong as it is handsome, as vigorous as it is charming. The girls of Connemara, with their queenly shoulders and eyes of fire, would put to shame, at this day, those daughters of the East, from whom they are said to be descended.

"We have asked many Irishmen the reason of this secular preservation through so many causes of degeneracy and ruin. What seems to me the most probable is, that it must be attributed to the singularly energetic mixtures which have constituted this race, and the purity of morals which has maintained it. We have in France, in the city of Arles, and in some other less known localities, examples of what can be accomplished by the combinations of antique beauty with the potent germ of the aboriginal tribes. It is likewise scientifically admitted that nothing develops more the human organisation than the multiplied mixtures of races. It entered without doubt, into the designs of Providence to elicit from the real fraternity of the peoples an energetic means of social perfection. Thus, no country has undergone, more than Ireland, those often unhappy conditions of a primordial constitution. The history of its origin is but the narrative of the successive invasions of Phœnicians and Milesians of Spain, of Danes and Saxons, of Normans and Anglo-Normans, races brown or fair, conquering or civilising, who all have left their traces upon the soil. These traces still exist. You recognise them in a variety of types—in gesture, in language, in monuments—above all, in the manners. There is as much difference between the manners of Galway, the Milesian city of the West, and of Belfast, the Anglo-Norman city of the North, as between Seville and Liverpool, Granada and Birmingham.

"Ireland in addition, owes to the fervor of her religious faith, and, it must be said, to her misfortunes and the persecutions which she has suffered, a domestic morality quite exceptional. There is, without doubt, in the great cities of the country, as in all the great centres of population, abodes of evil, physical and moral; but their range is more circumscribed in Dublin than elsewhere. It can even be said that the corruption there is English, as is the case with all the rest of exterior life. The purity, on the contrary, if Irish. It clings to the root of the nation. It is the common inheritance of all the children of the Island of Saints. It makes itself felt from the first day of your admission into the bosom of their families. All those beautiful young girls, with eyes so pure, with foreheads of marble whiteness, of stature so commanding, know not even the name of evil. One can clearly see that the blood which flows in their veins has never been vitiated by the misdeeds of preceding generations. Add to this a temperate life, almost entirely vegetable in the country parts—this must be kept in mind, at the risk of furnishing an argument to the Vegetarians—and we will comprehend all the vigor and native purity possessed by a people, in too many other respects so poorly endowed."

Here we must take leave of our French friend, who, although not altogether accurate in some matters, displays uncommon aptitude for catching the salient points presented in the natural and social condition of Ireland. As to his criticism upon our fair countrywomen, we are far from entertaining the notion of committing such an ungracious act of high treason as to say that he is not a most competent and clear-sighted judge.

COMMUNION OF THE IRISH CHURCH, ANCIENT AND MODERN, WITH THE HOLY SEE.

(From the Dublin Telegraph.)

Our readers must have been often astounded at the "powers of face" evinced by Mr. Fresham Gregg and other "playboys," as Terry Driscoll would call them, in iterating their notable discovery that St. Patrick was a Protestant—not one of your "penny-a-pottle Protestants," as Johnny McCreia used to designate the lukewarm, but one to the back bone. Recently the ludicrous statement has been revived, although Mr. Gregg and his "true blues" seem, by their silence, to have grown ashamed of the stupidity of the original joke. To any candid Protestant who desires to know the truth, the following passages from the able and impressive discourse delivered by the Right Rev. Dr. Keane, Lord Bishop of Ross, at the close of the late Synod of Thurles, must bring conviction:

"From an early age when he was still a captive in Ireland, St. Patrick yearned for the conversion of his Pagan masters. The vision, in which, as he himself states, the voice of the Irish was heard to call upon him, showed that the work should be no longer delayed. Yet, if not sent, how was he to preach? and, if a mission was necessary, where was he to derive it? He applies to Rome, then, as now, the centre of the Catholic world; and from Pope Celestine, the successor of St. Peter, chief of the Apostles, and Supreme Head of the Church, he obtains the necessary authority to commence the work. Thus with a mission and a blessing from Rome he arrives in Ireland; in the name of Rome he preaches the Gospel; he converts the people; he establishes dio-