

THE IRISH QUESTION

By Rev. P. C. Yorke, in the Leader, San Francisco.

(Continued from last week)

The third fact is that if a people accepts the foreign tongue it disappears from the catalogue of nations. The Gauls, for instance, were once a mighty people. When Caesar attacked them they were still formidable enough to excite terror in Imperial Rome. But once conquered, they allowed their language to lapse. In a century Gaul was a Latin-speaking country. The result was the Gaulish nation disappeared. When next the territory occupied by the Gauls appears as a nation it is with other blood and another tongue.

The fourth truth we must bear in mind is that when one nation tries to conquer and assimilate another it always begins by rooting out the old speech. For instance, in the Philippines we are importing schoolmasters and schoolma'ams by the ton in order to compel our new subjects to speak English. If the United States would hold its new possessions we must wipe out the Spanish language, which is the sign of Spanish domination, and then the native tongues, which are incitements to native independence.

When the province of Alsace-Lorraine was taken by the French, the French monarch strove to extirpate German. When they were retaken by the Germans the Berlin Government strained and is straining every nerve to outroot French. Well do all governments know that the tongue of the conqueror in the mouth of the conquered is the tongue of a slave.

To recapitulate, we must bear these facts in mind. First, every nation has its own language. Secondly, a vital nation will in the long run throw off a foreign language imposed on it. Third, a dying nation will accept the conqueror's speech. Fourth, a conqueror always tries to abolish the old national tongue because it is a perpetual reminder of ancient independence.

The last fact we have to bear in mind is that where two nations speak the same language the community of speech is a perpetual menace to their mutual independence. We have to-day certain notable examples of this tendency.—Belgium and France, Austria and Germany, England and the United States. I need not tell you how French-speaking Belgium has been united to France or how the German-speaking districts of the Austrian Empire have been agitated for a union to Germany. But perhaps the most noticeable example is this country itself. How often do we hear the cry of blood-thicker-than-water, of lands-across-the-sea, of the Anglo-American alliance. Though three-fourths of our American citizenship is not Anglo-Saxon yet the community of language is continually drawing us to England. Although we have learned in fire and sword, in the blood of our patriots, in two wars, in the help given to every domestic enemy, that England is not our friend, yet the influence of the common language is so great that vast masses of our citizens look to England as our natural ally and are moving heaven and earth to bring about what they call a union of the English-speaking people.

Let us now apply these principles to the case of Ireland. If Ireland gives up her national language and becomes a country speaking only English it is quite possible that in the first generation of English speakers there may be many good Irishmen. It is quite possible that in the second and the third generation the impulse of patriotism may still persist, but as sure as the night follows the day, as sure as the rivers run down to the sea, so surely will the law work out. Old thoughts will be forgotten, old ideals cast aside, higher and higher will arise the tide of Anglicization, until at last it will submerge forever the poor remains of Irish nationality.

Now you may say that I am too pessimistic; but why should the Irish expect to be an exception to the laws that govern all other nations. Indeed, if you care to look you will see the process going on under your own eyes. What has be-

come of the thousands and tens of thousands that poured into the great cities of England? Their descendants to-day are more English than the English themselves. During the late Boer war the most patriotic Anglo-Saxons in Britain were the sons of Irishmen. We need not indeed go beyond our own shores to find people, whose grandfathers and grandmothers spoke Irish now completely absorbed by the English. Here they wear English clothes, play English games, cultivate a fearful and wonderful English accent, and when they go overseas some of them may indeed visit Ireland as one would visit the unexplored regions of Central Africa, but London is their center and the English aristocracy the shrine of their devotion. They have thrown a few half-pence at the political pipers that periodically pass this way hat in hand, but as far as education, science, art, industry, charity they have done absolutely nothing. And why? Because they have no patriotism, no love of country. Their parents cast off the only national thing worth preserving,—their old language and the children are Janissaries, the hireling soldiers of another race.

Consider Ireland herself. Let us take a fact that we all wondered at a few years ago. During the Boer war as far as I can make out it was said that Irish sentiment was overwhelmingly in favor of the Boers. There were a few scoundrels here and elsewhere that had the courage of their convictions and declared for England and civilization "mar eadh," yet what are the facts? Thirty thousand Irishmen fought for England against the Boers, not 300 fought for the Boers against England. It is not pleasant to say this, but what is the use of blinding our eyes to the real condition of things. We have given up our language, and having given up our language we have become English. They may orate and demonstrate and resolve in Parliament and out of Parliament, but the logic of deeds tells. There may be ten thousand in this generation that will not bend the knee, but they pass quickly and the generation after them may preserve its quota, but the day must come when all will pass away; because the salt of nationality, the language, has been cast out. The complete Anglicization of Ireland is the only possible result. Ireland will be an English shire.

Your own memory can bring back to you how the Irish customs are disappearing. With all the millions of Irishmen in the United States, I believe there are not three cities in the Union to-night that could give you the exhibition of things Irish—Irish music, Irish singing, Irish dancing—that you have seen here just now. And with what an expenditure of energy and time and money have we wrought here. In Ireland itself the conditions were nearly as bad. The singing and dancing and music, the athletic sports, all had nearly disappeared. English customs, English sports, nigger melodies, tough dances, cricket, lawn tennis, and ping-pong, these were the favorite relaxation of the people. The old Irish games, if they remained at all, were low and vulgar, for the Irish were speaking the English tongue, and therefore thinking English thoughts and in the English thought the Anglo-Saxon is the superior race, and all other races were created by God for the Saxon's greater honor and glory.

Religion, it is true, is supra-national. It is the same in every land, among every race. In Ireland religion had become part of the people's nationality, and let me say you cannot destroy that nationality without injuring religion. Not till the judgment day shall we know of the millions of Irish Catholics lost to faith, lost to God in the United States, in Canada, in Australia, in England, in Scotland. We have, it is true, been apostles by the sheer force of numbers. Even those who hold the faith, is it not evident to every one that there is a lowering in its quality. The faith of the accomplished girl who speaks the correctest English as she is taught in our boarding schools, even convents, is not of the same quality as the faith of her Irish-speaking grandmother, to whom God was as near, aye, nearer, than

those she saw and spoke to around her. In the Irish tongue there was a wealth of prayer, of piety, of poetry, of imagery, of religion, that has been squandered and lost. Not speaking Irish we cannot have the Irish thoughts. Compare the dead, dull catechism and the stiff formulas the child has now to learn in the English language with the outpourings he would have inherited in the sweet Gaelic, where heart speaketh unto heart and man is God's child, lying on His loving on His loving breast and murmuring softly those loving phrases that the saints of Erin invented and that the language of Erin conserved. Aye, in losing the speech of Patrick and Brigid and Colum Cille we are losing that which was as it were the most precious shrine that ever held religion.

And let us make no mistake, in losing the language we are losing even that attenuated national idea known as Home Rule. People may tell you that if you keep eighty members hammering away at the English Parliament Ireland will come to her own again. But let us take thought for a moment. The very idea of Home Rule means that Ireland is different from England. Now in these days that difference cannot be a mere physical difference, inaccessibility or the like. Every part of Ireland is more easily reached from London than many parts of England. The difference therefore on which the necessity of Home Rule is predicted must be a moral difference. Now if there is no moral difference, where is the argument for Home Rule? Suppose they got up an agitation in Alameda County for separation from the State of California under the plea that Home Rule was a good thing, would we not say, "Why should you have Home Rule, are you not of our blood, do you not speak our language, have you not the same customs and institutions, is not our law as fair as human laws may be, your territory is in the heart of our State, easily accessible, in fact, a vital strategic point in case of war; why then should you want to separate?"

Let things go on as they have been in Ireland, and in a short time Ireland will be in precisely the same condition as Alameda County. When the members ask for Home Rule the English can well retort, "Why should we give you Home Rule and not give it to Yorkshire or Devon. You are just as much a part of England as they are, you have the same manners and customs, and, indeed, you speak better English. Once upon a time you were a distinct nation, you could say to the world, and your very speech would bear you testimony that you were not English. But all the things that made you a nation you cast away. Why should we be more solicitous than you of those things that made for your independence? You forget that you are the same as England now. Why should England undo what you yourselves have done? Would England be not justified in making that argument? By what reasoning could we invalidate her plea? The nation that loses its language loses the idea of a distinct nationality. It may get improved county government, it may get improved State government, but all the king's horses and all the king's men cannot set up a nation that has betrayed its speech.

Another result of the complete assimilation of Ireland with England would be the material ruin of the country. You may say to me that material prosperity is something that has nothing to do with language. Money speaks in one voice all over the earth. Yet, strange as it may seem, the language question is intimately connected with Irish prosperity. There was a time when Ireland was in a fair way to become a prosperous manufacturing country. The English were compelled in self-defence to make the strongest kind of laws against Irish produce, and by these laws they effectively strangled the growing Irish trade. Now the time England was compelled to make those rules to protect herself was precisely the time when Ireland was in spirit and speech thoroughly Irish. During the last century there were no laws against Irish manufactures, yet during the last century the few Irish industries that

survived were steadily going down hill.

If we think for a moment we will see the reason of this state of affairs. All manufactures exist to supply a demand. If people wish to have a certain article that article will be manufactured for them. No manufacturer is in the business for his health. If the people cease to buy a certain class of goods that production of that class of goods will cease. Now, demand is of two kinds, natural and artificial. There are certain things, such as food, clothing, and the like, which we must have; there are certain things which we think we must have. The artificial demand is produced by judicious advertising and other means familiar to you all. Even the natural demand is influenced by the same means. I suppose ladies must have bonnets. The demand for bonnets then is a natural demand. But the kind of bonnet the lady will wear is determined by artificial reasons. For instance, if passing down Market street, she sees a charming confection marked \$5, she will pass it by with a sigh. It is not for her. The next day she sees it marked down to \$2.98 and she is nearly killed in the crush to capture the bargain. Again, if a very useful article is left in the warehouse or on the shelves no one will ask for it, because no one knows about it. But put this article in a display window, cover the dead walls with recitals of its virtue, put up poetry about it in the street-cars, let it stare at you from the prominent pages of the newspapers, and soon a great multitude of people will think that life is not worth living unless they add it to their possessions. Now, during the past century in Ireland, while there was a natural demand, the artificial demand was entirely absent. The Irish manufacturers took to thinking that there was no use in competing with the superior nation, and while the English manufacturer was advertising in season and out of season the Irish manufacturer who would advertise would be almost boycotted for unprofessional conduct.

The result, of course, was that whatever artificial demand was created in Ireland was created for foreign goods, while the natural productions of the country suffered from the consequent perversion of taste. For instance, it has been proved that soap can be produced in Ireland cheaper and of a better quality than anywhere else, yet the Irish people would not buy Irish soap because their taste ran to a dearer and inferior article that bore a foreign trade mark. Indeed, in order to sell the Irish product at all the dealers were compelled to put French and English wrappers on it. The result was that the industry was dying out and the people it should have supported were flying over the sea to England and America and Australia.

What is true of the soap industry is true of several other industries, and you see that the cause of their decline was not an economic reason, but a moral reason. The people got it into their heads that English made goods were superior to Irish made goods, because they took the English at their own valuation. But now, when the Gaelic League is trying to revive the language a different spirit is abroad. The first step in the revival was to give the Irish a good conceit of themselves and to teach them to love, honor and support things Irish, simply because they were Irish. With this new sentiment came a radical change in the condition of Irish manufacturers. All over the country they took a new start. As yet the movement is in its infancy. The green deeps have not been moved, but if the day comes that the Irish people will believe that their own language is as good as the English language and that Irish brains can conceive and Irish hands produce as good manufactures as any other nation then the day of her prosperity will not be far off. I take great pleasure in commending this view of the case to the people who are perpetually airing the bread and butter argument. They want us to think that the revival of the Gaelic means that two raggedly Irishmen will sit one on each side of a bog-hole talking Irish between them. The Irish language is Irish



"Now is the winter of our DISCONTENT."

If coughs and colds are permitted to go on their way of making us miserable, unrebuked, unmolested. Drive coughs and colds out of your system by the proper use of Connell's Cough Balsam, which we can safely recommend. Others speak highly of its efficacy, why not you?

CONNELL & CO. DRUGGISTS. 474 MAIN STREET COR. BANNATYNE

Positions Guaranteed

O'Sullivan Business College

OPPOSITE CITY HALL SQUARE WINNIPEG, MAN.

Endorsed by the Clergy, Press and Leading Men of Canada.

ONE WEEKS TRIAL GIVEN FREE.



INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION

For Prospectus, call or address

E. J. O'Sullivan, C.E., M.A., Principal

Cor. Main & Market Sts. Winnipeg. Branch Schools located at BRANDON and PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

WANTED - FAITHFUL PERSON TO travel for well established house in a few counties, calling on retail merchants and agents. Local territory. Salary \$1024 a year and expenses, payable \$19.00 a week in cash and expenses advanced. Position permanent, business successful and rushing. Standard House, 334 Dearborn St., Chicago.

SYMINGTON'S EDINBURGH COFFEE ESSENCE

makes delicious coffee in a moment. No trouble, no waste. In small and large bottles, from all Grocers.

GUARANTEED PURE. 100

"Flor De Albani" Cigar New But True. Ask your dealer for it. Western Cigar Factory, Thos. Lee, Prop.

ARE WE RIGHT?

Do we spell your name correctly or address your paper inaccurately? If so you would do us a kindness in filling out the blank below and sending the correction to us, as we are about to make a general revision of the subscription list.

Name (as Review spells it).....  
 (As it should be spelled).....  
 Paper has been going to.....  
 Send it now to.....  
 (Write name and address very plainly).

Let me never hear the word "trouble" Only tell me how the thing is to be done rightly, and I will do it if I can.—Queen Victoria.