

A NATION'S TEST.

BY JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

Read at the O'Connell Centennial in Boston on Aug. 6 1875

A nation's greatness lies in men, not acres;
One master mind is worth a million hands.
No kingly robes have marked the planet shakers,
But Sampson strength to burst the ages' bands.
The might of empire gives no crown supernatural—
Athens is here—but where is Macedon?
A dozen lives make Greece and Rome eternal,
And England's fame may safely rest on One.

Here test and text are drawn from Nature's preaching;
Africa and Asia half the rounded earth
In teeming lives the solemn truth are teaching,
That insect millions may have human birth.
Sun-kissed and fruitful, every clod is breeding
A petty life, too small to reach the eye.
So must it be, with no man thinking, leading—
The generations creep their course and die.

Hapless the lands, and doomed amid the races,
That give no answer to this royal test;
Their toiling tribes will droop ignoble faces,
Till earth in pity takes them back to rest.
A vast monotony may not be evil,
But God's light tells us it cannot be good;
Valley and hill have beauty—but the level
Must bear a shadless and a stagnant brood.

I bring the touchstone, Motherland, to thee,
And test thee, trembling, fearing thou shouldst fail.
If fruitless, senseless, thou wert proved to be,
Ah! what would love and memory avail!

Brave land! God has blest thee!
Thy strong heart I feel,
As I touch thee and test thee.
Dear land! As the steel

To the magnet flies upward, so rises thy breast,
With a motherly pride to the touch of the test.

See! she smiles beneath the touchstone looking on her
distant youth.

Looking down her line of Leaders and of Workers for
the Truth.

Ere the Teuton, Norseman, Briton, left the primal wood-
land spring,

When their rule was might and rapine, and their law a
painted ring;

When the sun of Art and Learning still was in the
Orient;

When the pride of Babylonia under Cyrus' hand was
spent;

When the Sphinx's introverted eye was fresh with
Egypt's guilt;

When the Persian bowed to Athens; when the Parthe-
non was built;

When the Macedonian phalanx closed the Common-
wealths of Greece;

When the wrath of Roman manhood burst on Tarquin
for Lucrece,

Then was Erin rich in knowledge—thence from out her
Ollamh's store—

Known to-day by students only, grew her ancient Sen-
chus More.*

Then were reared her mighty builders, who made tem-
ples to the sun.

There they stand—the old Round Towers—showing how
their work was done.

Twice a thousand years upon them, shaming all our
later art,

Warning fingers raised to tell us we must build with rever-
ent heart.

Ah! we call thee Mother Erin! Mother thou in right of
years;

Mother in large fruition, mother in the joys and tears.
All thy life has been a symbol—we can only read a part,
God will flood thee yet with sunshine for the woes that
drench thy heart.

All thy life has been symbolic of a human mother's
life;

Youth, with all its dreams, has vanished, and the travail
and the strife

Are upon thee in the present; but thy work until to-
day

Still has been for Truth and Manhood, and it shall not
pass away.

Justice lives, though Judgment lingers, angels' feet are
heavy shod,

But a planet's years are moments in th' eternal day of
God!

Out from the valley of death and tears,
From the war and wants of a thousand years,
From the mark of a sword and the rust of chain,
From the smoke and blood of the penal laws,
The Irish Men and the Irish Cause
Come out in the front of the field again!

What says the stranger to such a vitality?
What says the statesman to this nationality?
Flung on the shore of a sea of defeat,
Hardly the swimmers have sprung to their feet,
When the nations are thrilled by a clarion word,
And Burke, the philosopher statesman, is heard.

When shall his equal be? Down from the stellar height
Sees he planet and all on its girth—
India, Columbia and Europe; his eagle sight
Sweeps at a glance all the wrong upon earth.
Races and sects were to him a profanity:
Hindoo and Negro and Celt were as one;
Large as Mankind was his splendid humanity,
Large in its record the work he has done.

What need to mention men of minor note,
When there be minds that all the heights attain?
What school, boy knoweth not the hand that wrote
"Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain?"
What man that speaketh English e'er can lift
His voice 'mid scholars who hath missed the lore
And wit of Curran, Sheridan and Swift,
The art of Foley and the song of Moore?
Grattan and Flood and Emmet—where is he
That hath not learned respect for such as these?
Who loveth humor and has yet to see,
Lover and Prout and Lever and Macleise!

Great men grow greater by the lapse of time;
We know those least whom we have seen the latest.
And they, 'mongst those whose names have grown sub-
lime,
Who worked for Human Liberty, are greatest.

And now for one who allied will to work,
And thought to act, and burning speech to thought;
Who gained the prizes that were seen by Burke—
Burke felt the wrong—O'Connell felt and fought.

Ever the same from boyhood up to death:
His race was crushed—his people were defamed;
He found the spark, and fanned it with his breath,
And fed the fire, till all the nation flamed!

He roused the farms—he made the serf a yeoman!
He drilled his millions and he faced the foe;
But not with lead or steel he struck the foeman;
Reason the sword—and human right the blow!

He fought for home—but no land-limit bounded
O'Connell's faith, nor curbed his sympathies:
All wrong to liberty must be confounded
Till men were chainless as the winds and seas.

He fought for faith—but with no narrow spirit;
With ceaseless hand the bigot laws he smote;
One chart, he said, all mankind should inherit—
The right to worship and the right to vote.

Always the same—but yet a glittering prism;
In wit, law, statecraft, still a master hand;
An "uncrowned king," whose peoples' love was Christ,
His title—Liberator of his land!

"His heart's in Rome, his spirit is in heaven,"
So runs the old song that his people sing:
A fall round tower they builded in Glasnevin—
Fit Irish headstone for an Irish king.

Oh Motherland! there is no cause to doubt thee,
Thy mark is left on every shore to-day.
Though grief and wrong may cling like robes about
thee,
Thy motherhood will keep thee Queen always,
In faith and patience working, and believing
Not power alone can make a noble State;
Whatever the land, though all things else concealing,
Unless it breed great men, it is not great.
Go on, dear land! and midst the generations
Send out strong men to cry the Word aloud.
Thy niche is empty still amidst the nations—
Go on in faith, and God must raise the cloud.

Count d'Orsay, while reigning as king of fash-
ion in London, was overtaken by a smart shower
one day while on his return from a race. He was
mounted in the saddle and accompanied by his
groom, but the groom had neglected to take the
overcoat which he generally carried for his mas-
ter's use in cases of emergency. The force of the
shower increased, and our monarch of the fash-
ion seemed likely to catch a severe cold. Close
by a wayside inn he espied a sailor habited in a
broad, long jacket of course blue cloth, envelop-
ing him comfortably from his chin to the middle
of his legs. "Ho, my friend," hailed the Count
"will you go into this inn and drink my health
until the shower is over?" "With pleasure,"
returned the sailor, touching his hat respectfully.
"Well, then, take off your jacket and sell it to
me. You will not want it while you are in the
house, and you can buy another when the storm
is passed." "Willingly." The sailor threw off
his long jacket, for which the Count gave him
ten guineas, and, having put it on over his frock
coat, d'Orsay remounted just as the rain ceased
falling, and spurred on for London. The sun had
burst from behind the clouds, and it was the
hour for promenading in Hyde Park, when Count
d'Orsay made his appearance with the sailor's
loose jacket, worn as an overcoat. "By George,
isn't that original?" cried one, "Charming!"
was the exclamation of another. "How airy and
graceful!" echoed a host. The dandies were
smitten, and within a week all the fashionable
young men had similar over-garments. And
such was the origin of the paletot.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE is the first to hand
for September, and the contents are unusually
excellent. We may refer particularly to the be-
ginning of a new story, "The Atonement of
Leam Dundas," by Mrs. E. Lynn Linton, which
bids fair to rival her own "Patricia Kemball,"
and which we particularly recommend to our
readers. "Mose Underwood" is another illus-
trated story of exceptional force, pathos and in-
sight into character. "Glimpse of Polynesia" is
entertaining and instructive, so also is "A Saw-
dust Fairy," by Charles Warren Stoddard. The
Monthly Gossip and Literature of the day are
treated with freshness and skill. LIPPINCOTT'S
maintains its high standard, and we receive no
periodical, English or American, which is more
welcome to our table.

The third number of WIDE AWAKE, the new
Boston Magazine for "the young of all ages,"
has reached us. It is very bright with pictures,
and its letter press is most "taking." It opens
with a good story by the editor, Miss Farman,
"The Strangers from the South," illustrated by
Shepherd with a sketch of four young "darkies,"
from life. Rev. Dr. Rankin of Washington,
follows with a baby-poem in Scottish brogue.
Mr. Butterworth furnishes a well-illustrated
paper concerning Whittier and his Home. Miss
Eastman's "Young Rick" grows in years and in
mischief. We get a vivid glimpse of the interior
of a New England Poor Farm in the present in-
stalment of this vivacious serial. Patty King-
man's "Ten Thousand Monkeys" are duly
diverting. "Twice in My Life," by Rev. Wm.
M. Baker, shows that this popular clerical novel-
ist was not a whit better than anybody else,
when he was a boy. There is a capital story for
young ladies by Clara F. Guernsey, "Fayette's
Ride." Nora Perry furnishes a stirring centen-
nial poem, "Bunker Hill in 1875." The
measure is as sweet and wild as the music of the
procession,—
"Beat, beat, when the drums, and the fifers played
sweet."

To the serial by the editor, "The Cooking Club
of Tu-Whit Hollow," we specially call the at-
tention of both the girls and their mothers. It
is the most wholesome story we have seen for
a long time, brimming with humor, too. By
all means, let the girls have some cooking-clubs!
There are other poems and papers, a serial by
George Macdonald, Guess Work, and a Music
page, together with a piece of music, under the
supervision of Dr. Tourjée, of the New England
Conservatory of Music; and it is worth while to

take a trip on the Magic Carpet this month.
Messrs D. Lothrop & Co., so well known for their
success in issuing choice books for young people,
are the publishers. The record of no other
house could give a better guarantee for success.
Price \$2.00 per year, postage paid.

In the CANADIAN MONTHLY for August, we
have the second paper of Mr. Jehu Mathews, on
"The Political Future of Canada," which we
trust to see issued in pamphlet form and widely
circulated. Rev. G. M. Grant pulls up suddenly
with his memoir of the late Mr. Howe, so sudden-
ly, indeed, that he omits mention of the cele-
brated Detroit speech. Mr. Le Sueur contributes
a thoughtful paper on a subject congenial to
his tastes and special studies, "Prayer and Mod-
ern Thought." Charles Mair concludes his
well written paper on "The New Canada."
"Vive la Commune" is written by a poet, of
whom we hope to hear further. His verse is far
above the average. "Die Lore-Lei" is not a
translation and hardly even an adaptation from
Heine. If F. R. meant the latter, then we may
not criticize, but if he intended the former, we
would ask him to compare the following as a
mere literary rendering:—

I know not what it presages
That I so mournful be;
A tale of the by-gone ages
Is ever haunting me.

The air is cool and it darkles,
And gently flows the Rhine;
The crest of the mountain sparkles
In the evening sunshine.

High on the promontory
Sits a maiden wondrous fair,
Her gems are a golden glory,
She combs her golden hair.

She combs with a comb of gold and
Warbles a lay thereby,
A song which hath a bold and
Magical melody.

The boatman out from the sedges
Is thrilled by its notes of love;
He sees not the rocky ledges,
He sees but the maid above.

I believe that at length the surges
Swallowed boatman and boat,
And that with the singing of dirges
The Lorelei hath wrought.

ORIGIN OF THE PALETOT.

LITERARY NOTICES.

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A DIORAMA FOR THE CENTEN-
NIAL.

Colonel Forney thus describes a visit to the
new Diorama of the Siege of Paris, now being
rapidly executed for the company organized to
place it on exhibition in Philadelphia before and
during the Centennial year. It is about the size
of the "Siege of Paris" in the Champs Elysées,
one of the most attractive spectacles in this
brilliant metropolis. The view is taken from the
south side of Paris, from the elevation known as
Mount Chatillon, and is different, more original,
and grander than the outlook of that superb
chef d'œuvre. You are brought face to face with
the real features of the fight—those nearest to
you, horses and men, being life-size, and at a cer-
tain stage of the exhibition batteries will be ex-
ploded. The optical delusion is so perfect that
you pass from these objects, and from trees and
houses the natural or usual size, and follow the
city and the conflict till the vision is as realistic
as if you looked down upon Philadelphia from
the top of the Independence Hall. The Tuile-
ries, the Madeleine, the Palais d'Industrie, the
Hotel des Invalides, the Place Vendome, the
Place de la Concorde, the new Opera House,
Notre-Dame, the River Seine; in fact, the streets
of Paris in that dread hour, with a resolute
people behind its walls and a determined foe
without, are seen. Colonel Luinnard has left
nothing to conjecture. He has reduced his pic-
ture to a system, and paints the battle-field
which he saw as he portrays the city in which
he was born. His many lay figures are dressed
in the original uniforms, whether French or
German. Here is a dead landwehr, here a writh-
ing zouave. We have the war-horse in his agony
of death; the shell bursting within a German
fort, and all so drawn and done as to make you
feel that you are in the presence of a genius such
as you see only in these ripe schools. Of the
thirty artists at work when we came in we secured
the names of the following, pleased as they were
with the justice of my statement and of the rare
enjoyment in store for the American people.
Colonel Luinnard is at once soldier, sculptor,
painter, and anatomist. He applies mathemat-
ical rules to his distances and judges of perspec-
tive as he does of figures and colors. His as-
sociates have all been selected for excellence in
their special schools. There is Lehnert, the
celebrated figure painter, some of whose perfect
soldiers, whether they fired standing or kneeling
or lying on the ground, were marvels of life and
force; Betseller, who executed the celebrated
picture of the Marshal President, MacMahon;
Plonsey, the sculptor; Greux, the painter of
cannons, caissons, &c.; Brancous and Leprince,
famous figurantes; Grandchamps, portraits,
together with familiar names like Barnard, Des-
brosses, Bonton, &c. All these men have noble
works admitted to the annual French Exhibition
for 1875, Betseller's picture of MacMahon having
just sold for 30,000 francs. Colonel Luinnard,
speaks of the new diorama with the quiet con-
fidence of certain success. He, as well as his
distinguished assistants, declares that it will be
the most effective work of the kind yet seen. It
was easy to understand that their hearts were in
it, and I shall not be surprised if this experiment
does not attract them to the United States,
where the diorama, apart from its novelty and
the courage of the men who began it, will create

a new and faithful school worthy of the French
masters and their American pupils. The diorama
will be finished in about six weeks, and will be
duly boxed and sent from Havre in the fine
steamer France, which leaves Havre for New
York on the 20th of September. Colonel Luin-
nard will accompany his own work with assist-
ants to see that it is properly placed, explained,
and launched before the public.

THE ART OF DINING.

Albert Rhodes writes in his "French at
Home:" A couple of diners who belong to that
brotherhood of which Brillat-Savarin was the
high-priest enter the Café Anglais. They are
past the prime of life, as are the greater part
of the clients of this celebrated restaurant, which,
according to these elders, is a compliment to
the establishment, for they aver that the young
have uncultivated palates, and hence limited
knowledge of food and drink. The two elderly
diners saunter in and leisurely take their seats.
They have been preparing themselves since break-
fast for the repast of the day in gentle out-of-
door exercise; for nothing annoys them so much
as not to be hungry at the appointed hour. They
select their snow-white table near one of the
windows looking on the boulevard, in order that
the sight may be pleased with the passing prom-
enaders at the same time that the taste is gra-
tified with nourishment. They settle themselves
comfortably in their easy leather chair, as a soft-
voiced waiter presents them with the bill of fare
without asking what they want, well knowing
that they require time for reflection. In an ordi-
nary restaurant he fires off his "Monsieur dé-
sire?" like a shot; but here he gracefully retires
to leave them to that meditation which the im-
portance of the subjects demands. Their sight
is not so good as their plates, and they have re-
course to the monocle, or eye-glasses, to scan, as
the Mohammedan does the Koran, the choice
bit of literature which the waiter has left with
them, and taste the happiness of anticipation.
To the gourmets this is the preliminary pleasure
of the dinner, and is counted on as one of its
features. Having carefully read the bill of fare,
from potage to dessert, there is discussion of an
easy kind, that rather sharpens than dulls the
fine edge of appetite. Were they seated in the
Foreign Affairs Department on the other side of
Seine they might be taken for diplomats discuss-
ing each separate provision of an international
treaty. At length the selections are made; for
example, a simple soup, a carp à la Chambord, a
capon stuffed with Perigord truffles, a pheasant à
la Sainte Alliance, tenderest of asparagus with
sauce à la Pomazome, a dish of ortolans à la Po-
vencale, a pyramid of meringues à la vanille,
and finally a bit of Brie cheese; for the great
Savarin has laid it down that a dinner without
cheese is like a pretty woman with only one eye.
And the swift but smoothly gliding waiter takes
the prandial programme to the horn of plenty
in the rear, which pours out its treasures year in
and year out before the most critical clients of
Europe. The wine is more quickly chosen, for
these sycarites know the cellar by heart—that
famous cellar which runs midway under the street.
One course after another is taken leisurely, and
the pleasure of the occupation long drawn out.
They say "We are not pressed; let us eat at our
leisure, for we always have the time to die."
They are the highest guild in gastronomy, and
are able to discover the superior flavor of the leg
of the partridge on which it has slept, and in
what latitude a grape has ripened, from the wine
they sip. In eating they experienced what they
call the three sensations. The direct, the com-
plete, and the sensation of the judgment: in
drinking, in addition to these sensations, those
of gutturation, and the last—the after-taste of
perfume or fragrance which for a time remains.
Pleasant wit and gentle cachinnation are courted
as auxiliaries to lengthen the appetite and pro-
mote digestion. An hour and a half to two
hours is devoted to the repast; and when the
end is reached three bottles of their dear friends
of the cellar are pleasantly at work under their
waistcoats in assisting digestion. In their gentle
exhalation they feel the need of locomotion; they
saunter out on the boulevard arm in arm,
and find each other and all the world delightful.
They lounge to the Rue de la Paix or de la Made-
leine, and back to the Café Napolitan, renowned
for its coffee, where they take seats at one of the
outside tables on the broad asphalt and sip
fragrant coffee to a fragrant cigar. According to
them, the coffee pushes the dinner, which is fol-
lowed by the sacramental tiny glass of cognac, in
its turn, to push the coffee. Thus the dinner
marches in single file discipline from soup to
cognac, like the queue entering a popular theatre.
Or it is a construction of regular layers, whose
cellar is soup, the ground floor the *piece de resis-
tance*, the upper stories the lighter courses, and
the crowning of the edifice coffee and cognac;
the chimneys being the wines which run through
them all—after leaving the cellar—to warm and
brighten.

ARTISTIC.

HOLMAN HUNT says it is almost impossible for
artists to get pure poppy or linseed oil, as the adulter-
ation extends even to the seeds before they are ground.
The only way to make sure of pure oil is to have the
seed picked over. This is not a cheap process.

GEORGE SIMOND'S statue of "The Falconer,"
soon to adorn Central Park, was publicly exhibited in
Rome at the artist's studio year before last, and was ad-
mired by the connoisseurs of that home of the fine arts
as the chef-d'œuvre of the season. While making this
statue, Mr. Simonda was in the habit of going out on the
Campagna in the character of a falconer, with falcons,
hawks, dogs, and a lot of jolly companions.

* "Senchus More," or Great Law, the title of the Bre-
hon Laws, translated by O'Donovan and O'Curry. Ollamh Fola, who reigned 900 years B. C., organized a
triennial parliament at Tara of the chiefs, priests and
bards, who digested the laws into a record called the
Psalter of Tara. Ollamh Fola founded schools of history,
medicine, philosophy, poetry and astronomy, which
were protected by his successors. Kimbath (450 B. C.)
and Hugony (300 B. C.) also promoted the civil interests
of the kingdom in a remarkable manner.