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# The True Witness

Vol. LV., No. 35 MONTREAL, THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 1906. PRICE FIVE CENTS

## LITERATURE OF THE GAELS.

The following is a lecture delivered by Dr. Douglas Hyde at the University of California:  
"Trelawny, a companion of Byron and Shelley, surveying the achievements wrought by Greece emerging from a desperate, unhappy condition as a nation to a place of comparative strength and vigorous life, said, with an evident eye to Ireland: 'No country, possessed of a name and language, no matter how black its prospects for national life, need despair.'  
"Now, after seventy-five years, Ireland is taking to heart the lesson of Greece and the Hellenes. A halt was called when Ireland was almost on the brink of a precipice, beyond which lay death and extinction, and although faint hearts have cried, 'Too late!' a few noble spirits, nerved by the very difficulties of the situation, and persevering in the face of dreadful difficulties, with their path marked by the deaths of some of the hand, worked to check the downward movement, and now a few, comparatively speaking, of the land stand solidly on the unassailable basis of a nationhood for Ireland, founded upon a natural national language and national customs.  
"We are now relearning our language and finding that it is a splendid instrument of thought and expression. We have to consider, in attempting to weld the modern Gaelic literature with the ancient, to make the body of Gaelic literature complete, that for three centuries Gaelic literature has been regarded almost altogether from the archeological or academic standpoint, and not from the literary point of view. It has not been regarded as having a bearing upon life or upon the existence of a nation. Now we see that it has such a bearing and we are attempting to make our modern literature a rational continuation of the Gaelic literature of the past.  
"We are hindered grievously in this attempt by the circumstance of our old manuscripts being scattered all over the world. What literature we possess, then, we really do not know nor can we ascertain. There are, for example, Irish writers that I have never heard of. A book of one hundred poems was recently shown me, written by a County Clare man that I had never heard of. The manuscripts of the last three centuries have perished by the hundreds.  
A GERMAN SCHOLAR'S TRIBUTE TO IRISH LITERATURE.  
"There is only one body in Ireland, an auxiliary of the Trinity College in Dublin, competent to purchase and husband such manuscripts, and it has meager funds at its command and purchases only moth-eaten volumes. There have been manuscripts of almost incalculable value found by travelers in Ireland of recent years that were perhaps being torn up by children. One Liverpool merchant, fishing in Ireland, discovered that a trunkful of precious manuscripts had been thrown into the river to make room for his luggage. One such manuscript dealt with the ancient Irish belief in the reincarnation of souls. Another such manuscript, kicked about in Irish houses, was discovered to be of such value that it has been published by a German scholar in an important philological journal.  
"Do not, my friends, blame the Irish woman or her children who ignore and throw away these precious manuscripts. Blame, rather, those who have taught them, in school and out, to undervalue and fail to appreciate the worth or meaning of these old Gaelic manuscripts. There were no people that knew more of poets, more of literature, than the Irish, until their knowledge and love of such was repressed and killed by treatment accorded them and methods pursued in offering them education at the hands of another nation.  
KEATING'S HISTORY OF IRELAND.  
"Despite the great handicaps in the seventeenth century, poetry and literature flourished in Ireland. Keating's work, as a historian and poet, being perhaps the most in evidence

at that time. He was of Norman descent. Forced to flee from the city in which he preached because of a pointed sermon which displeased a lady favorite of a foreign minister, Keating wandered in the hills, searched in old records, examined old volumes, and from his materials wrote a history of Ireland.  
"I read you now an extract from Keating's works, and you see, as I do so, something of the strength and beauty and force of the man. One extract shows him as a story-teller, with sense of humor keen; another illustrates the florid beauty of his prose, and perhaps the adjectival excesses of which the ancient Gaelic writers were prone to be guilty. Here is an account of the sufferings of men in hell, which place has always been a happy hunting ground for the lovers of adjectives. Our motto now is, I may say, 'Distrust the adjective.' (The speaker read some extracts.)  
"Now, after hearing some of these paragraphs from Keating, you may say: 'Why not give us these works in other tongues?' Emerson said he would as soon think of swimming the River Charles to get to Boston as to read works in the originals. That may apply to works read for information, but not to literature. That cannot adequately be translated. Thought and language react upon one another. An acquaintance with a nation's literature must be made through the medium of the language itself.  
"Ireland, although an island, has not been, even in centuries back, an insular island. She has been in touch, through her children abroad, with world movements and problems and thought of other lands. An Irishman, centuries ago, had but to say that he was an Irishman on the Continent and he was welcome where learned men or cultured men were found. Now, the Gaelic tongue contains, as then, sufficient in itself to make an Irishman, knowing no other language, a cultured, educated man.  
"I read you now an extract from a Gaelic writer of centuries back that will illustrate perfectly to you the black bitterness of spirit in which the Gaelic writers and literary men of that time seemingly must write. It shows how deep was the hatred of England inspired by the events of the times. It is the work of the Gaelic League to pass a wet sponge upon and over all that and to create a new Gaelic literature that shall be absolutely free from everything that partakes of that spirit of hate.  
"Of old Irish poets were educated in special schools and bards flourished by hundreds. They sang the advantages of a united Ireland as against the advantages of some petty chieftain, and so their songs stimulated national patriotism. The effect was admirable. These poets, too, effectually contradict the idea argued for by some, that there was not in those old days a national war between England and Ireland but merely a social upheaval, in which Irish gentlemen warred with their overlords. We see by the work of these bards that they wore themselves out trying to urge the Gaels to combine against the Gauls, which latter word is Gaelic for foreigners.  
IRELAND'S POETS LOVED MELODY.  
"The Gaelic poets were enamored of melody, and they frequently became intoxicated with it, the tendency accordingly being to sacrifice luminosity of thought to beauty or melody of the verse. I read you illustrations of this, showing the desire and love of the bards for a wealth of metaphors and such rhymes as were conducive to sweet sounds and melodious effects, without adding to the clearness or strength of the thought desired to be expressed. These bards of old, too, believed that a rhyme of the vowels, without regard to the consonants, was ordinarily sufficient. There is a story of one Irish poet, who composed a bit of doggerel about an Irish piper, likening in one line the noise of the pipes to a pig. The piper, offended, asked the poet to change the line, and seriously suggested that the word nymph be substituted for pig, saying that the rhyme would be unspoiled and the sense made better. He believed that as the vowel sound in nymph corresponded with the vowel sound in pig there could be no loss of rhythmic melody.

## SILVER-TONGUED ORATOR ON O'CONNELL.

(By Wendell Phillips.)  
I do not think I exaggerate when I say that never since God made Demosthenes has He made a man better fitted for great work than He did O'Connell. You may say that I am partial; but John Randolph, of Roanoke, who hated an Irishman almost as much as he did a Yankee, when he got to London and heard O'Connell, the old slave-holder threw up his hands and exclaimed: "This is the man, these are the lips, the most eloquent that speak English in my day," and I think he was right.  
Webster could address a bench of judges; Everett could charm a college; Rufus Choate could delude a jury; Clay could magnetize a senate, and Tom Corwin could hold a mob in his right hand, but no one of these men could do more than this one thing. The wonder about O'Connell was that he could out-talk Corwin, he could charm a college better than Everett, and leave Henry Clay far behind in magnetizing a senate.  
It has been my privilege to have heard all the great orators of America who have become singularly famed about the world's circumference. I know what was the majesty of Webster; I know what it was to meet under the magnetism of Henry Clay; I have seen eloquence in the iron logic of Calhoun, but all three of these men never surpassed and no one of them ever equalled the great Irishman. I have hitherto been speaking of his ability and success, I will now consider his character.  
To show you that he never took a leaf from our American gospel of compromise, that he never filed his tongue to silence on one truth fancying so to help another, let me compare him to Kossuth, whose only merits were his eloquence and his patriotism. When Kossuth was in Faneuil Hall, he exclaimed, "Here is a flag without a stain, a nation without a crime."  
We abolitionists appeal to him. 'O eloquent son of the Magyar, come to break chains, have you no word, no pulse-beat for four millions of negroes bending under a yoke ten times heavier than that of Hungary?'  
He exclaimed, "I would forget anybody, I would praise anything, to help Hungary."  
O'Connell never said anything like that.  
When I was in Naples, I asked Sir Thomas Buxton: "Is Daniel O'Connell an honest man?"  
"As honest a man as ever breathed," said he, and then he told me the following story: When, in 1830, O'Connell first entered Parliament, the anti-slavery cause was so weak that it had only Lushington and myself to speak for it, and we agreed that when he spoke I should cheer him up, and when I spoke he should cheer me, and these were the only cheers we ever got. O'Connell came with one Irish member to support him. A large party of members (I think Buxton said twenty-seven) whom we called the West India interest, the Bristol party, the slave party, went to him saying: "O'Connell, at last you are in the House with one helper—if you will never go down to Freemason's Hall with Buxton and Brougham, here are twenty-seven votes for you on every Irish question. If you work with those abolitionists, count us always against you."  
It was a terrible temptation. How many a so-called statesman would have yielded! O'Connell said:  
"Gentleman, God knows I speak for the saddest people the sun sees; but may my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if to help Ireland—even Ireland—I forgot the slave one single hour."  
"From that day," said Buxton, "Lushington and I never went into the lobby that O'Connell did not follow us."  
And then besides his irrefragable character, he had what is half the power of a popular orator, he had a majestic presence. In youth he had the brow of a Jupiter or Jove, and the stature of an Apollo. A little O'Connell would have been no O'Connell

## Marries Catholic Japanese.

On the day of the Longworth-Roosevelt wedding at Washington a unique and unusual nuptial ceremony was performed in St. Joseph's Church, Washington, when Dominic J. Sonayama, of Japan, and Miss Margaret Sherry of that city were married. It is not often that such an event takes place in a Catholic Church.  
Mr. Sonayama comes of one of the best families of Japan and, as usual with the men and women of this race, can trace his progeny back many centuries. He is, first of all, a Christian, and in this connection he has declared to friends that his family has been numbered among the Christian fold for very nearly 300 years. It is a matter of pride with Sonayama that his family was converted by St. Francis Xavier, and fifty years after the advent of St. Francis, when thousands of Christians were slaughtered at the hands of the Buddhists, a number of his family survived and fled to the mountains. Here the refugees formed a colony and lived for many years. Mr. Sonayama has an uncle in the priesthood, Father Fukahori, in Nagasaki.

## Irish Estate Rented by Earl.

The Earl of Eglinton, who rented last year the deer forest at Glendoll in Forfarshire, has taken for the coming season the forest, famed in song and story, of Glenveagh, in the Donegal Highlands, belonging to Mrs. Adair.  
Glenveagh, which is one of the wildest and most picturesque districts in Ireland, was purchased by Mrs. Adair's late husband, a man of immense wealth.  
Lord Eglinton has not lived in Ireland since he was a boy of ten years old, when his father (the "tournament" Earl, and one of the most public-spirited noblemen of his generation), was reigning in Dublin as Viceroy for the second time.  
His first wife, mother of the fourteenth and fifteenth Earls, was a lady of Irish family, a sister of Theresa, Countess of Shrewsbury, who was the loveliest bride of her day, just half a century ago, and who is still an attractive and popular personality in society.

## Pius X. Blesses Priests' T. A. League of America.

Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia, on returning to his diocese from Rome and Ireland recently, brought with him a cordial blessing from the Holy Father for the Priests' Total Abstinence League of America, which has already enrolled over seven hundred priests and several bishops in its ranks. Archbishop Ryan is the honorary president (who is always chosen from the American hierarchy) of the league. He himself took the pledge one day nearly seventy years ago in the streets of Thurles from Father Mathew.  
Rector of St. Bernard's Hospice in the Alps Visits Rome.  
One of Rome's most distinguished visitors recently was the Venerable Father Peter Chanoux, rector of the Alpine Hospice of St. Bernard's, where he has permanently resided for forty-three years. His long stay in the glacial heights of Mont Blanc, snowed up during many months of the year, constitutes a record. The long winter which cuts him off from the outside world is spent by Father Chanoux in the profound studies which won for him the esteem and friendship of many scientists of world-wide fame.

## Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup is an unparalleled remedy for colds, coughs, influenza and diseases of the throat and lungs.

The fame of the medicine rests upon years of successful use in eradicating these affections, and in protecting mankind from the fatal ravages of consumption, and as a neglected cold leads to consumption, one cannot be too careful to fight it in its early stages. Bickle's Syrup is the weapon, use it.

## Securate JOHN A. McCALL.

John A. McCall is dead. The doctors say he died of carcinoma. Everybody who knew him believe he died of a broken heart. The hue and cry from the insurance investigation demanded a victim and John A. McCall was the man whom it chose to crucify.  
The sad part of it all is that people who benefited from the generosity and friendship of Mr. McCall were recreant enough to memory and disloyal enough to gratitude to play the part of the leaders of a baying pack of bloodhounds and it was these bloodhounds who hounded John A. McCall to death.  
And oh! the hypocrisy of it all! John A. McCall was neither better nor worse than other big business men of this day. In business he professed and practised the moral code of ethics common in the dollar-and-cents world. That code is not idealistic. It takes things as it finds them. It tries to bend and twist existing circumstances the best way it can to promote business interests. This John A. McCall did. This ninety-nine out of every hundred business men in the country do every day.  
True, John A. McCall did not take up a Don Quixotic lance to reform the abuses in the insurance world. He knew it was useless for any one man to try and perform this Titanic task. He knew the same abuses existed in a less or greater degree in the business transactions of other big corporations. The truth of the matter is that neither insurance companies nor other corporations spend money on legislative matters because they want to. It is because they have to. The remedy for this evil must come from the people. They must elect men to office who cannot be bought and who will pass and enforce honest laws despite all the money in the world, and who will not levy blackmail by strike legislation.  
Of course, John A. McCall made some mistakes. Who wouldn't in his position? Mistakes we all make and Lord pity the human race if all men had to be crucified for their mistakes as John A. McCall has been. But whatever his mistakes were, all who knew him will never believe that they were of the genus of dishonesty. John A. McCall did not have a dishonest hair in his head and such will be the judgment of posterity.  
Were he at all dishonest, he could easily have made himself a billionaire with his countless chances of making money. But this was not John A. McCall's make-up, and consequently he died practically a poor man. Had he been dishonest, he would have laughed at criticism and ridden in glee over the storm of disapprobation—partly real but equally as much manufactured by designing enemies. But he was honest, and his heart cracked and broke under the unjust suspicion and undeserved blame.  
As an insurance man he had no peer in his day and generation. He was the greatest of them all. He made the New York Life a Gibraltar of insurance companies. This will be his monument. This will ever stand as a ghost to haunt his detractors and his hounders. This in its totality will engulf and bury in oblivion forever the mistakes over which his critics have barked and howled like jackals and vultures.  
In his private life John A. McCall was as clean as the driven snow. He was a gentleman ever, and his religion consisted of actions, not words. The sanctity of home, the purity of marriage, the responsibility of fatherhood, teaching by example were gospels and epistles which he never forgot and from which he never wavered. "Mother," was his last word, and this was significant of his whole character. A better son, a kinder father, a more loving husband never lived.  
In pure intellect he was a giant, in energy a human dynamo, in executive ability a power that placed him among the leading business generals of his age.  
GEORGE R. KELLEY.

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