

types of all that is best and noblest, the incarnation of high principles, sublime charity and child-like simplicity. If he gives us an occasional picture of a worldly-minded or rigid ecclesiastic, can we forget the hosts of self-sacrificing, lovable priests that throng his novels?

If the scholarly Canon sometimes leaves us breathless in our fruitless attempts to dovetail the typical Irishman's theories and practices, it is simply because he realizes that centuries of oppression and persecution, have made of the Irish race, a people better fitted for heaven than for earth. Hunger and poverty endured for their faith, have spiritualized the Irish nature, just as macerations and fasting etherealized the anchorites of the desert. The trivial luxuries of life are too trivial to engage the interests of the Irish peasant, what cares he for a palace or filthy lucre, when God's blue heaven spreads its sapphire vault above him, while the bracing breezes from the grassy downs and briny marshes set his nerves a-tingle and soothe his brow with their pure, stimulating touch? It is little surprising that the world of to-day in its maddened rush after glory, luxury, and self-satisfaction, should sneer at the simple-minded, pure-living Irish peasant. It is nothing more than the eternal antagonism of evil to sanctity — like the "eternal monks," Ireland has kept her birthright, where others have sold it for a pittance. When the moral vision of the world, is all distorted and false idols reign in the once glorious shrines of the God of Israel, the faithful sons and daughters of Ireland, see still God's power in the lightning. His beauty in the snowy white and heavenly blue of the Irish sky—His love in the Cross that now weighs them down—His tenderness in the suffering that ages have meted out to them. They, perhaps alone, with the Heroic Poets have by supernatural insight felt the truth of those exquisite lines of Father Tabb:—

"Is thy servant a dog? So must he be
If in the street where flaunting sin, and cruel envy meet,
He'd find the sweet, faint vestige of thy feet."

In reading any of Father Sheehan's works, one cannot but be struck by the author's vast erudition. He seems equally well-versed in German, French, Greek and Italian, while his pages teem with historical and classical allusions. Yet never is the reader wearied by the writer's "savoir." All seems so