

penal laws or the Act of Union, and its revival a greater blessing than even our emancipation. The Irish race would have had a different history for the past fifty years, if it had been welded, by a common language, into unbroken solidarity. And the Catholic Church in America and England, marvellous as its expansion has been under the ferment of Irish faith, would to-day have been fixed even on a firmer basis, if the Irish Catholics, like the German, had the strength and force of a national language behind them. There is no place nor occasion for despair. What the Jews did, after they had lost their common Hebrew tongue in the Babylonian captivity; what the Germans have done to revive their language, after it had been extinguished by Frederick and Voltaire, that we can do. And if it ever does come back, may there come back with it the old, genial, Celtic spirit, instead of the Anglicised, mammon-worshipping, neo-pagan manners and customs, which in many places at home, are the chief characteristics of our race to-day."

These are strong words but they are used by one who has unsurpassed knowledge of the subject.

That the movement is also literary in its character goes without saying, and as such it seems to be the manifestation of an unconscious but real effort of the Celtic mind to retain its characteristic ideals in thought and expression. What these ideals are and what the influence they have exercised in English literature, may be gathered from the importance attached to its Celtic element by every critic worthy of the name. Matthew Arnold's appreciation of this element, to mention but one of the able writers who have paid tribute to it, is too well known to be recapitulated here. Now if this element is a quality of such importance in any writer and for any literary student, it follows that for the writer or student by race or affinity a Celt, it has a special value. It may be urged that this literary characteristic, as it occurs in translations of the masterpieces of the language, may be studied, if not acquired, without going to the trouble of learning enough of the original tongue for that purpose. But, as Father Forde says, dealing with this very point in the essay to which we are already indebted, "The best translation is but a poor imitation