

The sentiment contained in this phrase is in itself one of the noblest that can find a place in the heart of an Irishman, and it was a happy thought which prompted its adoption as the motto of the Gaelic movement. But when the personality of the author of the saying and the circumstances under which he used it,—the man and the scene,—are considered: a member of a harried order and an adherent of a persecuted creed, the eager, indefatigable scholar (he might have stood for the hero of Browning's poem "A Grammarian's Funeral,") who had, in all seasons and in spite of all discouragements, gleaned from every accessible field the material of those Annals without which no coherent history of Ireland would have been possible, now with his devoted colleagues taking advantage of a temporary relaxation in penal laws to complete his great work,—with such a background, I say, the phrase in question, blending as it does the allied sentiments of religion and patriotism, becomes an epitome of Irish patriotism as its best.

Then the web of a language which, through an instinctive reverence on the part of the people speaking it, yields a variant (more liquid and tender than the generic form) for the name of Mary, when referring to the Blessed Virgin, must be shot through with the golden threads of religion.

Again, who that has heard the greetings, the ordinary, everyday salutations, of the Irish peasantry, whether in the vernacular or in the English modified into familiar idioms, has not been impressed by the dominant religious element in them? Were not editorial patience and typographical limitations to be considered, examples of this tendency might here be given. A passage from Father Sheehan's brilliant pamphlet "Our Social and Personal Responsibilities," which has recently been issued by the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland, might, however, be cited as bearing in a general but luminous way on this phase of our subject.

"I have no room," says the author of "My New Curate," who, it should be borne in mind, is also a parish priest laboring in the Irish-speaking fringe along the seaboard, "to speak of the necessity of conserving our racial characteristics, especially our language. I shall content myself by saying of this latter, that I consider its extinction, partial though it be, a greater evil than