

FRIENDLY CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

The use of slang may be generally defined as the abuse of language. On this subject, "The Home Journal and News," of Yonkers, N.Y., recently published a most instructive article. After pointing out the glories of the English language, the great names that are associated with its proper use for centuries, the magnificent works which it embalms for the benefit of generations to come, it refers to the fact that, outside bar-rooms and betting-rings, there is no place that slang may be fitly spoken. All cultivated and self-respecting people avoid it. The youth who prides himself on his collection of vulgar phrases, may be considered smart by the unrefined, but he is a bore and a nuisance in all society. We will take a few extracts from the article in question, and possibly they may find application even amongst our Canadian people. The writer says:—

"It is not a pleasant thing to hear slang from the lowest hanger-on at racing-stables, public-houses, and cab-stands, but it is vastly more unpleasant to hear it in the first-class railway carriage, the coffee-room of an hotel, or at a concert.

"How absurdly such men talk! They do not speak of a thing as being fashionable, but tell you that it is 'the cheese.' If you attempt to converse with them about a celebrated orator of the day, you are probably told that he is a 'spouter.' If you make an allusion to a beautiful lady whose society forms the chief charm of the house in which she lives, you are immediately asked whether she has any 'shells,'—that is whether she has a fortune. If you make enquiry after the speaker's father, you are probably told that 'the old buffer' is pretty well.

"Slang often gives wrong names to things; it is used to cover something that the speaker does not wish to appear, even to himself, in its true light. He may have been drinking for hours with a lot of wild, reckless, immoral companions; but he does not tell you that he has been drunk, he merely says that he has made 'a night of it.' If he should happen to tell you all about some companion of his who has wasted a fortune, lost his character, broken his father's heart, made his mother blush to own him as her son, and filled the hearts of his wiser brothers and fair sisters with grief and shame, he does not say that his friend had shown himself a profligate and a brute, but merely tells you that 'he has been sowing his wild oats,' and that 'he has made a mess of it.' Beyond this he will not go. He will not say that his friend was a gambler, a drunkard, an embezzler, a liar, and a vagabond. The worst crime alleged against him is that 'he has made a mess of it.'

"It is the same when young men who speak slang are conversing about immoral women. You do not find them speaking of these women in plain, simple, honest language. 'She is a gay girl,' would be the phrase used. 'A gay girl!' What does it mean? What sort of a girl is that? Is it one of the painted and elaborate dressed, drinking, heartless, and abandoned women who prowl the streets who are devoid of all womanly grace and goodness, and who ruin young men and then laugh at them and cast them off. The 'gay girl' is a half-educated, sensual, impudent, wasteful, lazy, drunken person. Young men are infatuated, and expend their income, beg money from their fathers and mothers, and rob their employers, for the sake of giving these 'gay girls' what they demand.

"Life is short: it must be enjoyed and the employer's money must enable them to enjoy it, so a few more dollars taken, to be repaid the week after next. The money is all wasted in a night. Money soon goes at a restaurant. A visit to some concert hall requires a full purse—a purse filled with money belonging to somebody. So the money is spent, and when the week after next comes it cannot be replaced. The plot thickens. The cashier discovers the money is absent which ought to be present. The young man is called into the counting house taken before 'the governor,' or brought face to face with the directors. It is all over. The game is played out. The young man comes from the judge. He is entrusted to the custody of keeper, makes his debut at the criminal court, and receives his sentence of imprisonment. The end is not yet. There is a life of shame, remorse, and want awaiting him. But do his companions who are so fond of slang call him a thief? They merely observe that 'he outran the constable.' So, slang is used to hide vice, to cover dishonesty, and to gild over the follies of young men.

"Our advice to young men is: Call things by their right names. Call a spade a spade; a necktie, a necktie, a thief a thief; a father, a father; a young lady, a young lady; an employer, an employer. Never apply a slang word to anything or any person. Look clearly at a thing; see what it is; understand its nature; do not blind the truth; call the thing whatever it may be by its right name, and then ask, How does it look? If it bears upon it the impress of goodness, truth, and honor, admire it; if it does not, shun it. Do not use slang at any time, but especially do not use it for the purpose of gilding vice and prevent you from seeing it in its true colors."

THE POET SEDULIUS.

The Very Rev. Thomas J. Shahan, D.D., has a lengthy and most erudite letter in the "Catholic University Bulletin," in which he strives to show that the famed poet Sedulius was an Irishman. The nationality of this poet has been one of the vexed questions of the history of Roman literature. Many scholars believed that he came from Ireland; Irish scribes and their English disciples copied and read his writings; he was the first Latin poet to introduce rhyming, which was invented centuries before his time by Irish poets. Although Dr. Shahan does not claim to have proved the Irish parentage of the poet, yet he advances many strong arguments in favor of that contention. Among other arguments he quotes from a work, written in the eighth century, in which it is stated "Sedulius, the verse-maker, was at first a layman, and acquired in Italy his knowledge of philosophy." To this the writer adds:—

"If the scribe thought that Sedulius were an Italian by birth would it not seem irrelevant to call attention to the fact that he studied philosophy 'in Italia?' What more natural than that he should frequent the schools of his native land? It has been suggested that he might have been born a Roman, and acquired his early training at Milan or elsewhere in Italy. To this it may be replied that this detail of the life of Sedulius has reached us in a manuscript of Anglo-Saxon or Irish origin; hence, the stress laid on the studies of Sedulius in Italy is quite natural in the supposition that the birthplace of Sedulius was that of the northern eighth-century scribe of the Codex Gothanus. A twelfth century manuscript (Vatican, Palat. n. 242), says that our poet was first a 'laicus gentilis, sed in Italia philosophiam didicit, dein ad Dominum conversus et a Macedonio baptizatus, in Arcadium venit, ubi hunc librum composuit.'

The antithesis suggested by 'gentilis' may as well be between 'Barbarian' and 'Italian' as between 'Gentile' and 'Christian.' In any case the appellation of 'gentilis' rather strengthens the view of those who maintain that Sedulius was born in Ireland."

Although it would be impossible to reproduce the six or seven columns of learned arguments and quotations brought to bear on the subject by Dr. Shahan, still, for other purposes than merely that of establishing the nationality of the Latin poet, we give these concluding paragraphs: at least they have a great weight in regard to the origin of rhyming, which was entirely Irish:—

"Sedulius was the first Latin poet who systematically introduced rhyme as an intentional element in the art of word-painting. With him begin to appear the numerous musical sound-echoes or rhymes which the Irish had long before worked into a most intricate system. Ebert says that the most varied rhymes are to be found in the famous Christmas hymn of Sedulius (A Solis Ortus Cardine), and Dr. Sigerson is of opinion that the influence of this hymn, with its interwoven echoes, was great 'in educating the ear and popularizing rhyme over Christendom.' He is of opinion that 'in his great poem (the Carmen Paschale) Sedulius impresses certain marked Irish peculiarities upon the classic hexameter. The influence,' he adds, 'of this remarkable epic, read as it was in all the Irish schools in the Continent and in Britain, must have been immense. The systematic adoption by its author of rhyme, assonant and consonant, and of alliteration, must have molded the forms of subsequent literary production in all the nascent languages of Europe, North and South, as it taught them the art of alliteration;

of assonant and consonant rhymes."

It is not claimed for the foregoing considerations that they prove Sedulius to have been an Irishman. But, in the absence of any positive knowledge as to the place of his origin, they deserve attention, for they show that at a very early date he was claimed by Irish scholars as one of their nation, that the Irish scribes and their English disciples copied and read his writings with especial pleasure, and that through him certain distinctive traits of Irish literature were grafted upon the Latin. This is

certainly enough to show that the tradition of his Irish origin is far older than Trithemius, and goes back to the crepuscular hour of Roman literature, to the eighth and ninth centuries, when the old classic life was yet the normal ideal of existence, and the reminiscences of its literary glories were not yet extinguished. Perhaps if we ever discover that 'complete copy of Genadius' that Sirmond had in his hands we may hear such final evidence from a contemporary as will remove this problem from the list of the unsolved questions of patrology."

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

In a recent issue of the "True Witness" reference was made to the attempts in some quarters, to awaken a sentiment in favor of the abolition of capital punishment. A reader of the "True Witness" now writes:—

The cases are exceptional when any sympathy should go out to the murderer. When such cases occur the jury is invariably lenient, and this leniency fully covers all the necessities of mercy in the matter. It is not a mercy to the rest of the population to encourage a red-handed descendant of Cain in his homicidal tendencies by letting him know beforehand that he in turn will not be killed. To those in favor of the abolition of capital punishment the tritest answer might be: Let the criminal not kill and then he will not be killed.

Even supposing for a moment that it was thought desirable to look upon the utmost penalty of the law as barbaric and that the means would be taken for the protection of society by life imprisonment, the conditions which govern our institutions both in Canada and the United States are of such nature that there is no guarantee of the fulfillment of the law, the pardoning power being of so elastic a character that it sometimes constitutes a menace to public safety. We need not go back many years to find cases where the pardoning prerogatives have been abused. There is a morally deterrent effect in the knowledge that the murderer will suffer death, not to speak of the added suffering that goes with the fact of its being in cold blood. The murderer here has the advantage over his victim. The latter is "sent to his account with all his imperfections on his head." The former is mercifully given time for repentance and to make his peace with God. The man whose heart is hardened to the murder point understands that beyond killing he can no further go; he knows that it is the most dreadful and irreparable injury he can inflict on an enemy and he pauses while he thinks that the law demands a life for a life. Without touching on the guilt of the criminal or the consequences hereafter, the physical and mental agony preceding execution has a terror-striking effect on most men and the fear of death has prevented many murders. May be at some future time more religion and a somewhat improved doctrine of civilization may work a change in the present order of things, but as conditions are to-day capital punishment seems about the most efficient, if not the only, prophylactic for homicide and a few other capital crimes.

And what shall be said of women, who in the ordinary course of events are styled ladies and are leaders of fashion, who offer flowers and delicacies at the shrine of friends only in outward semblance human, whose crimes could even discount murder? How can this mania be classed? The telling of the whole truth would not make pleasant reading.

And still there is another point in connection with latter day murders. That is the unaccountable Quixotism that says a woman should not suffer the death penalty. As a matter of fact when a woman degenerates into a murderess, she is usually worse than a man. Her plans are laid more craftily and she goes about her dreadful work in a more methodical cold-blooded way. The most notorious life takers in history have been women and beautiful women at that. A bad woman is a greater danger to the fabric of society than a bad man, and still pardon for the most outrageous crimes are prayed for simply because the criminal happens to be a woman. The recent executions of two women has to some extent done much to wipe away this peculiar popular prejudice. We would not care to advocate the English punitive methods of the early part of the century, when Margaret Nesbit was hanged for forgery, when Mary Young suffered the same penalty at Tyburn for picking pockets or when Eliza Fennell was gibbeted for attempted poisoning. The penalties were of course too severe, and they are only instanced to show that there was only one law alike for man and woman.

Many of the terrors of executions are removed under present methods and life is taken with the least possible suffering to the criminal, the idea of revengeful punishment giving way

IRISH INDUSTRIES AND THE RAILROADS.

The speech made by Mr. William Field in the House of Commons last Friday on the question of Irish railways marks the commencement of a fresh agitation for the redress of what is undoubtedly a genuine Irish grievance. The present position of these roads, with one highly paid director for each ten miles of railway is so extravagant that even the "Times" remarks:—

"We are not opposed in principle to any method of dealing with the Irish railways, whether involving state possession or state management." Truly, as Sir William Harcourt once said, "we are all socialists in these days!" The absurdity of the "case for the companies" in Ireland is clear.

The capital of the London and Northwestern Railway aggregates over £100,000,000 sterling; the capital of all the Irish companies put together is some £36,000,000 sterling, and yet the Irish roads require, in the words of the select committee which reported in 1891, "270 directors, 37 secretaries, and 20 managers!" It is little wonder that in giving evidence before the committee Sir George Findlay should declare that

from a single office in Dublin he, working four days a week, could do all the work done by these multitudinous directors, secretaries, and managers, and enjoy the other two days salmon fishing on the Shannon.

In a recent analysis of railway fares Mr. Edwards states that the average fares in Ireland are 80 per cent. higher than in England, and that, as the necessary effect of these prohibitive rates, while each inhabitant of England makes on an average 23 railway journeys yearly and the average for Scotland is 14, in Ireland it is only 4. In some admirable papers, which have since been republished from the Fortnightly Review, the late Mr. Charles Waring, the eminent railway contractor, was able to demonstrate that the cultivation of Irish flax had been almost destroyed by the excessive railway charges, and that Belfast linen manufacturers are able to import flax from points east of Ghent, by way of Hull, at lower rates than for the short haul of 80 miles from Donegal. Mr. Waring also wrote:—

"All the efforts to revive the wretched industries of Ireland have been frustrated by high rates. The railways

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It is not open to doubt that a purely agricultural community such as Ireland, at a time when the profits of agriculture have been almost annihilated by the general fall of prices, must suffer very severely by that ridiculous policy of Irish railway managers which aims at charging every penny the business will bear. The distress occasioned by such a policy, so long continued would, even without political causes for unrest, be always at work beneath the surface. If not reinforced by other elements of disturbance, the short-sighted railway policy must of itself have resulted in an agrarian agitation, in the displacement of the population and in the decay of trade. The facts are not disputed; the only questions are: What shall the remedy be? And how soon can it be applied? There is no more important matter for treatment than the Irish railway problem, and it should be treated without delay.—Financial News.

SCHOOL SELF-GOVERNMENT FAD.

We take the following from the New York Post. It is another striking evidence of the lengths to which a certain class of people will go in order to put one of their "fads" into practice:—

"The Superintendent of Public Schools at Elizabeth, N. J., has introduced a new system of self-government among the scholars of the Dattin High School. Instead of having a 'monitor' or teacher to watch them they govern themselves, and have formed a republic and elected officers to that end. An advisory committee has also been chosen; being composed of three members of each class' elected by the pupils. The Superintendent, vice-principal, and teachers form the executive body of the republic.

The duties of the council include the recommendations of punishments in cases of misdemeanor, of privileges to be granted to classes in high-standing, and of methods of enforcing the support of the resolutions passed. Prof. Shearer holds the position of Mayor of the Commonwealth to which the members of the school belong, and reserves the right to veto any measure that is not for the general good. The duties of the advisory committee are to make suggestions, give advice, and to report violations of rules to members of the council. The Commonwealth is composed only of pupils of the school who have promised to support all resolutions adopted by the council and approved by the executive board.

The object of this plan is not to shift the responsibility of government of the pupils from the shoulders of the faculty, but to teach the scholars how to govern themselves, and to make them feel that they are doing right for the sake of right, and not because of the punishment that will follow wrong doing. The members of the various committees have entered upon their novel duties with a determination to promote the welfare of the school at large."

SORROW OF A CENTENARIAN.

Julia Hedges, aged 100, was found dead in her bed at Indianapolis, on Friday last. Her husband, 106, survives. His limbs are trembling and

spare, and his face is covered with a scraggly beard. His clothes hang loosely about this stooped form but he complains of no particular ill-health, though admitting that his memory is not as good as it was.

He was much affected by the death of his wife, who lived with him for seventy years. He spoke tearfully of their early life and courtship to-night and at times seemed to forget that she was dead.

"I helped to build the first road that came to Indianapolis," he said—"the Madison Railroad. It was laid down with wooden rails. And I chopped some of them. I was born in Flemingsburg, Fleming County, Ky. My people are all there now, I suppose. Some of them are rich, too. I used to go to see my wife there, and when she and her mother and father came to Indianapolis I came too."

Success Must Follow

THE FAIR USE OF DR. WILLIAMS' PINK PILLS FOR PALE PEOPLE.

That is the Experience of Mrs. Sydney Druce, of Deseronto, Who Had Suffered for Many Years with Rheumatism and Catarrh of the Bowels.

From the Tribune, Deseronto.

Our attention was lately directed to the wonderful cure effected upon a resident of Deseronto, which illustrates in a very marked way the merits of that widely known health restorer "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills." We refer to the cure of Mrs. Druce, wife of Sydney Druce, caretaker of the High School building. Being desirous of giving our readers the facts, a reporter of the Tribune called at Mrs. Druce's residence, and is therefore able to present our readers with the following facts, which can be vouched for by many neighbors and friends of the family. Mrs. Druce had from the early age of ten years been a sufferer from rheumatism and had endured an untold amount of suffering from this dire disease. She had tried scores of different medicines to dispel the malady but in vain. Doctors told her it was impossible to eradicate the disease from her system and she had at last become resigned to the belief that rheumatism was incurable. In addition to rheumatism, about seven years ago she began to suffer from catarrh of the bowels with its attendant headaches and depression of spirits. The pain of the rheumatism and constant headaches were her out. The doctors prescribed opiates which only dulled the pain, but did not repel the disease. The two diseases continued to make steady headway and at times she felt such pain that she could not even allow her husband to raise or move her. The neighbors thought she would never get up again. All kinds of remedies were suggested and many of them tried, but all in vain. Providentially, as Mrs. Druce expressed it, the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills was mentioned. It was not until the end of the second box that she realized any benefit. She then began to realize that she was regaining strength. Before she mentioned this to others her husband also observed the change, for he remarked one day "those pills are doing you some good, you look livelier than you have for some time." She continued the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills until she had taken fourteen boxes, with the gratifying and almost remarkable results that she was completely cured of the rheumatism and catarrh, not a solitary symptom of either trouble remaining. Mr. Druce was present during the interview and confirmed all that his wife had said and was as delighted as she in praising the virtues of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Mrs. Druce said that out of gratitude for this wonderful restoration to health she had told scores of other sufferers of different diseases of the virtues of the medicine which had been the undoubted means of prolonging her life. She hoped that others would follow her plan of giving the pills a fair and prolonged trial as she was confident that in the end success would surely follow as in her own case.

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