

ONLY AN INDIAN SQUAW.

ONLY an Indian squaw !
 Brown as a berry,
 Each eye an ebon star,
 Each lip a cherry.
 Light as the mountain-deer,
 Active and agile,
 Voice deep, yet sweet and clear,
 Form slight and fragile.
 Back from the sunburnt brow,
 Thick and entwined,
 Tresses of raven hue,
 Float unconfined.
 And though a savage belle,
 Wit is not wanting—
 Wondrously beautiful !
 Darkly enchanting !

ESPÉRANCE.

CRITICS AND CRITICISM.

THE old-time feud existing between author and critic is not likely to perish, though it is mollified by the sweetness and light toward which, during this favoured century, our unripened and benighted sphere is supposed to be tending. In days of old, when the sword was mightier than the pen and usurped many of its functions, when critics made merry together, like warriors on the eve of a battle whose victory is assured to them, the antagonism between writer and reviewer was natural and unavoidable as that of builder and destroyer, or innocent lamb and hungry wolf. One is reminded of the fable concerning the latter. "You are muddying this stream for me," says the wolf. "Oh, excuse me," replies the trembling lamb, "but you are drinking higher up the stream than I." "You cruelly wronged me two years ago, and now I shall take revenge." "Two years ago! Alas, good sir, that was eighteen months before I lived to enjoy the honour and pleasure of your acquaintance." "Well, anyway, I'm going to kill you." This, of course, is an unanswerable argument.

All that is changed now, and it is a poor writer that can't fight a critic with critical weapons. "My verses are meaningless; are they?" asks the poet. "That is precisely the opinion entertained by the cattle in the field concerning the songs of the birds in the branches." If A accuses B of straining after point and effect, it remains for B to accuse A of being pointless and ineffectual. If C patronises D's book in a grandmotherish sort of way, D can retain his self-respect only by treating C's review with grandfatherly tolerance. If E and F, after quoting a passage from G's novel, regretfully assure him that "there is no such thing as an abundance of foliage," and "no such word as boat-ride," the only balm for G's aching wound is to produce a microscope of equal power, and by its aid to discover in the critiques of E and F several other things and words which are also—unfortunately—non-existent.

No, we have no fondness for the goblin analytic, who hates creative mind. Ever since the first and greatest Creator finished His work, and pronounced it good, we, or some of our race, have criticised and found flaws in it. It required an infinite Being to create this world, but any one is capable of railing at its imagined defects. The critic indeed never lacks employment. He may find a hundred faults in a potato; but, supposing the potato to be perfect, the subject is by no means outside his proper sphere, for it still remains for him to complain that it is not a parsnip. A great amount of needless criticism has been written on this principle. It may easily be objected to the essays of Emerson, that they are not diffuse enough to be popular, or to the poems of Dobson and Bunner, that they do not teach a lesson, or to the family cook book, that it is deficient in imaginative power. But, however indispensable these missing qualities may seem to be in critical eyes, it is certain that writers of individuality are sure to develop certain methods and characteristics that criticism, though it may modify, can never wholly alter. The true critic sees not only what the author has done, but what he can do, and he knows just what kind of "raking over" is needed by the mental soil with which he is dealing to make it bring forth abundantly the best of which it is capable. He knows where to weed and where to water. He is not pettishly dissatisfied, but lastingly unsatisfied. He is aware that every book represents a certain amount of drudgery on its author's part, and if it is wholly unlightened by inspiration there is greater need for the exercise of charity toward its unfortunate producer; still, though his sympathy is boundless, it is not "a mere mush of concession." He distinguishes between the criticism that will benefit author, or reader, or both, and that which is useless to every one. The poet, who is not so great as he is sensitive, would like to write, "Please keep off the grass," above every blade of tender herbage

that springs so abundantly and so verdantly in that empty pasture lot he calls his mind; but 'twould be a clumsy and a churlish thing deliberately to go out of one's way to trample it down. The self-confidence that is born of vanity is of few days and full of trouble. Soon enough to that poor rhymester will come the winter of his discontent, when every well beloved leaf will be forever laid low.

The peculiarities of reviewers would form a chapter by themselves. They are occasionally unlike in their opinions, and nothing is more painful to a literary prisoner than when the jury of critics are unable to agree. He does not smile when one of his acquaintances testifies that the deed was skilfully performed, nor sigh when another, equally competent, says that it was an unskilful performance. Too well he knows—poor culprit!—that the all-important question asked of the jury will be of far greater weight than "Skilful or not skilful?" Of course, in connection with almost every crime there are extenuating circumstances, but in his case, alas, how few! It can be proved that it was committed in cold blood, that there was small provocation, that very little if anything was to be gained by it, and that the innocent public against which the assault was directed has never done aught to injure him. His attack is unreasonable, unjustifiable, almost unheard of. Well for him if he receives a recommendation to mercy.

The public, after all, is the only judge whose opinion is considered of vital consequence; yet there is one who is mightier still, and the name of this chief critic is Time. In his withered fingers how small a handful remains of all that has been so ardently bepraised in the past!

A. ETHELWYN WETHERALD.

ARCHBISHOP LYNCH AND THE IRISH QUESTION.

THAT any one who has chosen for his vocation obedience to the command, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel," should busy himself with politics, is perhaps strange. That he should busy himself with the politics of a country with which he has nothing officially to do, is perhaps stranger. But strangest of all is the sight of a Canadian preacher of the gospel taking upon himself to advise an English political leader. There may be some connecting link between the cure of Canadian souls and the public advocacy of Home Rule, but the ordinary layman will think such connecting link exists only in a desire to enlarge the Roman See. At all events, whatever Archbishop Lynch's motives in addressing a letter to Lord Randolph Churchill, the letter itself is one well worthy of perusal and comment.

This letter is a curious one; not least curious being the style in which it is couched. His Grace's language is graphic and figurative; but his figures are sometimes such as to raise a smile—as, for example, when he "trusts English prudence will avert a growing volcano." A volcano, we submit, does not grow, and cannot easily be turned aside, least of all by prudence. But these are minor points. What the ordinary Englishman who reads his Grace's letter will especially take note of is the very evident insinuation, we had almost said threat, that if England refuses to grant Home Rule to Ireland, there are in England's colonies a sufficient number of Irish to revenge themselves for such refusal. In other words, Archbishop Lynch reminds the ex-Chancellor, that in dealing with the question of granting the right of self-government to the Irish, the British Empire must take into serious consideration the probability of Canada being attacked by the American-Irish of the United States; and what is more, that in Archbishop Lynch's opinion it would be far safer for the British Empire to give in to these American-Irish and allow the severance of the Union, than to run the risk of such attack. What meaning other than this can be attached to the following sentences:—"Better are good neighbours near than blood relations at a distance. Should any misunderstanding happen between England and the United States, Canada would, in a few days, be overrun by American troops. It would cost that Republic very little, as the Irish-American military organisations would supply very largely both men and money." Furthermore, there is a clearly implied, though unexpressed, idea that in "overrunning Canada" these "Irish-American military organisations" would be doing God's service. If these are not his Grace's sentiments, what does he mean when he says, "We must not forget how the great Roman Empire fell. England is not beyond the reach of eternal justice." Is not deserved retribution by human instruments ("Irish-American military organisations," namely) implied by these words?

If so, if this is really what Archbishop Lynch intends to convey, then we can only ask, Does his Grace fully comprehend the character of the course to which he has committed himself? That course is plain; it is simply the signification of his approval of the open exhibition of American-Irish hatred of Great Britain. The public expression of such approval by a man of his Grace's position and influence is a most serious matter. It is nothing more nor less than the incitement by the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Ontario of the American-Irish against England. And England, be it remembered, is the land to which the colony in which Archbishop Lynch holds so exalted a post is united by most sacred ties, the ties of kinship, dependence, and loyalty.

If this is the pass to which matters have come—if the British Government is to be hampered in its attempts to solve a most complicated problem by the public approval of the antagonism of its avowed enemies by