

slumber, and no dream of injury would intrude to disturb my rest. Violent and cruel actions certainly take place in Ireland. So they do in England; so they do in America; so they do everywhere—when men become excited: unfortunately, the causes of irritation in Ireland are constant and manifold; judged by the sources of provocation, the popular patience, rather than the popular outrages, will perhaps, be the matter of surprise. The peasant has burned the house from which he was driven, and he has shot the man who claimed the right to drive him from it; yet that home was never closed upon the wretched; and the door was always open to the poor, who sought it for a refuge. The Irish have a quick sense of wrong and they want that considerate wisdom, which teaches the folly and the crime of becoming our own avengers. They are a people of impulses, and the circle of human life is small, indeed, in which impulses can be safe or virtuous guides in action. The Irish have had the worst possible education from circumstances, and hardly any instruction from schools; they have grown up amidst a chaos of anomalies and contrasts—with a Protestant church, and a Roman Catholic people, the church the richest in the world, and the people the poorest. Judge the Irishman in his own position, and not in yours, this is what justice demands and what justice will concede, and after all, mercy requires you to judge him with clemency, and not with rigor. Sympathy is the basis of the Irish virtues, the highest principle is the idea of duty; all else is uncertain. We find, accordingly, the Irish failing in many of the sterner virtues, yet excellent in those that concern the affections,—in the love of kindred,—fidelity in service, and in friendship, hospitality to strangers, and pity to the poor. The Irish are not prudent, but as a people, they are pure. They are not slaves to the appetites; and physical good is not their strongest motive. The sacred relationships of home are revered, and a guard of sanctity is thrown around the humblest hearth. They rarely act in gross and naked selfishness; they rarely commit iniquity for money. The Irish are accused of being improvident and indolent, this accusation of improvidence is an odd accusation against people that have nothing in the present to waste, and nothing except hunger, in the future to foresee. Nor is that of indolence less amusing where no work is to be done,—where, if there was, nothing is to be had for doing it. Ireland is as good a school for economy and industry, as Bohemia would be for navigation and sailors. Habits of saving and activity in Ireland might indeed find a place in

the fancy of an Irishman—for no anomaly is too strange for that—but, they would be as productive of comfort as a dream of eating would be of nourishment, or as the feast of Barmecide was of enjoyment. Here, we know that the Irishman can work and does, as our rail-roads show—and that he can *save* there is bank-documentary evidence—evidence also of another kind, that has its record elsewhere than in cash-books or ledgers. Show the Irishman his reward, and while a muscle or a sinew lasts, no toil deters him; the dismal drudgery, from which others shrink, he patiently undergoes: he labors, and complains not. Life and limbs the poor Irish in this country are constantly risking; and though life is often lost and limbs are often broken, they relax not in the heroism of unpraised but honest exertion.

Let me not dwell upon the tendency to combat of which the Irish are accused, and not, certainly without justice. I trust the period draws near when improved influence will suppress these barbarian conflicts, not only among the peasants of Ireland, but among the nations generally, who set them the example of bloodshed in the proportion of a deluge to a dew drop. But while we condemn this savage pugnacity which every man who honors Ireland deplures, we must give some credit to that dauntless courage with which it is connected, a courage that has been signalised in every region of the earth and sea. Where is the print of British power that there is not the trace of Irish blood? Where is the spot in the world-wide empire of British dominion, that has been contested most manfully and won most gallantly, and purchased most dearly, that Irish hearts have not burst in the struggle, and Irish hands urged on the chariot of victory? Ask, if the Irish are brave, a thousand places from Andes to Alps, if they had a voice, would shout back the answer; and if the ocean could give up the dead, the witnesses would come in multitudes. The ranks would stretch from Copenhagen to Nile, wherever the sea had opened for the bold sailor, obscurity and a grave. And still more numerous would be the land in pouring forth the myriads which have sown it with the dust of Irishmen; ask the sands of India; ask the plains of Africa; ask the valleys of the Pyrenees, and the shout of victory from Calcutta to Corunna will echo in reply; ask the same question on the field of Waterloo, and if the blades of grass had tongues, they would tell that they have grown from Irish dust, or have been made green by the streams of Irish life.

If the Irish are brave, they are also eminently faithful; and this fidelity is not a habit but a