

ing. Already there shows great promise for the future, and much depends upon the representative Irish poet, Yeats. His poetry always has that singing quality which haunts the sense long after its experience is past:

The Poet Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven—

“Had I the heaven’s embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half light.

.....
I would spread the cloths under your feet,
But I, being poor, have only my dreams.
I have spread my dreams under your feet,
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.”
.....

“Modern poetry,” says Yeats, grows weary of using over and over again the personages and stories and metaphors that have come to us through Greece and Rome, or from Wales and Brittany through the Middle Ages, and has found new life in the Norse and German legends.” The Irish legends,” he continues, “in popular tradition and in old Gaelic literature, are more numerous and as beautiful, and alone among great European legends have the beauty and wonder of altogether new things. May one not say, then, without saying anything improbable, that they will have a predominant influence in the coming century, and that their influence will pass through many countries?

What limits may we set to the scope of influence of Celtic legendary history and hidden lore? Though emigrated Irish are become truly sophisticated, is there not assurance that they will take kindly once again to the imaginative wonder of their race?

In conclusion, may we not say that the formative minds of Europe are already wearing a new thread of mysticism which will become the leading-string of our new-born poetry of the twentieth century? The nineteenth century reacted against the eighteenth, and in turn this new philosophy of wonder will react against the nineteenth. Modern poetry tends to withdraw itself from temporal interests, and to vest itself more and more in the bodiless, shapeless reality which haunts the under-currents of this life and earth, and which flits about allowing only the hem of its garment to be touched as it vanishes over the world.