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"THE IRISH IN ENGLAND."

(From the Dublin Review.)

(CONTINUED.)

"Complaints are frequently made about the ignorance of the Irish population in England, and it cannot, we believe, be denied, that there is a true foundation for these complaints. They are often, no doubt, exaggerated. The ignorance is not so great as is sometimes supposed. For it must be borne in mind that a large proportion of the Irish poor have learnt their religion through the medium of the Irish language. It is the tongue in which they both think and pray. English is to them a foreign language, and while they are speaking it, they are really translating Irish idioms into Saxon forms of speech. Hence it may very often, and very naturally, happen that they do not understand an English expression, or an English question, whereas, were the same things said to them in Irish, they could at once reply to it. This gives them, at times, an appearance of being ignorant of things which they ought to know, and which they do know in their native language. It is only fair to mention this, and unless those who have to deal with them bear this in mind, they will be constantly committing serious mistakes, and be unwittingly doing them a wrong and an injury. Still it must be acknowledged that you sometimes encounter cases where the religious instruction has been very superficial and inadequate. There has been a want of accurate catechetical teaching, and it would seem as if no attempt had been made to do more than instruct them in those matters which are absolutely necessary to be known. From this want of instruction they suffer in a thousand ways, for ignorance is the parent of vice. It is ignorance which leads to drunkenness and other vicious propensities. It is ignorance which fills our prisons with men, women, and boys. It is ignorance which breaks out into anger, passion, and fighting. It is ignorance which leads parents to neglect their children, and children to disobey their parents, and which leads both to trifle with their faith, to receive bribes from the proselytizers, and to apostatize from the Catholic Church. Whenever you meet with drunkenness, fighting, and apostasy, as a general rule, you see the signs and the effects of ignorance; and if you would check and stop the former, it must be by doing all in your power to remove the latter. And there is this great advantage in dealing with the Irish people. They are quick and intelligent; they possess retentive memories; they have an aptitude for learning, and it always gives them pleasure to place themselves under instruction. They set a high value upon such education as is within their reach, and they often make many sacrifices in order to secure it. Hence there is no great difficulty in persuading them to submit to instruction, and still less in fixing it upon their minds. We can say with perfect truth, that were the Irish thoroughly grounded and systematically catechised in Christian doctrine, they would take their proper rank as one of the most intelligent people in Europe.

"It is sometimes urged as a defect in the Irish Catholic mind that there is little apparent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament; that many on coming into a church will scarcely genuflect before the altar, and seldom think of making a visit to Him who dwells thereon. But this complaint must be received with certain qualifications. That there is among the more uneducated and less instructed of the Irish poor, an absence of such devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, as we commonly meet with in foreign countries, must, we fear, be admitted; but then the reason evidently is, because it has never been evoked. Most of these people come from the country parts of Ireland, and in the country chapels the Blessed Sacrament is rarely reserved. These chapels are, for the most part, closed from Sunday to Sunday, like the Protestant churches; and they are within bare, unadorned, and sometimes even unprovided with a tabernacle in which the Sacrament could be reserved. This has most probably arisen from the missionary and provisional condition of the Irish Church, and from the difficulty of guarding the Blessed Sacrament when the priest's residence happens to be far from his church. But it is sufficient to account for this apparent defect of devotion to the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. We say *apparent*, because it results from a mere want of education, of the opportunity to call it forth, and not from any want of faith. The vast number of frequent communicants among the poor in their own country, and in England, are proofs that they not only believe, but appreciate, and cherish, and find great consolation in the Real Presence of Jesus upon earth. Another proof that this devotion only requires to be drawn out and educated in order to manifest its depth and its reality, may be gathered from the undoubted fact, that the recent introduction of the *Quarant Ore* into the churches of Dublin has elicited an amount of devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament, which might challenge competition with that exhibited in any other part of the Catholic world. Be-

side, we must remember that there are really very few opportunities for rich or poor to make daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament. The churches are few in number, and sometimes in remote and inconvenient situations; while the hard necessities of daily occupation and labor fill up every moment of time, so that even where there is the will there may not be the way. Moreover, the age and the country in which we live are both of them adverse to devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Our life is a restless disquietude. It is a life of great material energy and activity, of eagerness to get on, of haste to become rich, and of throbbing, feverish, mental excitement. There is one word which will fitly describe the anxious and busy life of an Englishman in the nineteenth century, and that word is *Restlessness*. And there is nothing which renders men more incapable of tranquil contemplation, and of quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, than the busy, restless life, which the tempo and the necessities of the times imposes upon rich and poor alike. Any thing which would act as a restraint upon this busy, feverish state of existence, and which would train the young and the old to make reparation to Jesus Christ by daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament, would be an inestimable gain to the Church and society; for after all, the great power which upholds religion and conquers the world is prayer; and when the hands of the Catholic people are constantly uplifted in prayer, in the very presence of their God, the world is impotent to do them any real harm; heresy trembles and is put to confusion in its strongholds, souls are rescued from the delusions of the devil, and the glory of God is more and more extended upon earth.

"A great excuse is to be made for those mixed marriages which frequently take place between Irish Catholic girls and Protestant laborers and small artisans. It is certainly a great matter in a temporal point of view for a poor girl who comes over to this country, without parents or relations, to secure for herself a permanent home, where, whatever her other trials may be, she is at all events preserved from dangers and temptations to which she would be inevitably exposed. The children of such marriages, as we have said before, are always baptized in the Catholic Church, and their mothers will undergo great hardships in order to procure for them this privilege. Sometimes, also, if they be earnest and well conducted Catholics, the wives succeed in effecting their husband's reconciliation to the Church, and we believe that where this effect does not follow, it arises, in the majority of instances, from the fact that the women are utterly careless about their religious duties, or are too profoundly ignorant to command the respect and attention of their partners. Perhaps the great majority of these men have no religion at all. They know no doctrine, nor prayers, nor religious rule of life. They rarely are seen to enter any place of worship, unless on some odd occasion they accompany their wives to Mass or Benediction. They are indeed as prejudiced and as bigoted as their neighbors against the Catholic Church, but in spite of these prejudices they are not always inaccessible to better influences. They share with the body of their countrymen an undefined curiosity to inquire and learn about the Church, and they have a favorable impression of its spirit of almsgiving, and of its motherly care of the poor. Often, too, they have a superstitious fear of the priest, and sometimes a latent belief in his divine mission. Hence we are inclined to believe that in many cases the blame of their remaining unreconciled to the Church must be laid to the charge of their wives. If these latter were diligent in fulfilling their own religious obligations, observant of prayer, zealous for the Church, and careful to set a good example, many of these mixed marriages would have a happier result than is at present the case. But however this be, it is the fact, that in the majority of instances these mixed marriages entail upon the women nothing but sin and misery. They are prevented from attending Mass, because they must remain at home on the Sunday to prepare their husband's late breakfast and early dinner; and as he is utterly indifferent to religious observances, he soon compels his wife to be the same. Not unfrequently these men are addicted to hard drink, and then they waste the substance that should have been laid out in the support of their families; and when they afterwards cannot obtain all the creature comforts to which they are accustomed, they give vent to their spleen by the ill-treatment of their wives, whom they regard as belonging to an inferior and a lower caste in society. The children having such examples continually before them at home, grow up as may be imagined. They have neither faith nor morals. Baptized in the Catholic religion, their religious training is either altogether neglected, or they are sent by their fathers to the national schools, there to be indoctrinated with the Protestant heresy. Upon the whole, the class of Irish women who are married to Protestant husbands are among the most hopeless of all who belong to the Church. It is true that

you will now and then meet with bright examples to the contrary. You will meet with very earnest women, who take great care to bring up their children well, instruct them in their prayers, bring them to confession, keep them from the heretical schools, watch over their daughters, preserving them from loose companions and dangerous influences, and who labor with much zeal for the conversion of their unbelieving husbands. But in general it is not so. In general they become debased and degraded, the miserable butts and the wretched slaves of their besotted husbands; while occasionally they come out in the character of persons aspiring to 'gentility,' who are consequently ashamed of, or indifferent to, their faith; and of all forms of Irish nationality preserve us from Irish 'gentility!'

"But if any over-zealous admirer of the Irish poor would have his faith in their good qualities put to the severest test, he must make an excursion into those parts of England where the hops are gathered in the months of August, September, and October. The Irish have a positive mania for hop-gathering. It is a wild and unrestrained kind of life which seems to give them intense pleasure. It is, as they suppose, a short and expeditious mode of laying up such a sum of money as will keep them going during the severe months of the winter. Consequently they flock in great numbers to the hop district from all parts of England, but especially from Bristol, Norwich, Brighton, and London. We believe that there are fewer importations from Ireland now than there used to be formerly. They put up in barns, sheds, out-houses, in fact, in any place where they can erect a covering to preserve them from the wind and rain. You will find the men, women, and children of eight or ten families all occupying the same room, or rather the same shed, with neither chair nor table, nor luxury of the humblest kind, and with no more costly couch than a wisp of clean straw. Such situations are not favorable to the discharge of religious duties, nor do they tend to develop civilization. They are too frequently scenes of drinking, quarrelling, and swearing, but we believe, rarely, of any gross immoralities. Yet even here you must bear in mind the Divine precept, not to judge according to the outward appearance. For in these miserable sheds, and in the midst of these curious groups of apparently half civilized beings, you will find many and many a soul dear to God, and living in the unbroken enjoyment of His love. You will find many well conducted women and girls against whom the breath of calumny cannot be raised, and whose diligent use of the Sacraments is worthy of all commendation. You will find many a little boy from the Oratorian schools of compassion, or from the borough, or Webb street, or the Commercial-road, whom the angel of God has kept pure and innocent in the midst of his abject poverty. We must not judge the poor too harshly, nor suppose that indifference to material comfort necessarily betrays the presence of a low and corrupt interior. It is no part of our theology that outward comfort any more than outward cleanliness is akin to godliness. No doubt, the fact of different families crowding together into the most wretched barns, is often attended with danger to morals, and is always more or less a hindrance to piety; but how can it be helped? The poor must live. They must lay up, if they can get it, for the hardships of the approaching winter. The hops likewise must be gathered, and we must therefore tolerate the evils which cannot altogether be removed. The most that can be done is to endeavor to mitigate these evils, by the presence and the control of religion. It would be a great gain to the Church, if sufficient funds could be got together and placed at the disposal of the Bishop of the Diocese, with a view to the opening of a mission in the town of Maidstone, which is in the very centre of the hop district. A permanent chapel and a resident priest would give these people the opportunity of attending to the obligations of their faith, and in this way would operate in checking many scandals and evils that are at present uncontrolled. Some such plan we have been informed, was actually set on foot a few years since through the instrumentality of a distinguished convert, who had then just given up, for God's sake, a rich benefice in the neighborhood; but it came to nought through the want of money, and through the want of priests. But there is no reason why the attempt should not be renewed. There are few places where a new mission is more needed, and where its effects upon the people would be more beneficial.

"In our judgment, the most dangerous and unsatisfactory part of the Irish character is their hasty and passionate disposition. As they express it themselves, they are very 'near their passion,' and in this, as in many others, they bear a strong resemblance to a southern race. This sudden violence of temper leads them into a thousand scrapes from which a cooler and more self-possessed people would be free. It leads them at times to the commission of acts which appear to be more criminal and malicious than they

are in reality. For like madmen, when one of these fits of anger seizes upon them, they lose all self-control. They become beside themselves with ungovernable rage and wild revenge. Like hot-headed children they fly on a sudden into a violent passion, deal blows all around, injure, it may be, their best friends, and when they come to their senses again, are extremely sorry for their faults, and extremely penitent for what they have done. But it must always be remembered that (1) that these fits of unlicensed passion are more likely to seize upon those who have not been properly instructed and trained; and (2) that they are very seldom so abandoned to their rage as to refuse to listen to the mediation of the priest, and to be assuaged and calmed by his admonitions. This fault, therefore, is by no means beyond the reach of cure. Religious influences can be brought to bear upon them, and they are very seldom used without success.

"But the favorite and universal accusation brought against the Irish, is that of a disregard to truth, and we suppose that we should be charged with the same fault, if we did not allow them to be brought in guilty. The charge, then, is true, so far as it implies the existence in the people of a suspicious temperament which makes them, first of all, think why you have asked them such or such a question, before they venture to make you a reply. And this suspicious temperament is partly a natural characteristic of the race, and it is partly the effect and the offspring of long misgovernment and oppression. The Irish have long been accustomed to look with distrust upon the acts of those above them, even when those acts have had all the appearance of springing from a real desire to do them good. And the plain reason is, because at home their landlords, the Protestant clergy, and the government, have rarely held out a helping hand to them, without having some ulterior and selfish object in view. Either they wished to get rid of them from their properties, or they were seeking to undermine their faith, or were attempting to rob them of some political right; on this account, suspicion is natural to this class of Irish, and suspicion inevitably leads to equivocation and falsehood. It must, however, be borne in mind that there is an essential difference between the ordinary Protestant notions on the subject of veracity, and the true doctrine on that most important question of moral theology. There is a vast amount of phraseology which to Protestant England would be characterised as simply false, which in the Catholic estimate is either misstatement of the most venial description, or is no fault at all, or is a positive duty under certain circumstances. The Irish, no doubt, deal largely in this sort of deceptive or evasive language. They are also, as every one knows, a highly imaginative people, and often represent subjects rather in the form which they assume in their own minds, than according to the literal facts of the case, as tested by a more rigorous and prosaic standard.

"Again, the charge is true, so far as it is confined to the very ignorant and very uneducated. But it is not true, to any serious extent, if it be brought against those who are careful and conscientious about their religious duties. Such persons are as scrupulous about telling truth, as the most rigid Saxon could wish them to be; and you very seldom find them transgressing the real bounds of truth and falsehood. But here we must request those who are the most severe in their censures of the Irish poor on this point, to have the goodness to look a little nearer home. A straightforward and honest regard for material truth—i.e., for truth in the natural order, has always been one of the good natural qualities of the English; and as it is no part of our object, to run down a great nation, we cheerfully and gladly pay our tribute of admiration to this attractive feature in the Anglo-Saxon character. But at the same time, it must, in fairness, be stated, that at the present day, either this good quality occupies a less prominent place in the national character than it used to occupy, or else it is grievously overlaid by the mischief of a false civilization. We see this quality of a honest and straightforward regard for truth of the natural order, in little English children, who are perhaps the finest children in the world, and of whom we cannot help feeling with St. Gregory of old—*Angli utinam Angli*. But it disappears as they grow up, and when they come to mix in the world, and to take their place with men, it very often vanishes altogether. Witness, for example, the false returns that are made every year to the commissioners of the income tax, and what are these, but so many deliberate falsehoods and lies? Witness again, the frauds that are continually committed in trade, the adulteration of food, and the various impositions practised upon the public by tradesmen and shopkeepers. Or to take examples of another kind, read the newspapers, observe with what unscrupulous coolness the most prominent journals color or deny facts, and diffuse calumnies, whenever a purpose is served by doing so, whenever it is judged expedient to malign the character of a foreign sovereign, or to misrepresent the conduct and motives

of the Catholic Hierarchy. Observe too how members of Parliament will vote black white, and white black, in order to please their constituents, to support or oppose the Government, and to secure their seats. Observe too with what eagerness the public mind will seize upon the most unlikely falsehood against an obnoxious person or an obnoxious creed, believe it readily, pass it from mouth to mouth, reproduce it in a thousand different forms, and yet refuse to receive its confutation, however earnestly urged upon them; and lastly, witness the surprising coolness with which the Protestant clergy, in order to gain credit for themselves, or to screen themselves from the charge of 'Popery,' will bear grave and deliberate false witness against the Catholic Church; how men in the highest positions in the Anglican Church, who have many Catholic relations, and who cannot, therefore, plead the excuse of ignorance, slyly put forth in their speeches and their writings, the most absurd and the most calumnious statements about 'Rome,' which the least diligence, or the slightest desire to know the truth, would prevent them from asserting. These things are not considered to be offences against the truth, simply because they are so common; but the fact that they are common cannot alter their intrinsic malice. They are, in fact, crimes of a deep dye. They are falsehoods of a far graver character than anything that usually falls from the lips of an unlettered Irish peasant. They are sins of 'false witness, lying, and slandering' against the one and only Church of God, and as such, whatever men may think of them, they are recorded in the book of the Divine judgments. In passing sentence, therefore, upon the untruthful propensities of the Irish poor, we must not lose sight of the spirit of reckless disregard to truth, whenever interest or prejudice stands in the way, which is extensively prevalent amongst all classes in this country; and if we must say which is the graver sin, the most offensive to God, and the most hurtful to man, we must acknowledge it to be that which carries a lying-spirit into these momentous matters which affect the higher and graver interests of mankind."

(To be concluded in our next.)

SECOND LETTER OF
REV. DR. CARRILL
ON THE MAYNOOTH GRANT.

Ballyroon Cottage, Jan 29, 1857.

No matter what the ardent friends of Maynooth may say in reference to the anticipated failure of the approaching motion of Spooner in the House of Commons, it is certain that a powerful anti-Maynooth combination has been organized, and that a formidable effort will be made to gain a majority against the grant. It is idle to talk of the opposition which Ireland can raise, in order to overthrow or delay the contemplated measure of the enemies of Catholicity: we have no party; we have no power. We have one or two splendid orators: faithful servants: honest, honorable men: but what can logic do against bigotry? How can eloquence move the deaf? How can thunder raise the dead? If Grattan, and Flood, and Curran, and O'Connell, spoke from one mouth, in the united, resistless power of their boiling patriotism and consuming oratory, it would produce no more effect at this moment, in softening the hearts of the enemies of Ireland in the House of Commons than an eruption of Vesuvius would have in dissolving the ice on the Apennines. They will listen, look on, remain quiet to the end of the most vivid, fiery, melting oration of Ireland, without their feelings being raised the one-hundredth part of a degree beyond the freezing point of Anglican insensibility to our wrongs. Let any impartial Irishman listen but one month to the discussion of Irish questions in the British Senate: and I undertake to say that the greatest enemy of O'Connell and of his policy must honestly exclaim, "That although the repeal of the Act of Union can never be accomplished, there is no other hope of obtaining justice to Ireland." No, we have no party in the Legislature in the coming debate on Maynooth: our national contentions, our jealousies, our divisions, have made us powerless, and hence we are an easy prey to the watchful, combined force of the enemy.

The present Cabinet may make a show of opposition, in order to keep up the instinctive, unchangeable character of Whigs: to cover their deceit by a well-prepared farce of indignant eloquence in favor of Maynooth, and to conceal their own bigotry by a harmless show of sarcasm against Exeter Hall. But the increasing power of immitigable Presbyterianism and Methodism, added to the fears of the approaching general election, will thin the numbers of even this show of ministerial opposition, and will have the effect (if other new elements are not brought into action) of rendering Spooner's motion a successful reality of easy attainment.

Of what use are arguments and brilliant speeches in such an assembly and in such a crisis? None; except to render injustice more palpable