

The Humorist Serious.

By "CRUX"

THIS week I have no review to make, so I will go of on some special reflections of my own. The reading of a poem which I will take the liberty of reproducing later on has brought to my mind many of the strange contradictions that seem to exist in men. I have very frequently been surprised to discover that men, whom I judged by their profound and serious writings to be regular hermits, or men who could not even smile, were in reality full of humor, of wit, of joyfulness, and that their good spirits were actually contagious. On the other hand, I have discovered that many of those who have made it a business, or a profession, to make the world laugh, were men who seldom laughed themselves, and frequently men who labored under fearful difficulties, or carried in their breasts great sorrows. Yet, they buried their own private troubles and divested themselves of their individual afflictions, to amuse, to instruct while amusing, and to render gay and happy the people with whom they came in contact, either personally or through their writings.

A couple of examples will suffice to illustrate what I mean. Amongst the famous prose writers we have William Makepeace Thackeray. There is not a richer or a more quaint humor in English than that which characterizes his great novels. He was full of the spirit of fun—at least his books are. Not jokes and smart sayings, but a keen perception of the humors of life, the amusing side of the situation. No person can read his books without having the impression that he was the most contented and happy of men. And perhaps he was in one sense, but not in the generally accepted sense. He may have been happy in his very sacrifices, content in his sufferings, for aught we can tell. But as far as any outside experience goes his actual life, with its sad circumstances, would be a glaring contrast to the happy lives that he pictured.

Who could believe the realities of that life, when enjoying the exquisite humor of his novels? He had been condemned, through domestic misfortunes, to spend many of the best years of his life in a kind of isolation that was ungenial to his nature. Yet he never murmured, he never exposed to the world his troubles, and he never ceased amusing the world with his writings—the product of which went to pay the expenses that affliction imposed upon him. Even when he used to sit up at night watching over his invalid wife—whose mind was clouded—the great novelist would compose, and write out some of the pages that have whiled away many a dreary hour for his more fortunate fellow-citizens. To the very last there was a sublime humor in him.

When he was a boy at school, the bell used to summon them to study, to duty, and when the name of each pupil was called upon the role, if he were present, he made answer "ad sum"—"present," or "I am here." How he pictures that in the death-scenes of the old school-master. But when the day came for his own departure, and as his spirit trembled upon the brink of eternity, the sound of a church bell was wafted into the sick-room, and the dying novelist heard it. It brought back, perhaps, the bell whose summons he had so often answered in youth; it suggested, may be, his own fanciful picture in his favorite novel; at all events, a smile of humor, faint and fleeting, passed over his features, and the Eternal summons had come, and he murmured "ad sum," and passed into the presence of God.

Another life illustrates very forcibly the same strange contradiction. Never were there a more serious, a more religiously devout, and a more positively sad-hearted soul than Richard Dalton Williams. Yet no man ever so convulsed his friends with the most exhilarating laughter. One of his biographers, referring to his glorious Celtic muse, says: "But Williams' music is daring, vehement, fierce, thundering with intense passion and hate," and yet he was the kindest, most gentle, most loving, the most tender of dispositions. He could no more hate an enemy than

he could injure him—and he was incapable of injuring a fly, he would feel so keenly for the insect's sufferings. The biographer continues, "With eagle wing he soars among the stars; and when he stands again upon the firm earth his hearty mirth bursts forth prolific as wild flowers on a forest bank. His style accords perfectly with his theme; sometimes as grand, solemn, and sonorous as the verse of Homer; and, anon, brilliant, sportive, and humorous as the very genius of mirth." Yet this is the man who led a life of disappointments; who saw the national cause which he had espoused fail; who knew that consumption's hand was on himself, and that while exile and an early grave awaited him beyond the ocean, all the treasured dreams of youth were to be buried in the land from which he was forced to go. While he felt that he—

"Would slumber in the gloom of a nameless, foreign tomb. By a distant ocean's boom"—

He kept the reading world in constant mirth, with his extraordinary parodies, and his "Misadventures of a Medical Student." While readers by the thousands were splitting their sides over his council productions, and wondering what kind of funny fellow he must have been, he was telling the true story of his heart, in such words as these:—

"But I have learned rude lessons since then, In life's disenchanting hall; I have scanned the motives and ways of men, And a skeleton grins through all. Of the great heart-treasure of hope and trust I exulted to feel mine own, Remains, in this down-trod temple of dust, But faith in God alone. I have seen too often the domino torn, And the mask from the face of men, To have aught but a smile of tranquil scorn, For all I believed in them. No more, no more, on this dreary shore, I hear the Caoine song; With the early dead shall be my bed, They shall not call me long. I fade away to a home of clay, With not one dream fulfilled; My wreathless brow in the dust I bow. My heart and harp are stilled."

Again I will say that it is this peculiar blending of the humorous and the sad, the gay in the sublime, in one person, one life, one soul that appears to me as a mystery. Yet it is a certainly wise dispensation of Providence. Were it not that it is so we would all be the losers, and in the instance before me, the world might never have possessed the masterpiece that I am about to give the readers, and on which I will briefly comment.

That to which I am now going to refer comes from "Punch"—the famous English "Punch." This publication has become historical; it has, for over half a century, been noted for its striking and humorous caricatures, and its fearful anti-Catholic bigotry. It is quite possible that "Punch" has inflicted more telling blows on the Catholic cause, and especially on the Irish cause, than ever did the Thunderer. And there has been great ability displayed in "Punch." Its caricaturists have been some of the most able that the world has ever known. And to correspond with their pencils, the pens of the most humorous poets have been employed. You open "Punch" with the expectation of finding fun, satire, sarcasm, humor, wit, grotesque drawings, and biting or laughable verses. And you rarely are disappointed; but you do go to "Punch" for eloquence, sublime poetry, lofty ideas, deep sentiments, solid logic, or mathematical calculations. These belong not to its sphere, and the men who devote their talents to "Punch" are not supposed, nor do they claim, to deal with the finer and loftier sentiments of men. Their aim is to make fun, to raise a laugh, to crush, to cut, to wipe out with wit and caricature. Nor is Mr. Owen Seaman the person from whom we would expect the highest grade of poetic expression, nor the kindest utterance concerning aught that is Catholic. Yet, strange to say, the death of Pope Leo XIII. gave occasion for one of the most beautiful poems in our language to-day; and Mr. Seaman is the author of it; and "Punch" is the publication in which it has appeared. I have read nothing to approach it, as an "In Memoriam" poem, on any occasion, no matter who the illustrious dead, no matter who the author of the tribute, no matter which the organ of its publication. In reading, however, this tribute to Leo XIII., we lose sight completely of "Punch," we forget

the author, we are wafted away beyond this sphere, we are in presence of the illustrious departed, and we are filled with strains of that supremely noble poem. It is one of these poems that go down into the heart, that stir up the innermost sentiments of the soul, that tap the fountain of tears and send them gushing upward to the eyes, that awaken a spirit of deep devotion, and that compel to prayer. Can I say more? I will now reproduce this poem by Mr. Owen Seaman, in "Punch," and I ask the reader to peruse it more than once.

IN MEMORIAM.

POPE LEO THE THIRTEENTH. BORN, 1810. DIED, JULY, 20, 1903.

There in the hushed Cathedral's holy calm, Dim lights about him, and the dome above, He sleeps—immortal by the spirit balm Of universal love.

Still, over lips and brows whence life has passed, Lingers the smile of faith serenely fair; The hands that blessed the world are folded fast, As in the act of prayer.

The long day closes and the strife is dumb, Thither he goes where temporal loss is gain, Where he that asks to enter must become A little child again.

And, since in perfect humbleness of heart, He sought the Church's honor, not his own, All faiths are one to share the mourner's part Beside the empty throne.

High Guardian of the mysteries of God, His circling love enwrapped the human race; For every creed the Pontiff's lifted rod Blossomed with flowers of grace.

The nation's peace he had for dearest cause; Kings from his counsel sought a heavenly sign, Christ-like he fostered loyalty to laws These earthly, those divine.

These earthly, those divine.

Robert Emmet's Grave.

(Dublin Freeman Journal, Aug. 8.)

Much astonishment was created in Dublin on Tuesday by the rumor that the grave in St. Michan's Churchyard, supposed to be the burial place of Robert Emmet, had been excavated the day before. The statement of a gentleman who had witnessed the operation was that two grave-diggers were engaged in the work, while a gentleman stood by taking notes and giving directions. The sexton of St. Michan's was also present. The work was carried out with great care. The stone slab which had marked the spot was removed to some distance, and the earth and bones which were taken from the grave were placed by its side.

A Freeman's Journal representative was informed that the work was done under the supervision of Mr. J. Franklin Fuller, F. S. A., 179 Great Brunswick street. Our representative having inquired of Mr. Fuller by whose direction the grave had been opened, received the reply that it was "by direction of the family."

A representative of the "Evening Telegraph" called by appointment at the office of Mr. J. F. Fuller, F. S. A., 179 Great Brunswick street, Dublin, for the purpose of seeking further information concerning the opening of Emmet's reputed grave in St. Michan's Churchyard. Mr. Fuller referred him to Mr. David A. Quaid, solicitor, who was present in the office. Mr. Quaid stated that Mr. Fuller and himself, as advisers of the Emmet family, had decided that they would make no communication to the press on the subject further than a written statement which they had prepared. He said that the members of the Emmet family, for whom Mr. Fuller and himself were acting, were Dr. Thomas Addis Emmet, of New York, and his son, Mr. Robert Emmet. Dr. Thomas Addis Emmet is a grand nephew of the great patriot whose centenary is being celebrated this year, his grandfather being the celebrated Thomas Addis Emmet, brother of Robert, Mr. Quaid added that investigations had been and were proceeding with a view to securing authentic information concerning the burial place of Emmet, the location of whose last resting place has formed the subject of much inquiry and controversy during the past year. Mr. Quaid added that he would advise Dr. Addis Emmet not to give any information to the press for the present, and informed our representative that a full official statement of the result of the investigations would be made later on with the authority of the family.

The following is the statement which Mr. Quaid handed to our representative:—

"Dublin, Aug. 5, 1903. We respectfully desire as advisers of the Emmet family (whose full authority we have to act) to say that all statements published regarding the investigations referred to are unauthorized, and possibly misleading. A certified statement in full of the true facts will be made public with the sanction of the representatives of the family later on.

"J. F. FULLER, F. S. A., Architect. "DAVID A. QU Aid, Solicitor."

An interesting book, "Footprints of Emmet," by J. J. Reynolds, published this year by Messrs. M. H. Gill & Son, deals among other topics, with the probable burial place of Emmet. Mr. Reynolds writes:— "As almost all Emmet's immediate relatives were in prison at the time of his execution, and his other friends and associates, for obvious reasons, dared not appear to claim the body, very little direct evidence has been forthcoming regarding his place of interment. Among the places in the city of Dublin and its neighborhood which have been claimed, in each case with more or less show of reason as likely to contain the grave of Emmet, may be mentioned the Protestant Church of St. Catherine's, Thomas street; St. James', James street; St. Ann's, Dawson street, and also, with much greater evidence of probability, the graveyard of Bully's Acre, Kilmainham; St. Peter's, Augier street; and the graveyard attached to the old Protestant church at Glasnevin. No entry of the interment appears in the registry of any of the churches nam-

ed. St. Catherine's and St. James' appear to have been mentioned merely from the fact of their being near the place of execution in Thomas street; and St. Ann's, from the fact that one of Emmet's grandparents had been buried there.

"As a result of his inquiries regarding the burial place of Robert Emmet, Dr. Madden came to the conclusion that the body was first buried in Bully's Acre, and afterward removed and buried elsewhere. He learned from Mr. Patten, who had been in prison at the time of Emmet's execution, that a man named Lyman (a porter in the employment of Messrs. Colville and Patten), had assisted in removing the body from Kilmainham Jail and burying it in Bully's Acre. In Dr. Emmet's work it is stated that the Rev. Thomas Gamble, assistant curate of St. Michan's, an intimate friend of the family, who had assisted Emmet in last moments, took charge of the remains on the night following his execution.

"In 'The Emmet Family' a remarkable incident is recounted in connection with the removal of the body from Kilmainham. It is said that being unable to procure some water to prepare his plaster he (Petric) took the head, which had been decapitated after the execution, with him to some neighboring house. During his absence Mr. Gamble returned, and with some assistance took away the box containing the body, but what he did with it still remains a mystery. Dr. Madden was informed that Dr. Petric had the skull in his keeping until a short time before his death, when he gave it to some physician, who lived in Galway. No one who knows anything of Dr. Petric's life and views would doubt, if this be true, but that he made careful provision for its preservation.

"When the time comes for writing Robert Emmet's epitaph this relic will certainly be forthcoming, and it may prove the only portion of his body obtainable. Dr. Patten could give Dr. Madden no positive information as to the final disposition of the remains, but was under the impression that the burial took place in St. Michan's Churchyard, Leonard (Dr. Robert Emmet's gardener), and many others from whom Dr. Madden had had an opportunity of getting information, held the same opinion; and at the present day the plain unscrubbed stone which is shown to visitors in this churchyard is generally believed in Dublin to mark the last resting place of Emmet, and as such is visited by pilgrims from many lands. The tall elm tree which hangs over the grave is said to have been planted shortly after the burial to mark the spot. The tradition is that the tree was so planted by a grave-digger upon the very morning after the burial one hundred years ago."

In addition to the statement which appears above, our representative ascertained some interesting facts in connection with the investigation at St. Michan's Churchyard on Tuesday. It appears that the work of digging out the grave reputed to be Emmet's occupied the greater part of the day. After the railings around the grave and the stone slab which covered it had been removed, the work of excavating the grave proceeded. The utmost care was taken so as not to disarrange any human remains that might lie in the grave; and after a few feet of earth had been dug out in the ordinary way the further excavating was carried out with extreme caution, a trowel being employed to gradually remove the earth, the adoption of this slow and laborious method securing that if the place contained a skeleton it could be disclosed intact. At length the patient efforts of the diggers were rewarded, and at the depth of about six feet they came upon human remains. The earth which surrounded them was gradually removed, and the skeleton of a fully grown man of good size was laid bare. It was lying with the feet to the East and the head to the West. A curious circumstance to which very great significance attaches is that the head, instead of lying prone and attached to the trunk in the ordinary way, was in an upright position. When it is remembered that Emmet was beheaded the fact of the skull being found in this position strengthens the theory that the grave in St. Michan's is really the burial place of the great revolutionary leader, and that the skeleton found on Tuesday is really his.

Some pieces of metal, which was taken to be the mountings of a coffin, were also found in the grave. The bones of the skeleton were not attached to one another, and they were removed carefully to an adjoining stone slab on which they were placed in their proper position. The skeleton while lying there was photographed, and was examined by some professional experts. It was afterward carefully replaced in the grave, which was filled in, the slab covering it being replaced.

The indications from the position of the skeleton in the grave in St. Michan's—the head being severed from the body, and in an upright position, instead of lying prone and attached to the trunk in an ordinary way—is strongly that the remains are the remains of Robert Emmet, whose head was severed from his body after his death by hanging. "I saw," writes Mr. John Fisher to Dr. Madden, "poor Emmet executed. The execution took place at the corner of the lane at Catherine's Church, in Thomas street, and he did without a struggle. He was immediately beheaded upon a table lying on the temporary scaffold. The table was then brought down to the market house, opposite John street, and left there against the wall exposed to public view for about two days. It was a deal table, like a common kitchen table."

PERSONAL.

Miss Mary Rowena Cotter, of Brockport, N.Y., a well known contributor to the Catholic press of the United States, visited the editorial rooms of the "True Witness," this week.

Business Man's Protest

Under the caption "The Three R's and Business," the New York "Sun" recently published the following:—

The Northwestern Miller makes a complaint that will fall on deaf ears. It mourns the lost art of writing, a loss which it attributed to the universal typewriter. It pleads, as many newspapers and men and some old-fashioned teachers have pleaded, for more attention to the rudiments in the schools. But what is the use? If the typewriter has had much to do with the waning legible handwriting, at least it should have increased the number of good spellers. Yet spelling is departing, too. Once boys and girls had to learn to write and spell by means of hard work. The way to spell is to spell. The way to write is to write. Such were the mouldy theories of our fathers and grandfathers. Improved and scientific methods of teaching have come. Different views of the comparative value of studies prevail. Our children learn, or are supposed to learn, more things than their unfortunate parents used to; learn them in a jig and quickstep, to music with many pretty trills and frills, and flourishes; and those wretched three R's are openly derided. Business men, owing to their want of training in the modern fashion, kick violently. Many of them say they can't get boys from the public schools who can write a good, plain hand, spell well, or even count and reckon well. "Carrying bundles is all most of them are fit for," we heard a merchant say the other day of these products of the march of improvement.

Doubtless such an assertion is a savage exaggeration. And business men should not insist on their antiquated notions. A boy may be weak in arithmetic and yet be able to sing a song or have very earnest views about "civics." Judge him by what he knows, not by what he had not been taught to know. Besides, machinery will supply the deficiencies of education. Mechanical addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are wonderfully exact. Spelling, like education, is being reformed. Why force anybody to learn it while it is in a fluid or uncertain state? Writing is already obsolete. Arithmetic may be only a survival. Business men expect too much.

THE INVENTOR'S WORK.

Below will be found a list of patents recently granted by the Canadian Government through the agency of Messrs. Marion & Marion, patent attorneys, Montreal, Canada, and Washington, D.C. Information relating to the patents cited will be supplied free of charge by applying to the above-named firm.

Nos. 82,486—Frank B. Belyea, St. John, West, N.B. Grain door.
82,551—Ernest Renaud, Montreal, Que. Automatic railway signal.
82,564—William Thorp, Rat Portage, Ont. Shingle cutting machine.
82,592—Messrs. Desjardins & Michaud, St. Pierre, Man. Clothes pin.
82,593—Messrs. Michaud & Desjardins, St. Pierre, Man. Bed.
82,603—John H. Grimm, Montreal, Que. Sap-sput.
82,630—Jas. Sutton Henderson, Parrboro, N.S. Larrigan.