

## FROM AN IRISH COUNTRY-HOUSE.

MRS. LUCY C. LILLIE IN CATHOLIC WORLD.  
II.

JULY.—

Invitations were sent out the other day for what is called in Ireland a "morning-party," the form of social entertainment which seems to be most popular among the country people. Their estates are so widely apart that dinner-parties at night and in full dress are quite impracticable, to the distant guests at least, and so the assemblies known as "mornings," combining luncheon and garden parties, are given in their place. I saw the gardener and his assistant early this morning putting up a marquee tent on the lower terrace where the lawn-tennis ground is laid out. The guests were invited for two o'clock, and punctually at that hour the carriages began to arrive; the ladies came in pretty summer toilettes, all bonneted, of course, like Londoners at a garden-party, and, as the day was exceptionally fine, everybody was in gay good-humor. Luncheon was announced at three o'clock—a sumptuous banquet—and the table was beautifully decorated with flowers, and massive silver and china older than any person present. The ladies left the table first, as at a dinner, but were soon joined by the gentlemen, and the entire party went out upon the grounds. The croquet and tennis players divided, the lawn being separated by a terrace, and very pretty the groups looked: the pale colors in muslin and silk, laces, and fluttering ribbons against the deep-green sward, with the flower-gardens blooming in the background and the fir and oak trees below; overhead a sky just touched with floating cloudlets; beyond a wide stretch of lovely country, with signs of hay-making at intervals and the slow movement of some red-wheeled cart.

Croquet and lawn-tennis are fine arts on this side of the water; the former is played with a dexterity which in America belongs only to the billiard-table; "tight croquet" is not admitted here, and the ball in the centre hoop is always used. Lawn-tennis is only just floating into America of late, and it interested me specially; the game was prettily played and is extremely graceful and effective; a net is stretched from two poles in the centre of the lawn, and the rival players, stationed on opposite sides of this and armed with small wicker-work bats, strive to beat the ball across the boundary according to certain rules, the ball being hollow and light so that it cannot be knocked to any distance. I watched a slim young woman tossing the ball, or batting it with the air of a "stroke oar," the proverbial "woman's throw," which is a curve of the arm around the head, being unknown to those skilled feminine tennis-players.

In honor of some of the guests who had lived in India, the Oriental game of "Badminton," first cousin to lawn-tennis, was introduced upon the lower terrace, and a lively scene it made with the whizzing of the gay-feathered shuttlecocks, the rapid strokes and calling out of numbers, and the shouts of laughter over some clever dash or awkward mishap. Of all the games we ever witnessed this seemed to us the most rapid and fatiguing, and therefore the least adapted to the heated tropics; yet it is called the national game of the Anglo-Indians. The games continued until sunset, when every one, moved by common impulse, sat down or sauntered over to the hillside to watch the wonderful display in the western horizon. We thought we had seen effects in sunlights at home, but there is something marvellous in the vibrations and pulsations of color in the skies of this high latitude; a great sweeping chord of amber and deep crimson passed over the horizon, illuminating green and blossom, the haymakers homeward bound, the cottages and roadsides, and sheltered corners, and then drifting slowly away, leaving for some time the after-glow of violet, in which the garden-party lingered. By nine o'clock every one was within doors again, and a second repast—as sumptuous as the first, and for which I could not discover that there was any name—was served in the dining-room; I think we should call it supper, though it had somewhat the air of "high-tea" and many of the attributes of dinner. Whatever it was, we were impressed by the magnitude of Irish hospitality; people here seem to think nothing of entertaining a party of fifty in this liberal fashion. Later there was music in the drawing-room, and then came much lively talking and laughing and cordial hand-shaking as the carriages rolled away, and by eleven o'clock every guest had departed. The moon had risen gloriously, so that even those who had come from a distance of twenty miles seemed pleased by the prospect of driving home under such friendly illumination.

After these morning parties it is customary for those invited, to call, but the limits are less rigidly fixed than in England; indeed, where a "duty call" implies a drive of from ten to twenty miles and the occupation of an entire afternoon, some latitude might be expected. Our hostess has a reception day, and these calls are very pleasant, sociable affairs, with a cup of tea or glass of wine in the drawing-room, and croquet or a walk in the grounds; all informally given and received with that frank, simple manner so agreeably characteristic of an Irish household and its guests, but preserving enough of formality to be dignified, and even stately.

FRIDAY.

We dined yesterday at a pretty, old-fashioned mansion, standing on high ground, with trees closely sheltering it, a wide lawn and long, straight carriage drive; the house coming into view with an impression of latticed casements, roses and trailing vines and other greenery, like a house in a picture or story book. The dinner was in honor of a recent betrothal, and naturally enough, when the feminine side of the party were gathered together over their tea-cups, talk drifted upon wedding ceremonials and customs in different countries, all of which was new and in-

teresting to us. While-English or Irish weddings lack the splendor and display of the American ceremony, they seem to be infinitely more homelike and agreeable; the bride is attended only by bridesmaids, two of whom usually are young children, and is invariably married in church, the groom with his "best man" awaiting her at the door or altar-steps. After the ceremony the guests assemble at the house of the bride's father for the wedding breakfast, at which speeches are made by various people, healths drunk and responded to, etc., the bride and groom usually leaving the table to depart on their wedding-tour. And here it may be remarked that, to us, a novel feature of weddings in Great Britain is the fancifulness of the bride's travelling garb; pale colors are generally chosen, light hats, everything that indicates novelty and a sense of festivity. When we read of a royal princess going off in white silk upon her wedding-journey, that is not so astonishing; but to see Miss Brown and Miss Robinson vanishing by railway in dove-colored silk and a pink bonnet is somewhat overpowering.

The dinner at B—— House was at three o'clock, after which there were suggestions of croquet; but it had begun to rain in the slow, tearful fashion which is peculiar to Great Britain—a quiet drip, drip from trees and branches, the flowers shining the better for the raindrops, the greens coming out clearer and brighter. This damp state of affairs by no means interfered with the croquet party; for they sallied, the young ladies in water-proofs and thick boots, and when some one exclaimed at such a rash proceeding, "Oh! said X——, "what would we do over here if we minded a bit of rain?" And judging from the sounds of hilarity and the rapid click of balls, the party outside the drawing-room windows were not subject to depressing influences. To reward their fortitude the clouds finally lifted, and the sun went down at last in all the splendor of crimson and gold. A nine o'clock supper followed, and then a drive home in the moonlight, the seven or eight miles seeming but a short distance on such perfect roads as exist in this part of Cavan.

Dinners, luncheons, and tea-parties seem to be the customary entertainments in Ireland in summer time, but when winter comes the routine varies; then the hunting is in full force, and hospitable doors are opened to the "hunt" for breakfasts—forty or fifty guests being no unusual number, our hostess tells us, at a hunting breakfast. The winter season must be a peculiarly festive one here, for Cavan has a fine hunt. The Master of the Hounds lives not far from here, and the runs are often remarkably good. The meet is about ten or eleven in the morning, and assembles some of the best riders in Ireland, of both sexes; and, indeed, our American horsemen can hardly imagine the daring and dexterity of the Irish or English women on horseback. Fancy a long day's ride over hedges and ditches, in and out of fields, lanes, and roads, stopping at nothing, and keeping a firm saddle all the way. Accidents sometimes do happen, however; our host was telling of one to-night. He and his younger sister were following the hounds one day a few years since, and, as he had the most perfect reliance upon her prowess, he gave himself no concern about her; over hedge and ditch they galloped, and, reaching a piece of water with a high bank on the other side, his horse, a superb hunter, dashed on, and with a tremendous leap barely got to the further shore with his forefeet and scrambled up. Hers followed only too quickly; and when Mr. A—— turned not a sign of lady or horse was to be seen—they had absolutely vanished! Getting down with all speed, he plunged into the water; by this time an equine head appeared, and the riderless horse began to scramble ashore; but the rider, where was she? Fancy his dismay at having to prolong such a search, and finding Miss A—— at last quite unconscious under the water. Some of the hunting party had come up by this time, and the lifeless form was lifted up on the bank. Luckily, her Irish constitution and spirit stood her in good stead; some brandy poured down her throat had begun to revive her when to her half-awakened senses came the words "Hold her up by the heels" from an old farmer. The prospect was too thrilling, and sufficed to complete her restoration. But what would American girls, who canter in the park or by the sea shore, think of this young woman, who, after a brief rest at a farm-house, finished the day's sport on the same horse, declaring herself none the worse for the adventure?

The day frequently winds up with a dinner or supper, to which the hunting party sit down in their riding costume, and sometimes in the gray of the morning horsemen may be seen trotting homewards; the sharp click of hoofs now and then breaking the stillness being the last sounds of the day's sports.

Picnic parties are frequent and quite fashionable during the Irish summer season, and very enjoyable they are made, several households combining—some lovely spot being chosen and arrangements made for a dance later in the evening. Lord —— has charming picnic grounds, with a cottage built for the dancing or tea-making of parties, and all the country people are at liberty to avail themselves of it freely. Like all Irish reunions, they begin early and end late; some one was lazily recalling "great days" to-night in the drawing-room, and a picnic-party was described which began at eleven a. m. one day and from which the story-teller returned at two the next morning, almost in time to see a streak of sunrise color above the hills.

The agitations which flutter a London hostess in the season as to whom she may invite with whom, rarely can disturb the serenity of a country household. The lines are drawn so closely, so definitely are distinctions marked, that there is no chance of questioning an invitation. Different sets may be asked on different occasions, but every one stands out in a sort of relief against his or her claims to "gentility," and nowhere is

society more exclusive than among the upper classes in Ireland to-day. Much of this may be due to their minor commercial interests; unlike England and Scotland, few of the old families ever are engaged in trade, and agriculture is the pronounced employment of the country gentleman, whose broad acres may yield him the income so often derived in England from cotton-spinning or the manufacture of Wilton carpets.

SUNDAY.

Why is it that all the world over Sunday is recognized as a day when a late breakfast and an indolent demeanor are allowable? I am sure X—— and B—— were not overworked yesterday, yet they entered the breakfast-room with a careless air of fatigue, and their comfort was looked after in a manner which would be quite inappropriate on Monday or Saturday.

Both Mass and the "church" service here begin late. Indeed, we were told of a neighboring curate who ordained his hour of service at twelve o'clock, but to this some of the more animated in his congregation finally objected. Eleven is the fixed hour in all places of worship, I believe, on the queen's side of the water; and as in country places there is a call from the post-boy on Sunday mornings, this is very convenient.

This morning I had my first ride on an "outside" car, in which we papists went to chapel—the brougham naturally going the orthodox way, as the American party were divided in religious sentiment, and the majority being against Miss —— and myself. I own to some trepidation as I was assisted into the little vehicle, so curiously arranged with seats for two on either side facing the road, the coachman's perch being in the centre—all comfortably cushioned, and as pretty and dainty as a lady's phaeton. A smiling and somewhat derisive group assembled in the door-way to watch my ascent and see us off. Away we jolted, and my first sensations were all of terror, I was so sure I would go head first upon the ground, and clung nervously to the side of the car; but presently familiarity with the joggling motion overcame this. I enjoyed the novelty, the side movement having quite a pleasant effect; houses, trees, fields opened broadly to view as we jolted on at what seemed to me a reckless pace, although the coachman kept urging his horse to go faster. All along the country road the people were trudging to Mass; some, Miss —— told me, having walked miles to attend the dear service. Their Sunday finery was most impressive. I was particularly struck by one young woman in the most crisp and rustling of white petticoats, above which a bright green merino gown was lifted carefully; her shawl, a crimson striped with yellow, fastened with a brooch, and her head bared to the morning sunshine, quite ignorant of bonnet or kerchief. To my surprise I found that many attend Mass in this fashion.

The old women we met were very neat and prim in air, wearing their shoes somewhat laboriously, however; their white caps were finely starched and frilled, and usually half-covered by a three-cornered handkerchief of gay hue; the men, with well-brushed corduroys, wore impressive waistcoats and a sprig of heather or flower in their coats. Everybody was bobbing and smiling with peculiar friendliness, the day and our common errand uniting us pleasantly. Down through the little village, swooping around a corner while I tremulously clutched my side of the car, and at last in view of the little chapel, a small building of gray stone, standing on an undulating common; the churchyard and priest's house to the right, to the left the rise and fall of open country. Here the hurrying steps of the congregation grew more frequent; a stream of people were going in, while some lingered without, either praying at the graves or at the foot of a tall cross near the entrance. The effect was very solemn, as it seems to me all prayer or reverential attitude in the open air, with no other roofing than God's sky, must always be. I have seen more paths, heard more piety in an inspiration beneath a sky shining with starlight than the most solemn utterances within a dwelling. These people, quietly dispersed about, their rosaries in hand, seemed to be praying with beautiful, tranquil simplicity. Now and then a gaze lifted upward, and while the lips moved dumbly, almost seemed to penetrate the blue above us. At one side, under the shadow of an old tree, a group of men talked quietly, but presently all went in. The chapel is a nice one; simple, of course, and lacking in all attempt at ornament; but there was a harmonium not badly played, and a small chorus of voices, crude, perhaps, but full of piety; and one hymn sung cheerily to the air of "There is a Happy Land" suddenly brought home before us. The congregation finally assembled was most interesting to me. It represented chiefly one class, that known as "the poor"; yet, looking at them, who but would add, *God's own*?—his class surely, from which, kingly though His Son's name may be, he has chosen to be born. Never have I seen in any congregation such simple, unaffected piety; old and young alike seemed imbued by the spirit of solemnity and the fact that the occasion was by divine ordinance, their own dear service which presently would be performed, and on every face was a reverent look of expectation, and something which made me proudly feel Ireland's Catholicism was that which no change of king or people could affect. They have defied the past, clung to their faith in the midst of bitter struggle, and God will surely guard for them the future and all eternity.

Before Mass began, and while we were waiting for the priest, the rosary was recited; the school master, who is quite a scholarly man, kneeling at the rails and leading the first decade, three or four old men in the congregation taking up the others. The voices rose and fell with various intonations—that peculiar inflection which in the north has a certain lingering cadence about it; beginning on a high key, the voice fell gradually, then waved upwards again, now and then with a droll effect, as in one case where

the whole decade was a sort of groan, accompanied by the pious ejaculations or long-drawn breath of the old people; but the piety dominated all. Never had prayers such pathos, never had they so entirely the sense of being a petition straight from the craving human heart to the throne of the Most High, and the *Glory be to the Father*, pronounced reverently by all, had, despite the quaintness of some tones, a positive thrill of sanctity about it.

There was a short sermon well delivered by the curate, and to which the congregation listened devoutly. Then, Mass being over, some Sunday-school classes were formed, and finally the last of the little congregation had gone out, lingering for a moment's prayer before the cross.

As we drove home we remarked that the people who had come to church quietly and hurriedly were now dispersed about in gay, talkative groups. Here and there some one was being greeted who had been out of sight a few Sundays; a pretty, girlish young woman, who had trudged to church with a small bundle in her arms, was now unfolding it proudly to view—a tiny little baby, who blinked in the sudden light—while three women stood about, one with her hand tightly over her mouth: an attitude, I have observed, which seems to add peculiar force to criticism or retrospection.

"Ah! now, indeed, then, Mrs. Callahan, it's a fine child it is, God bless him!" This we hear as we jolt by, while the wondering little face is covered again after its unexpected view of the world, and Miss A—— tells me that it is considered unpardonable in Ireland not to wish God's blessing on a child whom one sees for the first time. To "overlook" a baby, as slighting it is called, is rarely forgotten by the parent.

Our household routine varies on Sundays, dinner being at three o'clock, after which that world-wide impulse to sleep on Sunday afternoons carried every one off to their apartments, and I opened my eyes about six o'clock to find the trim parlor-maid in the dressing-room with a tea-tray, and plate of sliced potato-cake and buns. Every one assembled later in the drawing-room, and at nine o'clock supper was announced. All these details I record simply to indicate the mode of life in an Irish country-house. The routine gives one an idea of the system.

Conversation this evening very properly fell upon church matters, guided thither, I fear, by some frivolous remarks between two Americans of opposite creeds; but the word "disestablishment" made us naturally inquisitive. Of course we had read *New Ireland*; equally of course we knew that the Irish Protestant Church was no longer regularly established under government protection; but these are outside facts.

"Was disestablishment approved of generally?" asked an American.

"I'll tell you how it was," replies our hostess, turning round from a critical survey of the night: "everybody was compelled to own it was just. Here was a country, almost entirely Catholic, supporting a Protestant church from which it derived no benefit in any way; even England," continues this vindictive person, "had to see the injustice of it. Disestablishment had been in the air long before it was an accomplished fact. Look at Scotland" (with a glance towards the sofa): "the Scotch don't support the Episcopal Church; they have their own."

"Ay, but we have;" this with a laugh from the sofa.

"And why should we have gone on paying for a clergy we did not need?"

"The *we* is rather inclusive, my dear," says a staunch Protestant in the company. "Quite true," argues the champion of religious liberty, "but we are in the majority; let you who are served by the queen's church pay for it."

"It must have been hard for the clergymen who held the livings."

"No; because they were well compensated. Every rector occupying a living was paid a certain sum down or had his income ensured to him during his life; so it is only the newcomers who have anything to lose."

"And did many clergymen remain?"

"Many accepted the larger amount and went elsewhere; but there were plenty of clergymen ready to step in on the new terms. Some church lands were sold, and in many instances that was a great benefit to all the county. You saw that fine tract of land beyond the gardens; well, X—— bought that in from the government, and as it adjoined S—— R——, it was a very fine investment. Those lands were known as 'glebe' property."

"And are the new clergymen as good a class of men?"

"Good? Well, what do you call good?"

"Staunch!" says the young lady of Kepoch.

"I think I was trying to be English; for I meant, were they as dignified and imposing a set of gentlemen?"

"Ah! no; well, they are not; they are hard enough workers, but not always gentlemen; that is what we disliked in the matter—what disestablishment was sure to bring."

"They are afraid of it in England now," said our host; "nobody knows how soon it may come about, and already it is difficult to sell a living for a good price, and 'younger sons' are not taking so readily to the church as of old."

"But there is less political injustice in it in England," said our hostess calmly.

"And what is the feeling now between the two churches. Is it as bitter as ever?"

No one spoke for a moment; two or three in the company were analyzing their opinions before uttering them.

"It is no longer what it once was," said our host presently. "When I was young it was a deeply-seated political feeling; now it is more the result of personal prejudice."

"Which extends rather far, I fear," said the young lady of the family.

"Ah! but no one feels now that a man of a different creed is a sworn enemy; the time was—"

"The time was," puts in our friend from India, whose editorial faculty is not without its dash of fun—"the time was when Protestant and Catholic were terms for 'Greek and Greek.' Did you not hear Mr. Q——'s story the other night? He told it with the most impressive gravity, like a bit of gospel. 'Once in the old days a Catholic gentleman gave a dinner-party, inviting widely from far and near; but when all the guests were seated it was found they were placed Catholic and Protestant, Catholic and Protestant, and so on alternately all round the table. Well, the first course came on and went off, some wine was drunk, when suddenly a signal was given—up jumped every Catholic and stabbed his Protestant neighbor! Upon tales like this Mr. Q—— and his fellow-men have been nurtured; what do you think of that for feeling?'"

"Well, indeed," said our hostess when all the laughter had subsided, "you ought to be ashamed of yourself, just; and you a Limerick man!"

"I am only quoting Mr. Q——," said the editor, "to give our American friends an idea of what Ireland has been."

"What Ireland has been!" echoes the young lady. "Ah! me, say what she might be!"

And when we all had our candles lighted our hostess whispered significantly: "I've not finished the church subject yet; there's far more to be said!"

TO BE CONTINUED.

## ENGLISH FREE MASONRY.

In a recent pastoral of the Bishop of Nottingham, England, occurs some passages bearing on Free Masonry. It is often said that American and English Free Masonry are very different from the Continental sect. The Bishop of Nottingham has had opportunities of studying English Free Masonry on its own ground. He quotes facts to prove that the merely "benevolent and social" English lodges are in affiliation with the evil league which Our Holy Father, Leo XIII., has so vigorously condemned.

The Bishop of Nottingham—the Rt. Rev. Edward Gilpin Bagshawe—warns his flock of the dangerous nature of this association, and of the well-founded reasons for which the Church has banned it. He recalls her unceasing warnings on this matter, dating as far back as 1738, or soon after the rise of the so-called modern Speculative Free Masonry. He cites proofs to show that "the hostile movement against the Church and the Holy See has grown in extent and importance in proportion as the Free Masons have grown; that the great French Revolution of 1788, and of 1830, the expulsion of Louis Philippe, and the Commune in 1877, were all prepared, directed and controlled by Masons under authority of the Lodges." He notes that, of course, it may be objected that English Free Masonry is quite a different thing. To this His Lordship cogently replies:

"There are abundant proofs that the English and Scotch Masons are one with those on the Continent. They are even their fathers and teachers in the craft, for Mackay's 'Lexicon of Free Masonry' shows with dates how nearly all the Continental Grand Lodges were established by members of either English or Scotch Lodges between the years 1734 and 1800. When the Prince of Wales was first appointed Grand Master, the London *Times* of April 29, 1875, announced how deputations were sent to him not only from the Scotch and Irish lodges, but also from that of Sweden; how the Grand Orient Lodge of France sent a letter of congratulation, as they have done to his predecessors in office, the Earl of Zealand and the Marquis of Ripon; and how the Grand Lodge of Italy sent him a congratulatory address.

... the words [of which] would seem to show that there was some other kind of activity in the English Lodges to excite the emulation of the Italians besides that of eating and drinking. The *Times*, moreover, of July 19, 1875, announced that the English Grand Master had given official recognition to the Grand Orient of Italy. He also, after his installation, is reported to have appointed Brother Wendt to be Grand Secretary for German correspondence."

To the other equally frequent defence drawn from the action of the English Lodges towards those of France, since the latter ceased the mention of God from their formularies. To this the Bishop retorts: "It seems to us to matter little whether they (the English Lodges) acknowledged or did not acknowledge a 'Grand Architect of the Universe,' for in saying architect they already implicitly deny the true God, who is the Creator of Heaven and earth. Let us suppose, however, that the recent refusal to communicate with the Grand Orient of France was intended as an act of homage to God. But are not the English Free Masons who are Christians thereby judged and condemned out of their own mouths? If to erase and omit all mention of God be an insult to God, why is not the omission of all mention of Christ in their own Lodges an insult to Christ? If they will not communicate in their rites and ceremonies with an avowed atheist, why do they so freely and readily communicate in them with avowed anti-Christians, such as Jews, Turks and Infidels? If their conscience tells them that they dishonor God by communicating with those who deny and blaspheme Him, it ought to tell them that they dishonor Christ by communicating with those who are His professed enemies. Is not Jesus Christ their God and Lord?" The objection that the Prince of Wales, and other great personages, would not countenance revolutionary schemes, is confuted by a quotation from Louis Blanc. In conclusion, His Lordship points out that all that is condemned in Masonry applies equally to all secret societies: "They do all its work, promote its designs, and propagate its principles;" and strenuously appeals to his flock to have nothing to do with secret societies, by whatsoever name they may be called.—*N. Y. Freeman's Journal*.

## An Imperial Caesar.

A parallel case to "Imperial Caesar, dead and turned to clay;" stopping a hole to keep the wind away, has been found in Rome this year. The ashes of an imperial Caesar Piso were lately employed for the lye of a Roman woman's wash-tub upon the discovery of the urn in which they had reposed for eighteen centuries. "They were so white and clean," explained the workman, "that I gathered them together in the basket and sent them to my wife to make lye for her washing."

WOULDN'T FORGET HIM.—A benevolent gentleman while waiting for a street car, was approached by a negro who asked him for a nickel. The gentleman only had a nickel, but there was something so appealing about the negro, that he gave him the nickel and decided to walk home. "Thankee, sah! thankee. De Lawd ain't gwine ter fergit yer fur dis." "That's all right." "Yas, sah, yas." "Just then the car came along and the negro hopped on with agility. "Here," exclaimed the gentleman. "You are an old sound-rel." "Yas, sah, yas, but de Lawd ain't gwine ter fergit yer."—*Arkansas Traveler*.