



THE MACHINE HUMORISTS AND THE IRISH RACE.

(Written for the "True Witness" by an Occasional Contributor.)

Nobody in the world enjoys a joke more heartily than an Irishman, and few men, if any, can turn out as good, let alone a better one, in a twinkling of time, than can the light-hearted Hibernian. Providence has gifted him with a peculiarly good nature; in times of trouble he is an ideal optimist. He is not a diamond in the rough, but rather a carefully cut one, with many facets, all but one of which scintillate with wit and sparkle with repartee. The exceptional facet is sensitive, particularly to the light that strikes it. Its refulgence is equal to the others in all save one—that is when an unkind flash lights on it and it is expected to reflect back with added lustre an insult to religion or nationality. The school of caricature, which has developed in America during the last half century, is of its kind clever enough, but in the majority of instances coarse, in a great many cases almost brutal. Cis-Atlantic artists have not the delicacy of touch of their trans-Atlantic brethren, nor have the bulk of the humorous writers a real gift of wit. An absurd juxtaposition of words serves to forcibly wring a guffaw out of a reader; there is none of the nicety of a joke that one may read and enjoy with only a passing smile and still fully appreciate. The late lamented Bill Nye was a typical American humorist, and gave his readers a great deal of pleasure; but after a little while his matter would hardly bear analysis as far as originality was concerned, always exempting the peculiar way which he strung his words together. In his reading of a shipwreck, he described how, after swimming for several hours his feet struck something hard and it was the United States. This invariably brought down the house. It was humor as the Americans like it. If he had said, he "struck something green and it was Ireland," it would have served the same purpose, much in the same manner as if he had struck a sandy beach and his geographical big toe communicated to his gray matter the fact that he had arrived at the Sandwich Islands. If he had burned his foot on a submerged rock, he would have been justified in thinking that he was somewhere in the neighborhood of Terra del Fuego. Nye did not ring any changes on the first rough idea. He had come down to the level of his audience. It is really this lack of the appreciation of what is best in humor that accounts for the vulgarity with which the majority of American and Canadian papers is more than tinged. The want of originality, or rather the inability to take advantage of real opportunities for original work has driven the cartoonist and

the humorist to lengths that might possibly be funny from their very ridiculousness were it not for a very apparent under-current of vastness and bigotry.

The Irish race, their institutions, their religion, have furnished these pseudo-humorists with grist for their mill, and with the carelessness that comes of good nature, the great majority of Irish people see themselves and their country openly insulted without even a protest. When Punch cartooned France as an organ-grinder and Marchand as a monkey in reference to the Fashoda question there was a howl went up that was immediately recognized as almost of the importance of an international episode. Herein the Latin may teach the Celt something. The "True Witness" has always held that such work should be frowned upon by the Irish people. It could easily be done by withdrawing patronage from the offending papers, and having it distinctly understood why such action was taken. A few months' experiment of this kind especially about election time would have a wonderful effect. If the Irish people will not protect themselves in matters of this kind and stand upon their own dignity they can hardly expect other people to take their part.

An instance in point occurred in Montreal, on St. Patrick's Day, and the astonishing part of it was that the oldest newspaper in Canada, the one above all others which prides itself on its respectability and liberality, should have allowed the use of its columns to deliberately make game of the sacredness in which the name of the Apostle of Ireland is held by all Irishmen, Catholic and Protestant alike. But never was there a word of protest, except in the "True Witness." At least if there was it did not see the light of day.

At the same time an offensive article appeared in the Syracuse "Post Standard." Herein lies the difference. No sooner had editorial attention been called to the fact than a straightforward, manly apology was made, not a grudging one, but one that does credit to the paper. The "Post Standard" is not the greatest paper in the world, but its lines of ethics could be copied with advantage by more pretentious, if less honest sheets.

Here is the Standard's editorial under the caption "An Apology to Irishmen":—

What here follows is written to appear on Monday morning rather than on Sunday morning, because not all week-day readers of the Post-Standard read also in the Sunday issue.

On Saturday morning there appear-

ed on this page an editorial entitled "Americans in Green." In intention it was flippant; in effect it was insulting to Irishmen everywhere; and for its publication the Post-Standard offers frank and unqualified apology, while expressing profoundest regret for its appearance.

The article here apologized for was not written by the editor of the paper, and not only does not represent but misrepresents and affronts his life-long conviction relating to the Irish people, their traditions, their patriotism, their religion. What is thus stated of the editor of the Post-Standard applies equally, and to the people of Syracuse is known to apply equally, to all the owners of the Post-Standard.

The weary and harassing work of a radical office reorganization which through recent weeks has been stealthily in progress was responsible on Friday night for a passing lapse of the exact censorship that is conventional, and in that lapse, as in the newspaper offices such things always go, this most unwarranted and utterly inexcusable editorial went through. The management is chargeable, but a cruel and necessary inadvertence is responsible for the wrong that has been done.

The flippant treatment of any theme even remotely relating to the nationality, or home traditions, or patriotism, or religion of any man or race of men the Post-Standard believes to be as gross and even as profane as flippancy in the treatment of vital human sorrow. Each is sacred. Each is entitled to the consistent and profound respect if it may not have the reverence of all men.

The observance of St. Patrick's Day is an honor to Irishmen the world over; and their affectionate and reverent steadfastness to God and the religion and the traditions of their fathers and their home over the sea affords an object lesson to the world, in the study of which the world has profited, and in the learning of which the world would more profit.

Our times search in vain for better illustration of religious loyalty and fidelity than is found in the Catholic communicant. In Great Britain, on the Continent, in America—everywhere, the observant man is impressed with the simple, frank devotion to his Church of the Catholic of every social grade. On the part of men and women and children alike is revealed an earnest, zealous, honest adherence to services of worship that honors and commends the Catholic Church, and in this country accounts primarily for the giant strides she is making.

These are facts known to the Post-Standard and to all men, and are a record of qualities that tend to the making of the Catholic and the Hibernian as he is known in Syracuse. That the Post-Standard should have been the instrument in offering him insult is a sorrow. It seeks of its own wrong to "nothing extenuate." It asks of those wronged, and asks the more confidentially because they are Irishmen, that they do not set down aught in malice."

RECENT HAPPENINGS IN EUROPE.

As the "True Witness" anticipated last week, the elections for the County Councils in Ireland have resulted in an overwhelming triumph for the Nationalist party. The official list of candidates returned shows that no fewer than 544 Nationalists have been successful, against 119 representatives of landlordism. This gives the popular forces a predominant proportion of almost five to one. It was a glorious victory for Home Rule and national unity; and the next logical step is to establish a national central council in Dublin, composed of members elected in the county, rural and urban districts, which will be in fact, though not in name, a national parliament. Although no religious issue was mentioned throughout the struggle, yet Catholic interests have been profoundly affected by the result. The transference of power that has taken place is not merely from the landlord class to the tenant farmers and the people at large; it is also from the Protestant minority to the Catholic majority, who have hitherto been locally ruled by a haughty class since the Penal Days. The victory is therefore both a Catholic and a national one; and its magnitude can only be realized during the course of the present year. It tells well for the calm and earnest determination

of the Irish people in this matter that a hostile critic, writing at the time of the election, said:—"The transference of power from the grand juries to the new popularly elected bodies is taking place almost in a dead calm, the people everywhere showing an admirable sense of responsibility."

Desirable economical changes will naturally follow this political change—a political change which the "True Witness" believes will be still more marked at the next elections, when there will be no more ex-officio landlord members of the County Councils, and there will be fewer of the landlord representatives elected. The movement for the creation of a peasant proprietary will receive a powerful impetus from the existence of the national councils. Already, as a trustworthy correspondent says:—

"The Congested Districts Board is buying up land and allotting it at low rents with the right of ultimate purchase. Slowly the people are coming back to the good land from the mountains and bogs to which the remnants of them had been driven, and where their cottages still huddle together. They are stripping the land. They are widening it, as they say. They are cultivating it on allotments, living further apart. In 50

years much of the land will be their own. They have hopes that the boys will come back from the wide world, or, at all events, that the frightful depopulation will cease if the holdings are made large enough to feed the family and give them work. That is the present object both of the Board and the United Irish League, each after its own manner."

Much sympathy will be felt for Mr. Justin McCarthy, the gifted Irish member of parliament, in his enforced absence from the House of Commons, owing to a cataract of the eye. To a man of his active literary habits the affliction must be much more than ordinarily severe. Two operations have been performed upon the distinguished patient; and a speedy recovery is confidently expected.

That England is, as a nation, the "hardest" drinker in the whole civilized world has been proved by an official statement just issued. According to this statement, England drinks 30.31 gallons of beer per head per annum; Germany, 25.50; the United States, 12.20; and France, 5.10. France and Germany lead with wine and spirits. The total consumption of both beer and spirits per head per annum is as follows: England, 32.71 gallons; United States, 13.48; Germany, 28.73; France, 28.79.

To a deputation of members of the city Council of Dublin, headed by the Lord Mayor, wearing the historic

gold chain of his office, a few days ago, Lord-Lieut. Cadogan announced that he will soon release the three prisoners, Fitzharris, Mullet and Hanlon, still in prison, for complicity in the Phoenix Park murders. All three were sentenced to penal servitude for life and will have completed sixteen years this summer. Fitzharris was the driver of the outside car on which the men who committed the crime arrived and escaped. Every inducement was offered him to turn informer when the Crown case was being got up, but he scornfully spurned these proposals.

The Holy Father's reception of the members of the Sacred College, and his vigorous speech to them in reply to their address of congratulation this week, have it is to be hoped put an end for a long time to come, to the false rumors concerning his health, that have been so repeatedly circulated by newspaper correspondents. Coupled with these rumors are always others, equally false, as to the action of the Great Powers in regard to the selection of the new Pope, the cardinals favored by this country and that, and the chances of prominent cardinals of securing election. The latter rumors are the result of Protestant ignorance. The Pope is elected by the free, untrammelled vote of the cardinals; and the only influence exerted upon that vote is that of the Holy Ghost, who abides with the Church forever. An instance of the extent to which this ignorance can go was given several days ago, when it was stated in the secular press that Cardinal Vaughan had a good chance of being elected Pope, but that he actually put himself forward as a candidate for the papal honor! No wonder that his Eminence was annoyed when he read this piece of "Catholic" news; and no wonder that he declared its publication to be an "impertinence."

Mr. C. R. Devlin, the Dominion Immigration Commissioner at Dublin, Ire., is doing good work. He is not a man who searches out and exposes the few little things that may be found fault with in this country; he does not point to it as a suburb of the North Pole, nor does he go to the other extreme and describe it as a lotus land or a country flowing with milk and honey. He simply tells the truth about our great Dominion, and the picture when finished is an attractive one that should induce the better class of emigrants from Ireland to seek homes in the fertile plains of our boundless west. On the evening of St. Patrick's Day Mr. Devlin delivered a very powerful address in Wicklow, and in a few words did a great deal to dispel any false impressions the people might have had about Canada. He explained the liberality of the educational method, the marvellous progress made in a commercial way, the benefits which had accrued to Canada through her home rule parliamentary system, the spirit of even justice which had place in both Federal and Provincial Governments, the excellent work being done for the betterment of agricultural interests through the medium of experimental farms; in fact the speaker found many good things to say about Canada without resorting to exaggeration.

Speaking of the Irishman in Canada he said that he held his own. You will find him in the foremost ranks of the Church, the Senate; he graces the Bench; in the forum his oratorical powers are admired. The Irishman has made his mark in every walk in life. Some of our ablest Cabinet Ministers have been Irishmen; the greatest orator ever heard in the Canadian House of Commons was an Irishman. Thanks to the magnificent conditions prevailing, no obstacle, no barrier, no crushing influence is placed in his way. Years ago he may have left Ireland a poor boy; to-day you will find him in the liberal professions, or merchant prince, or perhaps looking after immense agricultural interests, which he has acquired. "At all events," said Mr. Devlin, "the position which the Irishman occupies in Canada is one which you have every reason to feel proud of."

At the end of his address Mr. Devlin was loudly applauded and warmly congratulated, after a vote of thanks proposed by Rev. Father Clarke, C.C., had been heartily responded to.

Three of the leading Protestant churches of Columbus, Ohio, have adopted rules that women remove their hats.

CHURCH WORK IN ALASKA.

Many interesting extracts could be taken from very interesting and comprehensive article, under the above heading, which appeared in the "Daily Alaskan," of February 19th last. After dealing with the Russian Church in that comparatively new land, we find these interesting details concerning our own Church, and some of her accompanying missions.

"Father Rene, the present prefect-apostolic, has recently returned from an important mission to the Vatican, one point of which was to obtain the authority of the Vatican for the establishment of a monastery on the Yukon, at a point near Forty Mile, for the purpose of fostering the development of agriculture in that region.

The foundation of these Yukon missions dates from 1886, when the first was established at Nulato, and a small day school was started. Two years later the boarding and day school were started lower down the river, with four Sisters of St. Ann. With the increase of pupils seven more Sisters were sent up in 1893, and since the Klondike discoveries the school has grown to be the largest and the most potent in the civilization of natives and the education of whites of any in the interior.

"There are now in the Yukon interior engaged in mission work ten fathers, seven brothers and eleven sisters, making 28 in all. Rev. Father Barnum is at Forty-Mile mission; Rev. Father Munro at Nulato; Rev. Father A. Ragurn at Holy Cross, Rev. Father Judge at Shageluk River, and Rev. A. Roberts on the Kuskokwim. Rev. Joseph Treca is superintendent of St. Joseph's boarding school at Akularak, Yukon delta, with three male assistants. The girls' school is under the charge of Sister M. Zypherine, superior, assisted by three other Sisters. At Tununa, at Cape Vancouver, and at Eskinuk there are Roman Catholic missions and also at St. Michael's, Norton Sound, and at Selawik River, Kotzebue Sound, and at other places along the coast of this wild far northern country.

In short, the Jesuit priests have moved with the American pioneers of Alaska, and have started missions wherever they have settled to trade or hunt for gold, and in many places where there are still only native residents. They have also established hospitals in the interior for the sick and the needy. These priests have been highly educated men, who have shown great devotion to the cause, travelling thousands of miles alone and bearing all the hardships incidental to Arctic journeying. They speak the language of the natives and thus easily gain their confidence.

MOUNT ST. LOUIS COLLEGE.

The pupils of Mount St. Louis College held their annual Easter celebration on Sunday evening, in the college hall, by a grand entertainment which was greatly appreciated by all present. The principal part of the programme consisted in the production of a very interesting drama in four acts, entitled "Falsely Accused."

The scene is laid in Milford, one of the rural parishes of England, and describes an unsuccessful attempt of wealth and intrigue to overcome honesty and poverty. A vein of comedy runs through the play, and the plot affords many opportunities for displaying the great histrionic abilities of the players. Needless to say, the pupils upheld on this occasion their high reputation, and showed the careful training they had undergone at the hands of their Rev. instructors, the Christian Brothers.

Walter Warren, the villainous gamekeeper was undoubtedly the star of the cast. Robert Quigley as Jasper Rosedale, the falsely accused hero, was very well suited to his part and was a great success. He was ably seconded by H. Cardell, as Claude Rosedale, his brother, who gave promise of much ability. Albert O'Neil, as Rev. Father Hylton, pastor of Milford, was an ideal clergyman, mild, gentle and reproving. Humphrey Higson, the heartless steward of Lord Elmore was well portrayed by J. Rogers. Jos. J. O'Brien, as Hinkley Brown ("Nothing Like It"), and W. Kinsella as Squirey Smith ("Don't yer know"), two eccentric sports, enlivened the audience and were much appreciated. John Stevens made a good naval officer, and A. Marcell deserves much credit for his portrayal

"It should also be mentioned that the fathers have what is conceded to be the best school in Alaska, the boarding and day school at Juneau, under the charge of the Sisters of St. Ann. At Sitka the Catholics worship in an old building, but it is hoped in the near future to erect there a new and imposing edifice.

"Rev. Father W. H. Judge, died at his mission on Jan. 16th, on his birthday, aged 49 years. Very sincerely regretted."

In connection with the various sects of Protestantism and especially with the inter-denominational Church edifice that has been the focus of all creeds, we find these very amusing and yet instructive details:—

"As an instance of how the Union Church has been occupied, it may be mentioned that at the time Mr. Leach was here the time apportioned to the various denominations was about as follows:—Monday evening, Christian Endeavor prayer meeting; Tuesday evening, Methodist Episcopal Endeavor meeting; Wednesday evening, Episcopal weekly evening service; Thursday evening, Union prayer meeting; Friday evening, Baptist prayer meeting; Saturday evening, choir practice; Sunday services:—Roman Catholic, 9 a.m.; Episcopal, 11 a.m.; Union Sunday School, 2 p.m.; Methodist Episcopal service, 3 p.m.; Roman Catholic Sunday School, 5 p.m.; Union services 7.30 p.m.

"At the last meeting of the church trustees, in order that all denominations should have a chance to hold services in Union Church, it was decided that no denomination should have a set hour regularly, but all must rotate. This will lead it is said to the winding up and disbanding of the Union congregation, and the use of the church mainly for school purposes and for such congregations as are not able as yet to build churches of their own."

It has generally been so, all over this continent; whenever a new country was being colonized the various congregations made use of the same edifice for prayer and worship; while, according as the population increased, each one managed to secure a temple of its own, and the old time divisions and even estrangements began to obtain. However, it is an evidence of the cordiality that hardship and a companionship in privations may create. The same has taken place here in Montreal in the days of the old church on Recollet street; and the same may again happen in some of those yet undiscovered regions when the foot of civilization will touch their soil for a first time.

Jonathan Rosedale, the hero's father. J. O'Brien as counsel for the prosecution, and J. Austin and A. Cole, counsels for the prisoner, were also very good. The other members of the cast were: A. Lebrun, T. Giroux, H. Steinfield, and F. O'Callaghan. During the intermissions of the acts selections were rendered by the Mount St. Louis Band, and a violin solo was given by E. Renaud. A duet by D. Duffy and E. Renaud, and a short dialogue entitled "The Dentists" by the junior pupils were much enjoyed. Rev. Bro. Thomas and Rev. Bro. Henry, who had charge of the entertainment are to be congratulated upon the success achieved by their clever pupils.

LADIES' GAELIC CLASS.

The Ladies' Gaelic Class inaugurated their new quarters at Miss Cronin's Academy, 257 St. Antoine street, last Thursday evening.

Many new members were enrolled, and a pleasant half hour was spent in listening to the sweet strain of the Irish bag pipes, most skilfully played by Mr. Touhey, the famous piper.

The ladies are making rapid progress and have done credit to their instructors, Messrs. Lavelle and Mangin. Among those present were Mrs. Allan, Pro. Pres., Ladies' Auxiliary, A.O.H., Miss McCull, Miss Brannen, Miss Cullinan, Miss Howlett and many others. Ladies desiring to join are cordially invited. The class meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. sharp at 257 St. Antoine street.

The Vacant See of Three Rivers.

A rumor states that Mgr. Marois, of the archdiocese of Quebec, has been called to the episcopal seat of the diocese of Three Rivers.