All Ireland Review

Rest

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Source: *All Ireland Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Jan. 6, 1900), p. 5

Published by: [All Ireland Review](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20544432>

Accessed: 20/06/2014 19:56

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TWO POEMS.

We desire our readers to compare and contrast the two poems which here follow, each the work of an indubitable poet; and to observe in each instance, in spite of identity of theme, the marvellous diversity of aim, thought, feeling, imagination, and execution. "What are poets good for?" some one may ask. It is a question not easy to answer. Yet the Almighty makes them generation after generation, and we must assume that He does not make them in vain.

R E S T.

BY PERCY SOMERS PAYNE.

Silence sleeping on a waste of ocean:
Sundown, westward, traileth a red streak;
One white sea-bird poised, with scarce a motion
Challenges the stillness with a shriek;
Challenges the stillness upward wheeling
Where some rocky peak containeth his rude nest,
And the shadows o'er the waters they come stealing
And they whisper to the silence, "Here is rest."

Down where the broad Zambesi River
Glides away into some shadowy lagoon,
Lies the antelope, and hears the leaflet quiver
Shaken by the sultry breath of noon:
Hears the sluggish waters ripple in their flowing
Feels the atmosphere with fragrance all oppressed,
Dreams his dreams, and the sweetest is the knowing
That above him and around him there is Rest.

Centuries have faded into shadow—
Earth is fruitful with the dust of Man's decay—
Pilgrims all they were to some bright El Dorado,
But they wearied and they fainted by the way.
Some were sick with surfeit of Pleasure,
Some were bowed beneath a care-encumbered breast;
But they all trod in turn Life's stately measure,
And all paused, betimes, to wonder:—"Is there Rest?"

Look, O Man, to the limitless Hereafter,
When thy Sense shall be lifted from its Dust,
When thy Anguish shall be melted into Laughter,
When thy Love shall be severed from its Lust;
When thy spirit shall be sanctified with seeing
The "Ultimate Dim Thule" of the Blest,
And the passion-haunted fever of thy Being
Shall be drifted in a Universe of Rest.

So far Percy Somers Payne. See now how our contemporary, Mr. W. B. Yeats, treats the same theme.

I N I S F R E E.

BY W. B. YEATS.

I will rise and go now, and go to Inis Free;
And a small cabin build there of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there and a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer and the noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always, night and day,
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore
As I stand on the roadway or on the pavement grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

NATIONS.

The following is one of the many suggestive sentences in the writings of Francis Bacon, which have such a power to set the mind in motion. "In the infancy of nations arms do flourish; in their prime, arms and learning; in their old age, commerce and the mechanical arts."

IRISH MUSIC IN LONDON.

Mrs. Kate Lee, the popular honorary secretary of the Folk Song Society, gave, a short time ago, a most interesting lecture on "Irish Music" at the Irish Literary Society's branch at Forest Gate. Her lecture consisted of an account of "Early Irish music and the Celtic bards, the way in which Irish music has lived, and kept its own characteristics, and the musical instruments of the ancient Irish." This instructive lecture was illustrated by Mrs. Kate Lee singing several traditional airs arranged by Alfred Moffat and C. Milligan Fox. Mr. Gabriel Thorpe (of Lis towel) supplied the humour of the Irish songs by a rendering of Lover's "Low-backed Car" and "Phe-lim's Wake," which, of course, are modern examples of Ireland's minstrelsy.

On the 7th December Lord and Lady Russell of Killowen entertained the president and members of the Irish Literary Society at their town residence, Cromwell House, 7, S.W. A programme of Irish music was provided, and all the singers were Irish (with one exception). Mr. McGrath sang two songs of Dr. Villiers Stanford, the celebrated Dublin composer: Miss Florence Daly sang "The Ould Plail Shawl," the words being written by Mr. Francis A. Fahy, a member of the Irish Literary Society. Mr. Joseph O'Mara, who hails from Limerick, sang two of Mrs. Needham's compositions, and Mr. Gabriel Thorpe and Mrs. Kate Lee sang songs by Mrs. Milligan, etc. The reception was a most brilliant one, and a great many of the Lord Chief Justice's legal brethren were present, besides the popular Sir Thos. Lipton, and Mr. Alfred Percival Greaves, of the Irish Literary Society.

At the London Ballad Concert on Saturday last Mr. Plunkett Greene's grand interpretation of Irish songs was universally commented upon. Ireland should indeed be proud to claim such a bard, who can at one moment move his hearers to tears by his rendering of an Irish famine song (in which the starving peasant wishes he "were a goose among corn, for they live and die at peace"), and the next moment to laughter and delight by his jovial rendering of "The Jug of Punch." This great artist believes in singing the traditional airs of his native island, and through him those melting airs (arranged by Stanford), "My Love's an Arbutus" and "When She Answered Me," were first heard on an English platform.

Dr. Villiers Stanford is at present arranging the airs collected by Petrie, and which Messrs. Boosey and Co. will shortly publish, and before long Mr. Plunkett Greene will, no doubt, introduce a few of the gems from the collection to an appreciative musical audience.

THE OPTIMIST.

God did not create some beautiful things, but Beauty is the creator of the world.

EMERSON.

"THE RESIDENT MAGISTRATE."

This is the title of the pleasantest and the merriest Irish book that we have read for a long time. It is the joint composition of two young Irish ladies, Miss Martin and Miss Somerville. Let all who wish to have a good laugh ask for "The Resident Magistrate."

JOHN MILTON ON THE ULSTER SCOT.

From "Observations on the Peace between Ormonde and the Irish Rebels."

After abusing the rebel Irish, the great poet delivers himself as follows, not quite in the strain that we might expect from the author of "The Paradise Lost":—"We have now to deal, though in the same country, with another sort of adversaries—in shew far different, in substance much the same. These write themselves the Presbytery of Belfast, a place far better known by the name of a late barony than by the fame of these new doctrines or ecclesiastical deeds, whose obscurity till now never came to our hearing. . . . Their grand accusation is our justice done to the King. . . . These blockish Presbyters at Clondeboy of the Presbytery in Scotland taught professedly the doctrine of deposing, not killing, Kings."