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joining of the skull. The eyes have seen evil, the ears have heard it, and the mouth has made laughter and speech of the same: how then would they be a right and fitting doorway for the feet of the spirit to pass! Moreover, I have heard tell that the skull of the man and the skull of the woman are different one from another—and it is the soul of herself has the sorest departure from the flesh."

Every story has its quaint turn or fine phrases. "There was a strong farmer one time, and he was the boastfulest man in all Ireland. He had a tidy, comfortable place, sure enough, but to hear him speaking you'd be thinking his house was built of silver and thatched with the purest gold."

The stories given in "The Folk Tales of Breffni" have a narrow range of interest—they are all about changlings, crocks of gold, wealth given by the Other Folk to poverty-stricken people, or butter drawn from the churn. But each story has its own beauty and its own excitement. What a pity it is that the reading of papers is taking the place of the telling of tales by the chimney corners and on the roadsides in Breffni! Miss Hunt justly says that the peasant of ancient race is more akin to the aristocratic type than the bourgeois can ever be—and that the story told from generation to generation bears greater resemblance to the work of a poet than to that of the popular novelist, who is the bourgeois of literature. We are all grateful to Miss Hunt for saving for us the delightful story of Breffni folk tales. We wonder can she give us a collection of Breffni folk songs? On the roadways and in the houses of the County Cavan one meets many people with a store of very distinctive ballads.

P. C.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

"Gitanjala" (Song Offerings). By Rabindra Nath Tagore, with an introduction by W. B. Yeats: (India Society).

The thread and tenour of these hymns have no air of earth-weariness: here there is no truckling with the common-places of saintliness—no high-handed abnegation of that which by its very nature has abdicated and gone without the camp, never a thought against the man who loves more earthly wine, scarcely a wish to be considered a consecrated being at all. We deal with whisper and shadow, and the beautiful calm of eternity lightens all the wise rhythm and character of his song-offering. Mark, it is not thrown at the feet of an ignorant world, but set, a little fearfully, upon the altar of day, to a God who loves and chastens, by one who knows no fear and lives in love. He is not afraid of piety, this Indian seer: he is unashamed as those who have the white hope—not hope of hereafter, but of life out of time: coming with a torch and that basket of flowers he calls "Gitanjali," from the timeless gardens where wisdom and folly, the consequent and inconsequent, bring forth strange sons and daughters—blossoms everywhere. For who shall say what counts and what is of no avail when fools jostle the seers on God's pavements, and a reed-song, where the stream of day grew stagnant,

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drew to its music that sweet maiden who was daughter of pain and the mother of a nation within the nations of the world. Again, what is art to this singer, when the mind becomes subtle with its dream (vision only implies light which is earthly!) : and language, where words are the embarrassment we raise against the stream of God : music is near its mouthing and maybe the murmur of a kiss—but the deep is shadow, and whisper where we send our songs and dream to meet the song of "I am."

Our Master, wiser than the mentors of men, "worketh hitherto and I work!" Said the Christ. "Raise thou the stone and there I am, cleave thou the wood and there am I." "Surely I am with you!" Nor am I afraid of being pious! The world of God is all around; all that we live in is God if we follow beauty. Who will follow any other one, consciously, heartedly! And thus the world of God follows beauty! and we can say with Tagore:

"Our Master Himself has joyfully taken upon Him the bonds of creation—
He is bound up with us forever."

And the world of God has no rest—we are flung upon its motion and strength in our highest choice: when we love beauty, the army of all the beautiful fall into our tread and become tributary to our ecstasy.

"All things rush on, they stop not, they look not behind; no power can hold them back, they rush on."

Is it this pilgrim, freighted so with a burden of wandering—that darkened, briar-tangled saint, world-reproached and laughter-less sun-less, peace-less, passion-less, to whom has come the hard will of God, who cries—"Thou art the sky and thou art the rest as well?" Nought but an even tread on the road, and the white beauty at the hedge's rim—just in sight—so here is the very loveliness of the pilgrim's way. His eye is fixed sternly and unwavering upon the wicket gate.

Did Rabindranath Tagore find song on the path of a saint, or was he impelled to saintliness because his song demanded austere preparation? In any case, the conjunction is fine, and worldliness ever the foe of that peace through which we creep to the flowers of the happy meadows. Here you will find the bare bones and skin of that medium long considered the only expression for soul: no decoration, no jig-rhythms for vulgar or lazy, no indolent passion for the gossamer-houses of inane or meekly religious—but the fierce godliness of conviction, the long-established ground of unconquerable mind.

"And because I love this life, I know I shall love death as well!"

Open these songs—they are written to be sung, and the music is by their author, is no artificial quality. Though they aspire, they never strain: they are pure, not repured!

"My song has put off all her adornments. She has no pride of dress and decoration."

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And the songs have their root in ecstasy, and their bourne is the worship of "I am."

"I know Thou takest pleasure in my singing. I know that only as a singer I come before Thy presence."

To that realm the Western is a stranger. He wants so many things beside his song, earth-love, wine, fame, gold, peace; all the paraphernalia of the quack about his neck, when the clauber of the Way of Salvation is sweet and peace. Tagore is so far from life that he can love it, and give back to those who throw their arms about it, the fierce significance of it they have lost in desire. Thus ever must the heart-heavy poet, through battle and pain, give back to the fool and blind, who are afraid of death, the heritage they were too ignorant or incapable of claiming or keeping. Who goes to prayer these days or hates the little self that ogles him from the gaze of "I am."

"I came out alone on my way to my tryst. But who is this that follows me in the silent dark. I move aside to avoid him, but I escape him not.

"He makes the dust rise from the earth with his swagger; he adds his loud voice to every word I utter.

"He is my own little self, my Lord, he knows no shame: but I am ashamed to come to Thy door in his company."

The lovers of one's little self, friends, ease, pride and concern of weighty-moving life-satisfaction, play villain to many a God-ward singer. Not into the garden of songs may this mis-born brother ever come, nor pull a flower through the barred gate, and because he never can hear

"the harp of the road break out in sweet music of pain"—

To Mr. Yeats, who long ago saw that the singer must sorrow as a saint, we owe a new debt; but who knows how much the Celtic Renaissance, of whom he is prophet and laureate, may influence these untouched, untrammelled watchers at Eternal doors in far Bengal.

CRAWFORD NEIL.

THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY NUMBER OF "THE TIMES."

I.

Look at it how we will, each from his own standpoint, the Irish Number of "The Times" (March 17th, 1913) is something of an event. It marks a definite stage in the altered and altering relationship between Ireland and England: and all the more, because it appears at a very unlikely time. During a short lull in the Irish political campaign, "The Times," of all papers in the world, has thought it desirable (and incidentally, do doubt, profitable, which is significant of the changing atmosphere) to attempt an impartial survey of Ireland as it actually is in this present year of grace, 1913. It is a pity that