All Ireland Review

Old Favourites

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their heroes into the divine world. As their earthly ideal was denied fulfilment and became more remote, their memory of the dead grew at last into harmony with that spiritual and imperishable world which they always imagined over them; and to-day Red Hugh, Sarsfield—aye, and even our modern Mitchel and Parnell—seem to belong to the company of Cuculain, and can be mentioned with the venerable names of two thousand years ago. Your "King's Irish" have not yet added a name to this hierarchy. They have not found their singers in this island. But I do not wish to be unjust to them. I believe some of them have their honourable place among the heroes of another cause. Perhaps you and your readers will bear with me while I explain, for the philosophical temper is not the one we have most cultivated in Ireland, and the novelty of it may tide them over the explanation. The words by which we are accustomed to denote opposing parties here, beside their evident meanings, have, I think, others, not often declared, and but dimly felt by those who are divided by such names. They are the symbols here of eternal ideas which have been in the world since its beginning, and which are ever trying to incarnate in the minds of men. The first of these great ideas I may express as brotherhood, or the solidarity of humanity—one in its begetting and one in its end; and all the empires that have arisen and perished were the efforts of the world spirit through chosen races to bring men to realise this unity, and to express it as brotherhood. The other idea, no less essential, is freedom—the right of men to choose their own heroes and ideals, for without this right fully granted there is no merit in a forced peace or virtue. The great martyr of the first idea was Christ, though there were others before and since; and I may name Socrates as the martyr more especially of the cause of spiritual freedom, though in choosing him I may wrong many names as worthy. The great spiritual forces underlie all others; and political and social aspirations are only the spiritual instincts with a veil, or many veils, over them to darken and lessen their power. There is no essential conflict between these ideas; indeed at their root freedom and love are identical, but on the surface of things their reflected light is mixed with less noble forces which beget their own destruction. When the nation chosen to bind many other nations into a solidarity does so by inflicting on the other nations its own nationality, it finds itself opposed by the passionate spirit of freedom. We see, for example, what the phrase "British supremacy" has evoked in South Africa; and you know as well as I do what are the causes which prevent a similar outburst here on the part of our friends the *intransigentes*. But to return to my explanation. I have no doubt it was some dim feeling for the largeness and essential unity of life which lies at the root of the loyalty of your "King's Irish," mixed often with too many other motives of profit and praise and power. I have tried to take you seriously in this matter, for I think even when you are at your wildest you are worth taking seriously; and I have discovered this path and this guiding star as the probable equivalents of that "grand old road" you speak of but do not explain. I am sorry to think that this mixture of motives has so

obscured their light that it has necessitated the other Irish following a star of their own. It is not in the ALL IRELAND REVIEW that you can fittingly refer to one section of Irishmen as alone being on the right track, when so many others have been stirred by that mysterious fire which leads to death and self-sacrifice, and whose memories have been illuminated by the tender love of poets. This power of the bards to sing a cause is a great test of its worth. You once quoted in a splendid outburst those lines so full of pathetic loyalty:—

"Shawn O'Dwyer a glanna
We're worsted in the game."

Try if you could think of as good a poem about the King. You cannot. The soul has nought to do with a conventional loyalty. All you could imagine would be but rhetoric. But the Dark Rose—the little Dark Rose has had many singers and historians; and in spite of your article you will have a warm place in the hearts of the other Irish, for you are one of the best of them. Yours sincerely, A. E.

Dear A. E.—Was not the dark Rosaleen, historically, Ireland with King and Parliament, but that King a Stuart, and—absolute? However, I think I know what you mean. I must defer that little bout of friendly controversy to which you invite me until I shall have explained at more length what I mean by "the law of laws," and by "the Great Road."—ED.]

A. I. R.'s MEANING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL.

DEAR MR. O'GRADY,—I think it is quite obvious what the meaning of the large note of interrogation is that you received some time ago. Many of your friends will wait, like myself, to know what you *mean*. While most anxious to be a help in anything for the good of Ireland, we do not want to be dragged into the quagmires of so-called Nationalism. I am sure you see the hopelessness of trying to work R. Catholics as a Church! though there may be a few sensible people among them (perhaps more than we know) who would work cordially and honestly with us. You know I abhor Orangeism, but I am convinced that Popery is the curse of Ireland, though the Religion may be good enough for those whom it suits.

I wonder is M'Carthy an honest man. If so, he is also a brave man. They should stir him up to write on the University Question. Not that I am quite opposed to the R. C's. having a University. I am not competent to judge about it. Some very intelligent Protestants here are of opinion that it would be impossible for the studies of the members of the two religions to be carried on together advantageously; and that, therefore, it would be better to give them a University.

E. B.

P.S.—Please give us an article to tell us what you mean.

DEAR E. B.—The humblest things we know, the little field-mouse, the moth, and the poor earth-worm cannot explain what they mean, even when helped to expression by great philosophers. I feel sure that Darwin did not, because he could not, tell a thousandth part of the meaning of the poor little earth-worm, who, I think, is some kind

of cousin and kinsman of our own, if a good deal "removed," and for whom I have always felt a certain regard ever since, as a boy, on rainy days, I used to watch the lusty blackbird dragging him out of the earth, joyfully—the poor little thirsty worm having just left his dear wife and children, and come to the surface for a drink. Please grant me, too, the same privilege that you so willingly accord to these humble creatures, and suffer me explain my meaning, if I have any—also, if I ever can—in my own way and at my own time.

I am printing your letter because you tell me in the simplest language possible, very kindly and very sincerely, the things that a great many others are saying to me, only not quite so simply. You are all so used to your life in one or other of our hostile camps, that you cannot understand one who belongs to none of these camps; you think that because I was born and brought up in one of them and have gone out of it, I must have done so with the intention of going into another, and thence shouting a borrowed war-cry and an adopted Shibboleth.

It is not so, E. B.; not so at all. I shall, if I can, trace a circle, which shall include and run quite round all these circles. What have I to do with all these camps and factions—I who am coming out to speak for such things as you feel, if not know, that I and my gentle Ariel stand for in this Lost Land;—God, and the King, and the Law—the Law of Laws.

OLD FAVOURITES.

Amongst my literary projects is that of bringing out a little cheap book of good poetry. With this in view, I propose to print in A.I.R. various poems by various authors, and stereo the type. Lovely poetry is always so welcome that I don't think my readers will object to seeing re-produced here even poetry with which they are familiar.

THE HAUNTED PALACE.

In greenest of our valleys,
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace,
Radiant palace, reared its head.
In the monarch thought's dominion
It stood there:
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!
Banners—yellow, glorious, golden—
On its roof did float and flow.
(This, all this, was in the olden
Time long ago);
And every gentle air that dallied
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid
A winged odour went away.
Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tun'd law,
Round about a throne where sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state, his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.
And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door
Through which came flowing, flowing,
flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.
But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
Ah, let us mourn! for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate.

And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers now within that valley
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out for ever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

POE.

[Is there in the wide wide world a
Land and a Nation which are brought
to one's mind by this lovely and
mournful poem?—ED.]

AN INDIGNANT EXILE.

Minnesota.

DEAR SIR,—Stop sending the ALL IRELAND REVIEW when the time paid by the present subscription expires. The exile from Erin has had to force himself during the past ten years to keep up any interest in Irish affairs. Ireland whips creation as a monumental humbug. Absence from her shores, and living among a business people cause the son of Erin to be in exactly the same frame of mind as that now so ably shown by the *Leader*. If the sums devoted to liquor on the "old sod" were expended on the homes of the people, our American visitors would not return with their tales of Irish dirt, drunkenness, and beggary.—With best wishes, nevertheless, I remain,

R. C.

[DEAR "R. C."—If it must be so, farewell. The world is full of meetings and partings. I believe that God has not forgotten this lost land, and, in spite of what you say, don't think you will forget her.—ED.]

TO SUBSCRIBERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

Owing to the confusion, perhaps inseparable from the transference of books and general management out of the Provinces to Dublin, and into new and unaccustomed hands, I fear very much that many subscribers did not get the issues dated September 21 and September 28. I regret this the more because one of these numbers, September 28, contained my address to the "King's Irish," which was cardinal, illustrative, and explanatory, as it was one of the chief purposes with which this organ of opinion is being conducted.

I, therefore, very particularly request those who did not receive that number to write for it to the manager of the ALL IRELAND REVIEW, 56 Henry Street, Dublin, who will despatch it by return of post. Those who have not read that address have lost touch with us at a very vital point.

Also, I take this opportunity of apologizing for past defects of management arising from the difficulty, indeed the impossibility, of one man endeavouring to be at the same time Editor and Manager, especially as I had, too, upon my mind a great many other things far more troublesome and vexatious than the conduct of this little paper, both the editorship and the management of which have been to me more a relaxation and amusement than a labour. I have now an excellent manager, and believe that complaints on your side, in future, will be few and far between.

In my capacity of Manager, curiously enough, I used to receive a good deal of help as Editor; and what here follows I wrote in the hope of being able to secure a continuance of the same. Many subscribers when sending me their subscriptions took that opportunity of writing me letters quite simple, natural, and sincere.

These letters, though written to me privately, I often published appending an initial or a *nom-de-plume*. Professed literary people, those who have made or are making reputations for themselves almost never write simply, and never with the exquisite simplicity and beautiful spontaneity of those letters written to me personally by friends, and especially by women.

If you think I am misrepresenting, please turn to last week's issue, October 5; read again Scott's beautiful letter, and compare it with the published prose of any of our professed writers. You will at once perceive its superiority, for the professed literary man can never quite shake off the thought of himself, his reputation, his prior performances, &c., and so what his composition may gain in other respects it loses in the grand quality of naturalness and simplicity, so injurious is the consciousness of public exposure to the native refinement and delicacy of the mind. I am, myself, very conscious of this weakness in myself, viz., a tendency to pose—that sort of thing—in short not to be quite simple and natural, and am endeavouring to correct it.

Shortly after I began to publish this paper I received a long epistolary scolding from a pretty and clever young lady of the Intransigent way of thinking—or rather feeling—for I regard Intransigentism as rather an affair of the heart than of the head. The letter was very severe, but was so natural and spontaneous made in fact such good literature that I determined to print it—with permission. The following correspondence then took place between us.

EDITOR.

You are very severe: but I think your letter good literature. May I print it, appending only your initials?

INTRANSIGENTE.

Certainly not, print my private letter! I am sending you something for publication.

EDITOR.

I would rather have your letter. I shall only put an X at the foot, nobody will know.

INTRANSIGENTE.

No. People would know I wrote it. Am posting M.S., which contains the same things properly expressed.

The M.S., arrived in due course, and, as I fully expected, was as literature very inferior to the letter, so much so that I could not use it.

I am always pleased to get letters but would ask correspondents to write to me personally, thinking only of me and the things about which they write, and forgetting utterly the possibility, generally remote, of their letters being converted into copy. Praise and encourage, or rebuke and condemn as you feel inclined. All that I want is true feeling and sincere thinking expressed in simple language. Though in future you will ad-

dress your letters, enclosing cheques and orders to the Manager, you need not be afraid that he will read what you want to say to me. He has a great deal too much else to do. He will remove the enclosure and post on the letter to me, wherever I may be, north or south, for I believe I shall henceforth travel to and fro a good deal in Ireland, and perhaps beyond Ireland. Here now are two letters which came by this morning's post, each of which in its own way rings true. Besides helping me to make up readable matter for each number, such letters are often the means of bringing into activity thoughts and purposes which might otherwise remain for ever in a latent state. Both come to me from that great Transatlantic continent which is going to be the country of the future, and fulfil many prophecies.

A TALK ABOUT THE GOOD PEOPLE.

I was paying a visit to my sisters in County Wicklow when I met Mrs. O'Malley, or the Red Queen as my sisters liked to call her. The country people believed that she had a lucky hand, and though the village possessed a Jubilee nurse, who had been trained in the best hospitals, many a poor woman preferred Mrs. O'Malley's lucky touch. They said "she would have you up and about while the other nurse had only succeeded in making you turn in the bed." She was a large woman with clear blue eyes; one could imagine those eyes growing hard and stoney, but while she talked with me they were soft and clear, with a far away look in them. She was looking back into her girlhood for my benefit. We were talking about the fairy mounds, and I asked her if she had ever seen the fairies. She looked steadily at me and said, "would you believe in the fairies Miss?"

"Of course I would, did you ever see them?"

"I saw them when I was a girl, more than once."

"Well tell me about it."

"You would not think, Miss, from the way you see me living now that once I was a snug farmer's daughter; we had a lot of cows and farm land—there was a large family of us; but one after the other got married, and now the whole place has gone out of our family; yet, still it is known as Pat O'Malley's farm. I think this brother of hers drank the place out of his hands, though she did not say so. Well, Miss, some of my work was to bring the dinner to my brothers when they were working in the fields, and one day I was passing down a *boreen* or lane between the two fairy forts that were at the foot of one of our fields. I had just passed in between the hedges when I had to draw back on one side to make room for about fifty or sixty horsemen, who passed me as close as I am to you, and disappeared within the other fort. No, I was not afraid, Miss, they were grand horses, with fine big men upon them, and they took no notice of me."

"Why did you not go after them to see?"

"Oh, no, I would not do such a thing as that. I would not touch a blade of grass belonging to the fairies! As children we never played on the fairy fort. If you did anything they did not wish they would turn