

All Ireland Review

Watercress

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of men, making ample allowance for superior provision and reasonable luxuries and amusements for yourselves as the officers and captains of the same—say a quarter of a million of men, devoted to you as were the old personal retainers of the mediæval aristocracy, and free to be directed upon all noble and salutary tasks which the times might call upon you to attempt. So ruling, you might have brought under cultivation every rood of cultivateable land in the island, interlaced it with railways running free to all, completed your harbours, planted all plantable moors and hill-sides, established a national emigration service with the Irish colonies governed like the old land at home, written the history of your island—a history, let me add, intensely loyal to you and your order, redolent as is its every page of aristocracy, chieftaincy, tanistry, kingship, of rule and of obedience. To those and such ends governing you might have stood to-day girt with a loyal and devoted nation, leading in the van of European and the world's progress, leading whither I know not—for who can even guess?—knowing only that it would be onward and upward. Such opportunities the reward of abundant heroism on your part in old times, the reward of wakeful nights and laborious days, of wise counsel and valiant action, of blood shed like water, and life ease, pleasure, valued at a pin's point when Duty called and propitious Chance led the way, of these and such like those opportunities the reward. You had them and you lost them. Benign Fortune put into your hands the absolute rule and mastery of this island. Benign Fortune, Destiny, Providence, let the right name be what it may, then inaudibly whispered, so: "You have not ended your work. Indeed, you have only got your tools and a fair field to work in. For you now the real struggle begins. You stood pain, toil, and the shock of war, and triumphed. See how you will stand pleasure, her soft but deadly arrows flying night and day perpetually. You smote the great Apollyon, bat-winged monster of the deep, and trembled not for the roaring of many lions; see you sleep not on the Enchanted Ground. Battles you have won, cities sacked, storms overridden, but lo!—the Sirens." Well this Irish aristocracy of yours, like so many others great and brave, did cast anchor off that pleasant isle, listened, well pleased, to the sweet song. In due time your bones will whiten round the feet of the enchanters. Three aristocracies I find have come and gone in Ireland, three distinct, yet closely knit, the second heir of the first and the third of the second, like father, son, and grandson. This way all three have fared over these stormy Irish waters. The first, the Celtic, struck upon the rock of anarchy, and went down. The second, Hiberno-Norman, loving darkness too well and light and freedom too little, sailed away for Cimmeria and extinction by the way, brave Sarsfield last seen at the helm. The third, Anglo-Irish, putting into the isle of the Sirens; all too plainly in these days have determined to leave their bones on the strand, a historic monument to the power of those immortal maids.

The End.

NOTE.

I must cut short this vituperation in the midst of his angry career. He and his rhetoric must take themselves away out of "A. I. R." When a man is down it is no time for fault-finding and vituperation, but rather for the friendliest counsel and assistance. —Ed.

WATERCRESS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ALL IRELAND REVIEW.

Bransgrove, 8th November, 1900.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to "Kappa," I have made enquiries in this neighbourhood (in Worcestershire), where much watercress is grown, and find that some of the beds are in a small stream, fed by a neighbouring spring, and flowing through market gardens, where the soil is loamy, with some admixture of clay.

Others are in a large and fairly rapid brook, from a range of gravel hills about two miles off flowing through open meadows, the soil of which is alluvial, but not, I should think, very rich or heavy.

The mode of cultivation appears to be most simple, not to say casual. The roots of the plant are strewn about the bottom of the stream, and left to take root and multiply, which they do rapidly. The only treatment required, so far as I can ascertain, is to keep the beds free from earth, or weeds from the bank, and from rubbish, detritus, etc., brought down by the stream. For want of this simple precaution, some of the largest beds about here have been destroyed, or nearly so. No levelling appears to be necessary, though I do not know how this might be if the soil were shallow, upon a steep gradient, though such a site would not seem desirable in any case.

Of course, there should be a good supply of perfectly clean running water.

Good results are obtained in the foregoing manner, though doubtless more careful methods might effect an improvement.

Yours faithfully,

C. S. B.

VERY SEVERE.

A LETTER FROM R.

What follows is from the pen of one of the most gifted Irishmen of the present day, a good friend of ours too, and one whose praise, long since, confirmed me in this scribbling habit which now can only cease with my life. It is, as will be seen, awfully severe; but then, too, it is sincere and frank, and also, what I value very highly in all my correspondence, very representative, therefore very interesting and very important.

R. is one of the many Irishmen—I know crowds of them—who are as Irish as they are made, and of whom we are all, and rightly proud, who labour under the delusion that they are Englishmen born in Ireland. They are no such thing; they are Irish of the Irish. R. represents, as I happen to know, though I think he does not, a wave of conquest and colonization which swept over this Island about seven centuries ago, and has as much right to call himself an Englishman or a Frenchman as I have to call myself a Spaniard because my people came into this Island on the crest of the Hispano-Milesian wave of conquest.

We are all conquerors, settlers, and colonizers, and, please God, shall have a good many more conquerors, settlers, and colonizers ere all ends and before we start upon our career which, I think, is likely to be a notable one and likely to create some little disturbance in this sleepy old Planet.

I am very much pleased at the receipt of R's letter, and would be very glad to get many more stingers of the same kind, provided only they are, like it, frank, sincere, and, above all, representative. —Ed.

Thank you very much for sending the "A. I. R."