

# DANA

AN IRISH MAGAZINE OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT

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# DANA

AN IRISH MAGAZINE OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT

## THE POLICY OF THE IRISH PARTY.

SETTING out from the proposition, accepted by the great majority of Irishmen, that the most important thing for Ireland—incomparably the most important—is to secure Home Rule, it follows naturally that the first duty of Irishmen who accept this proposition is to give the strongest possible support to the Irish Parliamentary Party. The question which it seems desirable to raise is whether Irishmen discharge that duty in a manner befitting its importance, and whether the parliamentary leaders take the best means of eliciting from Ireland the maximum of support.

At the first glance, it would appear that nothing could be more satisfactory than the existing state of things. Since what Mr. Morley calls “the supreme electoral demonstration of 1885,” hardly a seat has been lost to the National party. The dissensions of the great schism have disappeared, and Mr. Redmond leads a body of supporters hardly less numerous and united than that which followed Mr. Parnell. In the other important matter of funds, we are told that the party chest is well filled and that the annual appeal this spring was answered beyond expectation. Having done all this, the country washes its hands of responsibility, and leaves the rest, with an agreeable consciousness of duty discharged, to Mr. Redmond. He, for his part, accepts the situation with gratitude and confidence and tells the country that when occasion arises he will do the right thing.

Now, I fully concur in the judgment formed both by Irishmen and Englishmen of the Irish leader's ability. He unites in a rare degree eloquence with judgment. At the same time, one may wonder whether Mr. Redmond is wholly contented with such passive acquiescence in his strategy, and if he is, whether he is wise to be so. Is it wholly a sign of confidence that the voice of discussion should be absolutely dumb on the great and critical issues in which he, as he constantly avers, may at any moment

be called upon to take a decision for Ireland? Is it not rather a symptom of intellectual apathy?

One is tempted to construe it in the less favourable sense because in matters which come home to the business and bosoms of Irish nationalists, discussion is audible enough and by no means too respectful. The line taken by Mr. Redmond on the question of land purchase is sharply criticised, yet nobody has a word to say on the infinitely more vital controversy which is agitating English political life and transforming parliamentary parties. Does Ireland wish Mr. Redmond to support the Protectionists or the Free Traders? Ireland has to all appearance not given the matter a thought. It is a poor kind of support to be passionately ready with vituperative censure after a thing is done, but sterile of suggestion while the manner of doing it is still in debate.

It is of course true that by the unfortunate necessities of the situation, the Irish leader is more or less a general in campaign, who must maintain a discipline and whom suggestions embarrass rather than assist. Yet if one saw the Press of any country which was at war so silent as to the purposes and methods of a campaign, so barren of constructive criticism, as is the Press of Ireland upon Mr. Redmond's general line of action, one would think it a sign of disease. Are Irish Nationalists really speculating in silence whether Protection is or is not a dead policy? or are they simply refusing to be interested in the matter? Not many of us would be confident that the latter was not the truer diagnosis. And yet, if we consider seriously, the whole hope of Home Rule springs from the answer to that question. Our chance lies in the prospect that Mr. Chamberlain has or will have half of the English electorate behind him.

That the long-standing debate on Irish policy has altered in its character during the last ten years is evident to any Irishman living in England. Formerly, Englishmen used with perfect sincerity to condemn Home Rule because it would be bad for both countries, but especially for Ireland. For example, the Whig politician was always ready to assert that a Parliament in College Green would certainly establish Protection (as Parnell indeed declared) and would deny to the manufacturing towns of the North the blessings of Free Trade. Now however, when a system of Protection is vehemently demanded in the interest of English manufacturing towns, that argument tends to disappear. And, speaking broadly, the claim for Home

Rule is resisted, by every Englishman who does resist it, on the ground that Home Rule, whether good for Ireland or no, would be perilous for England.

It is possible that eloquence, combined with menacing circumstances, may some day convince England that Ireland self governed would be a less dangerous neighbour than Ireland under the rule of the Castle. But the possibility is remote. It is at least more likely that the Irish vote might stand between the English democracy and the realisation of some urgent political purpose so consistently that the English Government might be tempted to sweep that vote once and for all out of the way. Now there is at last a really great political issue dividing parties in England—the issue of Protection versus Free Trade. That makes a novel state of affairs, for nearly a generation has elapsed since any real question of principle emerged in English domestic politics. Each side was always ready to introduce with slight modifications the measures which it was opposing when they were proposed by the other side. The question of Home Rule made a real division, but in truth Home Rule was not *desired* by either party in England. A section was prepared to vote for it as a measure of justice, and did so vote under the pressure of a great personal influence. But the present situation is very different. A large element in the ‘predominant partner’ desires eagerly to maintain Free Trade; a large element desires eagerly to establish Protection. What can be got from the one side can no longer be got with a few trifling alterations from the other; and it is more than likely that Mr. Redmond may hold the balance between these two really opposing forces. The situation has again and again been discounted by him, and he has declared that he waits for it to arise before declaring what he will do.

Here is a point at which I think criticism may be usefully applied. There are two bidders contemplated, but what have they to bid? Say that the Conservative party offers Home Rule, or a large instalment of it, as the price for support on a measure of Protection. In that case, the Irish members must presumably first fulfil their part of the bargain. But once the Protection scheme is passed, how is a Conservative Government to pledge the House of Lords to carry Home Rule? Say on the other hand that the Liberals come in. If the Irish promise to support Free Trade, will the Liberals be really anxious to rob the House of so desirable an element? And if they carry Home Rule through the House of Commons, how about the Lords

again? The absurdity of the matter lies in this that neither party if consistently supported by the Irish members would care to abolish its supporters: and we should be threatened with the old insoluble difficulty of Irish representation both at Westminster and at College Green. On the other hand, if either of the two parties were assured of steady and persistent opposition from the Irish vote upon an issue which both sides already regard as vital, it might well be worth that party's while to eliminate from the House of Commons this refractory contingent. Now, to do this the Liberal party are not able. The House of Lords is bound to be Protectionist by all its interests, and certain to be opposed to Home Rule by prejudice and tradition. A measure of Home Rule proposed by Liberal Free Traders can therefore never pass. But prejudice would rapidly yield (for patriotic reasons duly given) to solid interest, if a Protectionist ministry advocates Home Rule as a means of removing part of the Free Trade vote.

For that reason, it seems possible to hold that the Irish party ought to depart so far from their present attitude as to declare unreservedly for Free Trade and throw themselves with spirit into the fight on the side of the few real allies whom they have in the House of Commons. Men like Mr. Morley, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. John Burns, are as good Home Rulers as any Irish Nationalist, and it is to men like these that we must look to remove from the English mind that sincere apprehension of danger which attaches to the Home Rule idea. They will always support a measure of Home Rule, but it is not rash to infer that the zeal of their support will be weakened by every action of the Irish members which they regard as suspicious and unfriendly. For the rank and file of English Liberals and their convictions on the Home Rule question, there need be no consideration; and so far as the bulk of the party is concerned, I would urge the Irish members to throw in their lot with the Liberals, that is, with the Free Traders, simply and solely because that is the best way to get what we want from the Protectionists. But the natural leaders of the Liberal Party, the heirs of Mr. Gladstone's tradition, deserve every consideration; without their help, the real and respectable opposition to Home Rule, considered as a peril to England, cannot be reasoned out of existence; and in return for their help, which can be counted on, it seems only right that they should be able to count on help from the men whose cause they have advocated, so long as that help can be given.



I write as if Ireland had no direct interest in the matter, but am far from thinking so. When Ireland gets Home Rule, she will get with it presumably the right to decide on her own system of taxation. For Ireland, if Ireland had the Colonial status, probably the best thing would be a Free Trade England. And until Ireland gets Home Rule I can conceive of nothing more ruinous than a system of Protection for the United Kingdom, arranged, as it would necessarily be, in the interests of the predominant partner. The economic conditions of the two countries are so radically opposed that an artificial system devised to suit the one must of necessity hurt the other.

Whether Free Trade or Protection would be more profitable for England is a question that does not concern the Irish party or Ireland. It is for England to settle; and once it is raised, the Irish party have only to consider how best to fish in the troubled waters. It is highly desirable that whatever they do should be done on grounds with which the country is ready to identify itself—in other words that the elements of the great problem should be familiar to Irishmen. Under the present system of management, even the opinions of the Irish members are not known; they, who ought to lead the political thought of the country are, for all the country knows, without a reasoned conviction. It seems highly probable that if the Protectionist party produced a scheme plausibly devised to offer apparent advantages to the Irish farmer, very strong pressure would be brought to bear on the Irish members to accept such a scheme irrespective of its remote political consequences. I admit the loyalty of the Irish nationalists to their leader, but it is a quality which should not be drawn upon too far. They should be asked to follow intelligently, to be men, not to be children. Moreover, the party discipline, excellent as it is, has certain undesirable results. The other day an English member remarked that in his experience of Parliament, the front benches had changed entirely; only the Irish party remained unaltered. The figures in it who attracted attention were those familiar in the eighties. It threw up no new men.

Concentration is a good thing in itself, but it can be overdone. It will hardly suffice for the country to be assured that the Irish party will remain constant to their posts, reiterating their demand for Home Rule and ready to vote against any Government on any question of confidence. At present, every thinking man knows that the attainment of Ireland's desire may by a turn of the wheel

become possible ; it is not too much that the whole faculties of the country should be occupied in considering the means to this end. It is a very serious matter that although the loyalty to the party has not been weakened, the interest in its action has been perceptibly lessened. The reason, I think, is that Mr. Redmond and his colleagues do not take enough pains to instruct their supporters in the detail of their strategy. They have not, for instance, made it clear to Ireland what they judge to be the force of the movement for Protection, though that is a matter on which a mistake would be almost irretrievable. And yet the blame is not theirs. The blame is with Irishmen who will not take the trouble to read and think for themselves on the crisis which Mr. Chamberlain's action has only precipitated. These pages are written by an outside observer in politics merely in the hope to quicken discussion, and to induce an attitude of rational forecast, rather than a blind waiting on events. Suppose that after a general election neither the Protectionists nor the Free Traders can make a majority in the House without the Irish votes, what will happen then? It is at least interesting to try and think out the situation in detail, and I think it will be salutary.

So much as this may at least be suggested. The apparent omens of the polls at by elections can readily be taken too seriously; and though it is probable that the Free Trade policy would obtain a majority for its supporters at present, that is not likely to be permanent, nor is the victory likely to be so sweeping as the Liberals would have us believe. The Protectionists have for them the one English politician who commands enthusiasm among his supporters; they have for them the influence of capital, and the power of speculative capital is yearly growing in the counsels of Great Britain. Englishmen have lost their serene assurance that England has a monopoly of political wisdom, and the fact that England alone stands for Free Trade is no longer a source of confident pride. The argument that what everybody does must be right weighs more heavily than the argument that what England does cannot be wrong. The case for Free Trade is intricate and complex, based on the peculiar conditions of a populous country which has ceased to be food producing; the case for Protection is easily put in a manner that appeals to the mob of voters. "Hit me, and I hit back." And beyond this is the fact that the most active disinterested force in England is the idealism of men who desire to make the Empire an organism far more closely knit together than



at present, and those men, for perfectly honourable and patriotic reasons, (according to their conception of patriotism), see in a system of Imperial Protection and reciprocal preferences the strongest possible cement of Empire.

Nevertheless the opposition to Protection will be very hard to master, for the workingmen have shown decidedly an instinct (I believe it to be a sound one) for identifying Free Trade with the interests of labour. They have seen too much of Mr. Chamberlain's promises; and Chinese labour introduced in what was to be the Golconda of British workingmen has disinclined them to "think Imperially." So long as they can count on the Irish vote they can probably defy the capitalist interest, and the land-owning interest. That is why I believe it may be worth while for those interests to get rid of the Irish vote.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

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A SUNDAY IN JULY. 8

(MULLION, CORNWALL.)

Where the blue dome is infinite,  
 And choral voices of the sea  
 Chaunt the high lauds, or meek, as now,  
 Intone their ancient litany;

Where through his ritual pomp still moves  
 The Sun in robe pontifical,  
 Whose only creed is catholic light,  
 Whose benediction is for all;

I enter with glad face uplift,  
 Asperged on brow and brain and heart,  
 I am confess'd, absolved, illumed,  
 Receive my blessing, and depart.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

## MOODS AND MEMORIES.

## IV.

Yesterday I drove to breakfast seeing Paris continuously unfolding, prospect after prospect, green swards, white buildings, villas engarlanded; to-day I drive to breakfast through the white torridities of Rue la Blanche. The back of the coachman grows drowsier, and would have rounded off into sleep long ago, had it not been for the great paving stones that swing the vehicle from side to side, and we have to climb the Rue Lepic, and the poor little fainting animal will never be able to draw me to the Butte. I dismiss my carriage, half out of pity, half out of a wish to study the Rue Lepic, so typical is it of the upper lower classes. In the Rue Blanche there are *portes-cochères*, but in Rue Lepic there are narrow doors, partially grated, open on narrow passages at the end of which, squeezed between the wall and the stairs, are small rooms where concierges sit, eternally *en camisole*, amid vegetables and sewing. The wooden blinds are flung back on the faded yellow walls, revealing a portion of white bed-curtain and a heavy middle-aged woman, *en camisole*, passing between the cooking-stove in which a rabbit in a tin pail lies steeping, and the men sitting at their trades in the windows. The smell of leather follows me for several steps; a few doors further a girl sits trimming a bonnet, her mother beside her. The girl looks up, pale with the exhausting heat. At the corner of the next street there is the *marchand de vins*, and opposite is the dirty little *charbonnier*, and standing about a little hole which he calls his *boutique* are a group of women in discoloured *peignoirs* and heavy carpet slippers. They have baskets on their arms. Everywhere there are traces of a meagre and humble life, but nowhere is the demented wretch that we meet in our London streets—the man with bare feet, the furtive and frightened creature, gnawing a crust and drawing a black, tattered shirt about his consumptive chest.

The asphalt is melting, the reverberation of the stones intolerable, my feet ache and burn. At the top of the street I enter a still poorer neighbourhood, a still steeper street, but so narrow that the shadow has already begun to draw out on the pavements. At the top of the street is a stairway, and above the stairway a grassy knoll, and above the knoll a windmill lifts its black and motionless arms.

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For the mill is now a mute ornament, a sign for the *Bal du Moulin de la Galette*.

As I ascend, the street grows whiter, and at the Butte they are empty of everything except the white rays of noon. There are some dusty streets, and silhouetting against the dim sky a delapidated facade of some broken pillars. Some stand in the midst of ruined gardens, circled by high walls crumbling and white, and looking through a broken gateway I see a fountain splashing, but nowhere the inhabitants that correspond to these houses—I only see a workwoman, a grisette, a child crying in the dust. The Butte Montmartre is full of suggestion; grand folk must at some time have lived there. Could it be that this place was once country? To-day it is full of romantic idleness and abandonment.

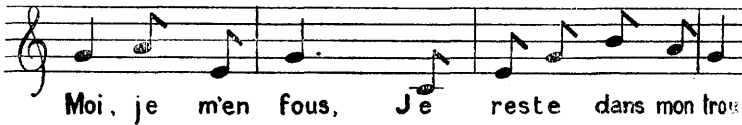
On my left an iron gateway swinging on rusty hinges leads on to a large terrace at the end of which is a row of houses. It is in one of these houses that my friend lives, and as I pull the bell I think that the pleasure of seeing him is worth the long way, and my thoughts float back over the long time I have known Paul. We have known each other always, since we began to write. But Paul is not at home. The servant comes to the door with a baby in her arms, another baby! and tells me that Monsieur et Madame are gone out for the day. No breakfast, no smoke, no talk about literature, only a long walk back—cabs are not found at these heights—a long walk back through the roasting sun. And it is no consolation to be told that I should have written and warned them I was coming.

But I must rest, and ask leave to do so, and the servant brings me in some claret and a siphon; and the study is better to sit in than the front room, for in the front room, although the shutters are closed, the white rays pierce through the chinks, and lie like sword-blades along the floor. The study is pleasant, the wine refreshing. I begin to feel better by the northern window. The house seems built on nothing. Fifty feet—more than that—a hundred feet below me there are gardens, gardens caught somehow in the hollow of the hill, and planted with trees—tall trees, for swings hang out of them, otherwise I should not know they were tall. From this window they look like shrubs, and beyond the houses that surround these gardens Paris spreads out over the plain, an endless tide of bricks and stone, splashed with white when the sun shines on some railway station or great boulevard: a dim reddish mass, like a gigantic brickfield, and far away a line of hills, and above the plain a sky as pale and faint as the blue ash of a

cigarette. I cannot look upon this city without emotion : it has been all my life to me. I came here in my youth, I relinquished myself to Paris, never extending once my adventure beyond Bas Meudon, Ville d'Avray, Fontainebleau—and Paris has made me. How much of my mind do I owe to Paris? And by thus acquiring a fatherland more ideal than the one birth had arrogantly imposed, because deliberately chosen, I have doubled my span of life. Do I not exist in two countries? Have I not furnished myself with two sets of thoughts and sensations? Ah! the delicate delight of owning *un pays ami*—a country where you may go when you are weary to madness of the routine of life, sure of finding there all the sensations of home, plus those of irresponsible caprice. . . . The pleasure of a literature that is yours without being wholly your own, a literature that is like a peerless mistress, in whom you find consolation for all the commonplaces of life! The comparison is perfect, for although I know these French folk better than all else in the world, they must ever remain my pleasure, and not my work in life. It is strange that this should be so, for in truth I know them strangely well. I can see them living their lives from hour to hour; I know what they would say on any given occasion. There is Paul. I understand nothing more completely than that man's mind. I know its habitual colour and every varying shade, and yet I may not make him the hero of a novel when I lay the scene in Montmartre, though I know it so well. I know when he dresses, how long he takes to dress, and what he wears. I know the breakfast he eats, and the streets down which he passes—their shape, their colour, their smell. I know exactly how life has come to him, how it has affected him. The day I met him in London! Paul in London! He was there to meet *une petite fermière* with whom he had become infatuated when he went to Normandy to finish his novel. Paul is *foncièrement bon*; he married her, and this is their abode. There is the *salle-a-manger*, furnished with a nice sideboard in oak, and six chairs to match; on the left is their bedroom, and there is the baby's cot, a present from *le grand, le cher et illustre maître*. Paul and Mrs. Paul get up at twelve and they loiter over breakfast; some friends come in and they loiter over *les petits verres*. About four Paul begins to write his article, which he finishes or nearly finishes before dinner. They loiter over dinner until it is time for Paul to take his article to the newspaper. He loiters in the printing office or the café

until his proof is ready, and when that is corrected he loiters in the many cafés of the Faubourg Montmartre, smoking interminable cigars, finding his way back to the Butte between three and four in the morning. Paul is fat and of an equable temperament. He believes in naturalism all day, particularly after a breakfast over *les petits verres*. He never said an unkind word to anyone, and I am sure never thought one. He used to be fond of grisettes but since he married he has thought of no one but his wife. *Il écrit des choses raides*, but no woman ever had a better husband. Now you know him as well as I do. Here are his books. The Rougon-Macquart series, each volume presented to him by the author, Goncourt, Huysmanns, Duranty, Céard, Maupassant, Hennique, etc., in a word the works of those with whom I grew up, those who tied my first literary pinafore round my neck. But here are *Les Moralités Légendaires* by Jules Laforgue, and *Les Illuminations* by Rimbaud. Paul has not read these books; they were sent to him, I suppose, for review, and put away on the bookcase, all uncut; their authors do not visit here. . . . And this sets me thinking that one knows very little of any generation except one's own. True that I know a little more of the symbolists than Paul. I am the youngest of the naturalists, the eldest of the symbolists. The naturalists affected the art of painting, the symbolists the art of music; and since the symbolists there has been no artistic manifestation—the game is played out. When Huysmanns and Paul and myself are dead it will be as impossible to write a naturalistic novel as to revive the megatherium. Where is Hennique? When Monet is dead it will be as impossible to paint an impressionistic picture as to revive the ichthyosaurus. A little world of ideas goes by every five-and-twenty years, and the next that emerges will be incomprehensible to me, as incomprehensible as Monet was to Corot. . . Was the young generation knocking at the door of the Opéra Comique last night? If the music was the young generation I am sorry for it. It was the second time I had gone. I had been to hear the music, and I left exasperated after the third act. A friend was with me and he left, but for different reasons; he suffered in his ears; it was my intelligence that suffered. Why did the flute play the chromatic scale when the boy said, "*Il faut que cela soit un grand navire*," and why were all the cellos in motion when the girl answered, "*Cela ou bien tout autre chose?*" I suffered because of the divorce of the orchestra and singers, uniting perhaps at the end of the scene. It was speaking through

music, no more, monotonous as the Sahara, league after league, and I lost amid sands. A chord is heard in "Lohengrin" to sustain Elsa's voice, and it performs its purpose; a motive is heard to attract attention to a certain part of the story, and it fills its purpose; when Ortrud shrieks out the motive of the secret, and in its simplest form, at the church door, the method may be criticised as crude, but the crudest melodrama is better than this desert wandering. While I ponder on the music of the younger generation, remembering the perplexity it had caused me, I hear a vagrant singing on the other side of the terrace:



and I say, "I hear the truth in the mouth of the vagrant minstrel, one who possibly has no *trou* wherein to lay his head." *Et moi aussi, je reste dans mon trou, et mon trou est assez beau pour que j'y reste, car mon trou est*—Richard Wagner. My *trou* is the Ring—the Sancrosanct Ring. Again I fell to musing. The intention of Liszt and Wagner, and Strauss was to write music. However long Wotan might ponder on Mother Earth the moment came when the violins began singing; the spring uncloses in the orchestra, and the lovers fly to the woods.

The vagrant continued his wail, and forgetful of Paul, forgetful of all things but the philosophy of the minstrel of the Butte, I picked my way down the tortuous streets repeating:



GEORGE MOORE.

(To be continued.)

## THE FACTS OF THE CHURCHBUILDING QUESTION IN IRELAND.

IN view of the intentional misrepresentations which appear to be propagated with regard to the views of all, both Catholic and Protestant, who criticize the financial extravagance of certain ecclesiastical constructions in Ireland, I should like to state clearly and definitely what some Catholics mean by their protests in the matter.

In the first place, of course, we fully approve of the churchbuilding which is necessary for public worship and which is proportioned to the resources of the population; but, to take an extreme illustration, there can be no glory for God or man in a cathedral of Carrara marble amid pigsty cabins, the haunts of ignorance, drunkenness and disease. Cathedrals costing £200,000 in townlets of four or five thousand Catholics who are, besides, in want of almost every prerequisite of civilisation and prosperity, cannot be said to correspond with any apostolic ideal. "The children asked for bread, but you gave them a stone," occurs involuntarily to the mind. We are also sincerely sorry for the recklessness of the calculations so often avowed in dedication sermons and the like. "The cost of building has unfortunately exceeded all our estimates. It is over £20,000 instead of the £12,000 upon which we counted. There is, accordingly, a heavy debt of many thousands to be cleared off;" and every kind of outlay for progress must be paralysed for years in the parish, while the struggling laity scrape together the missing thousands of clerical miscalculation.

In the second place, we hold that not the building but the flock is the primary and fundamental and essential object of the Christian ministry. A Catholic population, educated, sober, independent, prosperous, even though worshipping in a church of brick, with a simple cross above its modest belltower, is infinitely nearer to the Christian ideal than a population, ignorant, shiftless, drunken, and left behind by every other race, in spite of being huddled in rags in the nave of some ambitious copy or caricature of gothic magnificence.

In the third place, we say that erecting the costly church before you have built up a noble people is distinctly a case of the cart before the horse. If half of the treasures which



have been squandered on stone and mortar had been laid out in helps to education and culture, we should generations ago have had an Irish Catholic people, enlightened, skilful and respected, and, in spiritual matters, all the better able to maintain its religious convictions because possessed of the knowledge necessary to defend them. It is a terrible thing for the Irish Catholic to consider that *not one-fourth of the descendants of the Irish immigrants to America have retained the religion of their forefathers*; and a similar loss is computed to have fallen upon the Irish immigrants to Great Britain. When I came to London thirty years ago, I heard from Cardinal Manning himself that there were then 350,000 Irish Catholics in London. The other day it was shown that less than 20,000 men and some 30,000 women formed the total of the Catholic congregations attending divine service upon any one Sunday in London.

Fourthly, the results of the haphazard manner in which churchbuilding is carried on are a most grave scandal and a most grave danger. A bishop's sense of what is due to his dignity, the zeal of a parish priest, the influence of a religious order, can cause scores of thousands of pounds to be spent in stone and marble in some limited spot; while a hundred poor congregations are left with unrepaired churches and ruinous schools, with overworked priests, and with shivering schoolchildren fireless and comfortless through the bleak winters.

This abuse is not confined to Ireland. In every country in which the laity are denied their right to be consulted and regarded, similar evils prevail, for there seem to be few restraints upon the fantasies of the clerical imagination. In London, the condition of the poor Irish quarters is simply heartbreaking. Ignorance and misery fester side by side. The really working priests are overworked. It is almost a miraculous event for a poor family to receive the visit of a clergyman. All the time there is being completed, at the expense of half a million or a million pounds, one of the vastest cathedrals in the world, in an aristocratic Protestant parish, where there are few Catholics, almost at the gates of the King's palace. There they pay singing men as much as would keep an East End missionary priest. Immense preparations for costly and imposing ceremonial are the order of the day. I wonder what compensation it can be in the sight of heaven for the neglect of hundreds of thousands of poor workpeople that half the English Catholic nobility, half the wealthy tourists from the Strand and Northumberland Avenue hotels, and half a hundred inter-

national reporters can admire the blaze of gold embroidery through clouds of incense, and the chanting of Gregorian ritual by an army of canons and choristers who feel no call to preach the gospel.

Let it not be forgotten that hundreds of working priests think about these things just as the educated laity. As for the religious orders, they practically do little but oust the Catholic schoolmistress and schoolmaster out of everything worth having, or run factories for lacemaking and shirt-making, and dressmaking and clothmaking, where they do not provide their outworked lay operatives with old-age pensions.

I cannot, as a sincere Catholic acquainted with the condition of my countrymen in more than one country, deplore too deeply the wholesale neglect of the religious instruction of the Irish masses. I know of no Catholic population which is left more unfitted for the defence of its religious belief against the errors of infidelity and indifference. Among ten thousand Irishmen and Irishwomen it is practically impossible to find ten who can give an effective explanation of the Old or New Testament upon a single one of the points which are assailed by modern unbelief. Notwithstanding all the exhortations of Popes, the Holy Scriptures are practically unknown to the vast majority of Irish Catholics. Even the Catholic Catechism rarely goes beyond the rudimentary and by-rote character of childhood's lessons. Church history is almost a closed book, except in the form of exploded legends or edifying trivialities. The Irish priests are busied, by order of their superiors, with politics, with church building, with collecting money for all sorts of side issues. They have rarely the time, and still more rarely the training, required to protect a modern flock against modern dangers. A remarkable series of letters has recently appeared in one of the most clerical of Irish Catholic papers, in which the writer, an Irish priest in England, declares that the most rudimentary doctrines of Christian religion are habitually unknown or badly known to the average Irish boy who comes to England, even, and above all, those from the schools of the Monastic Congregations. "I know such schools of religious orders," wrote this Irish priest, "where there is hardly half an hour per week given to religious instruction, so intent are the school authorities on using their boys to win result fees for the school in every possible subject which can bring in money."

I need not dwell upon the ruin of the secular education

of these pupils of clerical schools. The neglect of Catholic religion, even in the instruction of our Irish youth of both sexes, should suggest to our venerated clergy that the resources of the Church require to be expended on something more urgent and necessary than ornate architecture.

Unfortunately the antiquated semi-instruction, even in theological subjects, and the astounding innocence of Irish Church history, displayed by many of the loudest clerical champions of clerical shortcomings, render it deplorably problematical that a remedy can soon be applied, at any rate from within.

As a specimen of the sort of controversy which is employed, I may mention that I have just read, in an exceptionally able clerical periodical, a most triumphant reply to Sir Horace Plunkett, in which Sir Horace Plunkett's recent protest against extravagant architecture in churches is made the subject of an instructive parallel with Judas Iscariot's remonstrance against the penitent Magdalen's pouring her vase of precious perfume in the service of Our Lord. I am not sure that the result of the parallel was not distinctly unfavourable to the chief of the Department of Agriculture. This slashing performance of the Donnybrook order of divine would not be unworthy of that mediæval theologian, who proved that the Pope possessed temporal as well as spiritual supremacy from the fact that "two swords" were once found in the possession of servants of the Apostles. "Now, my brethren, these "two swords symbolized Temporal and Spiritual Supremacy, which are both united in the hands of St. Peter." Q.E.D.

A far higher type of clerical advocate is to be found in the Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer of Limerick. But when he comes to Church history, he sometimes is hardly above the level of the above example. Thus, he is never tired of recounting the dreadful destruction of religious edifices during the politico-religious wars some centuries ago. What has the spoiling of a Catholic church by Protestant zealots, or of a Protestant church by Catholic ones, in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, to do with the propriety of erecting a £100,000 church to-day in a poor little townlet of 3,000 half-starved and wholly ignorant people?

But what Bishop O'Dwyer does not seem to know is that not only were Catholics, all over Europe, just as busy as any Lutherans or Calvinists in destroying the religious edifices of their opponents, but that unfortunately Ireland had by no means to wait for Mountjoy and Cromwell in

order to have her religious edifices burned and the lands of her clans harried and wasted, not by heretics, but by the faithful soldiers of the Pope, acting by the Pope's warrant and supported by the Pope's authority.

I venture to say that were an exact estimate possible of the robberies, massacres, burnings, torturings, outrages of every kind perpetrated by the pious Plantagenet pirates, *to whom the Pope entrusted the subjugation and enslavement of Catholic Ireland in Catholic times*, even the deeds of Wallenstein's ruffian armies in the Thirty Year's War would not look particularly black by the comparison.

Bishop O'Dwyer seems to have never heard that all the floods of greedy invaders who, for centuries before a Protestant was seen in our land, ravaged and ruined in Ireland, were strictly and purely Papal troops and Papal officials. It was as "Lord of Ireland" merely that the Pope's English mandatory and executive officer attacked the High King of Ireland, slew his subjects and soldiers, confiscated the lands of the Irish nation, robbed and rioted from one end of Ireland to the other, and most religiously paid the Pope the stipulated share of the loot. *This robbing, rioting and murdering went on under the Pope's authority for four centuries*, whenever the Catholic Irish dared to dispute the rule of the Papal "Lord of Ireland" or any of his subordinates. Cromwell and Mountjoy can at least quote the palliation of religious animosity and sectarian persecution on the one side as well as the other.

I do not hesitate to take up the Most Rev. Bishop O'Dwyer's reference to the building of St. Peter's enormous church at Rome, which he has quoted as a sort of justification of colossal churches in starving districts of Ireland, and as a sort of proof that true religion and expensive churches flourish together.

On the contrary, the Catholic who knows history knows that the enormous Basilica which to-day forms one of the marvels of the world, so far from speaking of Catholic progress and unity, is the very monument of some of the worst Popes and of the very worst calamities to Christianity in the entire course of the Church's existence. It was founded by the cruel and rapacious Pope Julius II., infamous for his ceaseless wars, in which he kept his sword drenched in the blood of Catholic Italians, and by the voluptuous and extravagant Pope Leo X., whose favourite recreations were the hunting party and the gaming table, and whose fate it was to see the revolt of all the North of Europe, and a good part of the centre of Europe, from

the Church of Rome. From the day of its foundation in 1506 by Julius II., assisted by the pomp of five-and-thirty Cardinals—most of them notorious for anything but priestly virtues—down to its consecration in 1626 by Pope Urban VIII., in the very midst of the mutual slaughter of Protestants and Catholics in the Thirty Years War—during those 120 years of colossal church-building, the Church of Christ was torn asunder, all Europe was drenched in the blood of millions of Christians slain at each other's hands; and for every stone which helped to construct the mighty edifice on the Vatican Hill, a parish, a county, or a region dropped away for ever from the allegiance of the Popes.

It was the sale of Indulgences to get together the money for the enormous church which provoked the religious troubles in Germany, and all the time the work went on Europe was ceaselessly ransacked by Papal collectors for the expenses of the gigantic undertaking. Not less than £10,000,000 sterling went in the stone and marble and decoration of the proud temple, and the cost of collection probably exceeded £50,000,000 sterling, giving rise to endless scandals of extortion and deceit. Considering the value of money in those days, it is something appalling to think of what the building of St. Peter's cost Europe even in the material respect. And all the time there were the horrors of civil and religious wars in almost every corner of Christendom. Nations were almost exterminated; flourishing cities and countries were laid in desolation and ashes. The building of the biggest church coincided with the worst extremity of Christian ruin and destruction. The pious pilgrimages which are organised by the Catholic Association are not told a word of what the giant edifice cost the Christian world. Indeed, it would not be difficult to prove in every age of Christianity that the sacerdotal passion for extravagant architecture and palatial pomps has almost invariably coincided with the moral and physical degradation and exhaustion of the Christian laity. Those Irish cathedrals which raise their towering steeples amid drink-shops and cabins are unfortunately no isolated portent in the sad history of clerical ostentation and lay decay. "Go teach all nations" was the Divine command, not, "Go build palaces and pyramids"!

F. HUGH O'DONNELL.

## ON GOING TO CHURCH.

It is hard to say how much virtue may not go out of a religious communion when it produces a writer like Thomas à Kempis or Bunyan or George Herbert; and modern ecclesiasticism would perhaps have been well-advised if it could have taken a hint from the masters of the Eleusinian and Druidic mysteries, who discountenanced the written promulgation of their teachings. The Church of Rome should never have allowed a book like the "Imitation" to be published; nor would she have done so had she foreseen how, with this volume in their hands, uncompromising rationalists like George Eliot, or moody heretics like General Gordon, could feel thenceforth that they had at their command at any moment the quintessence of the religious genius of Europe for a thousand years. Protestantism has produced no book which provides the unbeliever with so good a substitute as this for attendance on her sacraments, which is in part perhaps the reason why she enforces with greater severity, as a public and private duty, the practice of "going to church." This fancy occurred to the present writer, one of the "lapsed masses" of Protestantism, the other Sunday morning when reading, not without a certain degree of edification, in the sympathetic translation of Mr. Stephen Mackenna, the "Imitation," while outside the pavement tinkled to the tramp of the well-shod Sabbatarians, and led him to reflect how much more congruous it was with Catholicism than with Protestantism that he should so employ his Sabbath morning—how content Catholicism was to leave him alone with the holy little book, and how much Protestantism would have preferred to see him brushing his clothes for church. Perhaps this is a frivolous way of talking. No doubt, if Catholicism feels that with Thomas à Kempis she leaves me in safe hands, it is because she can claim that he, along with the great company of the saints, is her own; though, indeed, on the other hand, it might be argued, that since the great parent church brought forth her unruly child Protestantism, she has hardly retained the capacity to produce saints in whom all the lineaments of our common humanity are visible. Still, the glory of the Catholic Church is her saints, just as the glory of Protestantism may be said to be those intuitionists and robust champions of the freedom

of thought whom she, in her turn, looks upon reproachfully when they absent themselves, as they are prone to do, however religiously, from church. The modern Catholic denies, of course, that all original thinkers are necessarily Protestant as strenuously and as plausibly as the Protestant denies that the saints were essentially "Roman" Catholic. There were Protestants, doubtless, before Luther, as there were great men before Agamemnon, and there are reasonable men to whom the great tradition of the Catholic Church seems to contain the essential principle of Christianity. But, roughly speaking, the two claims may be held to counterbalance one another. Protestantism is committed to the great principle of the freedom of thought; and the truant child of Protestantism well knows that in the severity with which she enforces the practice of "going to church" she but disguises the weakness of her authority. For what if, instead of Thomas, I were deep in the Bible itself, that Bible which it is the glory of Protestantism to have interpreted and circulated among the nations, and which is doubtless far better read and taken to heart by some of those men and women who no longer make the little weekly pilgrimage to church, than by the vast bulk of those who hear it intoned from Sunday to Sunday by callow curates? What in the world can Protestantism say if I am seduced from attendance at church by the power and charm of the book of books?

Undoubtedly, Protestantism, appearing in the full height of the renaissance, or rather the naissance, of thought and learning in Western Europe, absorbed some elements not included in Apostolic Christianity. The Protestant Reformation is sometimes represented as being to the Renaissance somewhat as the Catholic reaction was to the Reformation itself. Yet a revival of learning which should not have included the study and circulation of the Bible would have been so much the less and not more of a humanist movement. When we read Luther's account of the effect produced upon him when as a youth of twenty he first read the Bible, we have to regard him as a humanist, at least as much as those who had a little earlier drunk of the old wine of Greek culture. Perhaps, however, we are inclined to think of the change of character which came over those nations which accepted the Bible as the prime source of authority as more spiritual and less merely political than it really was. Religion became an inestimable factor of patriotism and of national force when the cause of individual independence and the sacredness of conscience



was championed by the state. A certain honest worldliness of tone, which has its credentials in many texts of the Old Testament, became the distinctive attribute of the reformed churches, especially in England—which soon learned to worship in Providence a kind of English Jehovah. The main distinction between Judaism and Protestantism was that in the Protestant Bible the Gospels were printed in an Appendix. It is still of the genius of Protestantism to address and recommend itself to the prosperous citizen, to sane and level-headed persons, rather than to the afflicted, the destitute, and the unsuccessful. It is able to say, and loses no opportunity of doing so, that it has been successful, and is fond of pointing to the wealth and power of those states in which it is predominant as an argument that its warrant is from on high. With no suggestion of Pecksniff in his mind or manner, but simply out of the Protestantism of the Protestant religion, the Protestant pastor computes, with more or less of satisfaction, the proportion of his flock on whom abundant means confer increased “opportunities of usefulness.” It is easy to understand how the poor people, with shabby coats and a paucity of pennies, are shy of entering Protestant churches, where indeed their presence is by no means felt to be a desideratum. Special churches are told off for such persons, who feel a natural reluctance to intrude among the families of the respectable; but these churches are notoriously unable to carry on the more distinctively Christian section of the work of modern Christianity. In London, as Mr. Charles Booth has recently shown, the mass of those people of whom alone the early Christian evangel took cognisance. the working classes and the poor, grimly and altogether abstain from the practice of going to church.

It is, indeed—and the spirit of philosophical criticism will presently teach us the reason—among the “lapsed masses” of the various Christian communities, among bohemians, rakes, outcasts, anywhere but in the churches, that we find that readiness to burn one’s boats, to leave all for an idea or for a person, which was the mood to which Christianity made its original appeal. The people who go to church are those with strict propriety called the ‘nice people,’ the sociable, good looking and normally inclined; people, above all, who from habit or prescription “have to go”; people who have never been reduced to the extremity of seeking a principle by which to live, and who find in the decorous tedium of the Sunday service a vague but sufficient substitute for one; good

ladies, full of prayers for those dear to them, whose pious wishes mount with better confidence to the throne of grace when commingled with the volume of sound sent upward by a congregation, or solemnly communicated by an authorized official; doctors, barristers, etc., seated by their wives and daughters, whose thoughts fall into no unpleasing strain of rationalism as they lean forward and observe the clergyman through disparted fingers; shrewd business men, and here and there one whom the social conditions of modern life have tended to isolate, to whom this is the one social function permanently open; Eros, too, is there, conveying "fair, speechless messages" to some demure vantage-ground. We miss, however, altogether the true significance of the practice of going to church if we require in those who conform to it a renunciation of the world, or demand in the sentiments retailed from the pulpit a complete harmony with the spirit of the sermon on the mount. Instead of too hastily assuming that because Protestant churches are resorted to mainly by the comfortable and respectable they are thereto stultified, let us rather contend that by modern conditions of life the poor man is excluded in this matter also from a real privilege.

Facts like those brought out by Mr. Charles Booth seem to show that so far from there being anything antagonistic between the church and the world, it is only those who have some share of prosperity and happiness who feel the acknowledgment of the "good God" to be a public duty. It is no part of the function of the modern churches to engage in a revolutionary propaganda like that of the early Christians, but simply to be the medium through which society acknowledges God. Has not the public recognition of the Divine a place as well as the private realization of it? let the secluded idealist take pleasure to see and hear this testimony of the crowd, instinctive, traditional, involuntary as it may be, to those truths which he has taken to his bosom. Nay, if he be not a Spinoza, a Behmen, a Shelley, if in many matters he contentedly take his place as one of the crowd, if he enjoys life in most of the usual ways, and floats more or less contentedly with the current of human existence as a member of that great public addressed from morning to morning by the newspaper, let him not be ashamed, when the Sabbath morning sheds its reproachfully benignant calm, to count himself also in this matter one of the crowd, and worship with

it in the church. If a man have not attained to have a private life, let him, in the name of decency, join in some form of public worship; let him be compelled by the ordinances of social good taste to go to church, there to hear from accredited lips the menace of perdition.

We must not, however, find excuses for conformity without acknowledging the superior virtue of those who have "chosen the better part." As to acquire a conviction is the highest success possible to man as a moral and thinking being, so to embrace a dogma is the acknowledgment of intellectual failure. Doubtless it is the highest achievement of which man is capable to work out for himself a moral conviction, to contain within himself amid all the contrarieties of experience a spark of transcendental affirmation. He is the man of whom all men are in search, and from his one crumb of the heavenly manna he can feed all mankind. Contrast this vital faith, through which our common humanity rises to a higher power, which opens up new views to speculation and new paths to genius, with the capitulation, common enough in these days, to the mumbled threat of an old creed, with subscription to the 39 Articles or the Westminster Confession, or with "submission" to the chimera of a "Catholic Church." In the first place, if there is any benefit to anyone, it is only to the convert himself, who may indeed be put out of harm's way thenceforth. But what sort of faith is that which is compatible with a distrust of men and with the formal acknowledgment of the Devil as the prince of this world? Every such "conversion," every such abandonment by man of his reason, is "one more wrong to man, one more insult to God." We see the worth of a merely theological acceptance of religious truth in men who would consider any free-spoken remark about Jesus Christ as a sort of personal affront, but whose latent and brutal scepticism reveals itself when they hear of any transcendental theory of life, or even of any supreme virtue among men. Faith among these people simply means the relegation of the ideal to the region of impossibility and superhumanity.

It is as a member of society, then, rather than as a "simple, separate person," *homo sapiens*, that one may go now and again to church. As beings whose lives are warped and circumscribed by necessity one may at times do homage, in default of freedom, to that great Disposer of our destinies in whose will, the poet says, is our peace, but whose will it certainly appears to be that so far as

evolution has yet brought us, we should neither be entirely free, nor yet wholly slaves. There we salute some mysterious reconciliation of two opposing claims, the claim of the world and of the individual aspiration. And though in this way the spectacle may seem a little admirable, one of decrepit human beings hobbling to church to lay the flattering unction of the will of God to their own dulness and lack of initiative, let the blame be upon man, not upon that ancient usage, far older than Christianity, which is in truth rather the pagan embodiment of the need of man to do homage to an unknown God. As to what church to worship in, the church of your fathers is perhaps the best; unless indeed the new generation which is growing up around us, emancipated as it promises to be from all sectarian prejudice, should devise a ritual universally acceptable, which should bring the worshipper into a soothing realization of a mystery in things—a religious mystery. “There let the pealing organ blow to the full-voiced choir below!” When we reflect that the cathedrals of the middle ages are regarded less as the creations of individual artists than as the expression of a universal instinct of aspiration common to men in the “ages of faith,” it will seem less incredible that in the democratic middle ages on which we have entered a ritual worthy of such shrines should be elaborated by the common need of men. Already, the recrudescence of a conservative instinct in matters of religion is to be noted as one of the surprises of democracy.

JOHN EGLINTON.

## ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A THOUGHT REVIVAL IN IRELAND.

IN a country like Ireland, where the desire for thought has been killed by a combination between penal laws and other forces peculiar to our national evolution, and where all rational discussion has a tendency to become absorbed in the inanities of sectarian strife, it behoves the apostle of mental efficiency to reflect well before he enters the arena. It is not a matter in which initial mistakes can be afterwards rectified. Under modern conditions the most level-headed thinker, if he allows himself and his friends to be classified, even as a separate group, according to the standards of that public opinion he proposes to transform, will be lost to his time and country. Undoubtedly in Ireland, Catholic orthodoxy, like other orthodoxies, believing and unbelieving, is peculiarly unfitted for the struggle now going on around us. But it does not follow that this unfittedness is essential to the Catholic principle, or to Catholic traditions as such. It is rather due to the deadening influences which have been forced down to our own times, through a history which was not of our own making.

That Irish Catholics are not less capable of evolution than other people, not less inclined by nature to enlightened co-operation with modern tendencies, may be seen in the fact that, some years ago, old Europe was rudely awakened from her self-complacent slumber by reports of the domestic action and by the missionary labours of our Irish cousins in America. And Catholic Europe was not merely sleeping; she was unconsciously sinking in her sleep to a painless death. When she awoke she realised all the horrors of the situation, felt the pain of which she had before been unconscious, failed to distinguish between the remedies and the diseases, accused the doctor of violent methods, and got him dismissed. Then our Irish friends went back to America, and continued to live and work as they had done before, but old Europe turned over and went to sleep again, and the disease hurried on its way, nor was there any to stay it, or to prevent her enemies from working against her as she lay.

Thus Irish Catholicism has shown that it is capable, now, as of old, of decisive missionary action, and that not

amongst savages, but amongst civilized men and women. How far Europe is likely ultimately to respond is a matter which does not concern us here. It is sufficient for our present purpose that we should realize that our countrymen in America did this great thing, did invade Europe with missionary intent, in the cause of religion and of civilization, and that they came prepared by a frank acceptance of modern conditions.

Recognizing this, what can we say of the possibilities of a publication like DANA? That the absence of a habit of thoughtfulness is among the more potent causes of our country's present incapacity to right herself, is now pretty generally admitted. That DANA may do something to alter this state of things will be evident to all who appreciate the importance of conscious cerebration as an agent in mental evolution. But DANA may fail in this, and will fail, unless great care is taken by those responsible for its management. The first number gave ground for serious reflection. There were frequent thoughts in it, and a healthy tone which seemed to promise a fair arena to all who acknowledge the validity of the rational processes. But there was a general atmosphere and tendency which was not so healthy, and which will breed failure unless attention is given to it in time. To the casual reader—and the general public is a casual reader—the articles appeared to be written all on one side, and to have one objective—the Catholic Church. Now, obscurantism and the other ills which impede our national advancement, are not, to say the least, the exclusive property of Irish Catholics. They are, as has been said, the result of historic circumstances, and are pretty fairly distributed over the community in all its sections, believing and unbelieving. It is important that the matter should be dealt with freely and fairly, and that the remedy of open and well-balanced discussion should be applied wherever necessary. The present writer has had considerable personal experience in these things, and he has been forced to the conclusion that the healthiest procedure, in the case of critics, is for each man, as far as possible, to confine his investigations to the thoughts and doings of those with whom he is most closely in touch, with whom his judgment may be of some weight, and about whom his opinion may be, to some extent, impartial. This does not mean that a man like Professor Harnack should not write a "History of Dogma," mainly Catholic, or that external, and even hostile criticism is not often useful and necessary; but it does mean that a campaign

carried on from an exclusively external standpoint will end by increasing that sectarian animosity it was meant to combat, and will be applauded, first of all, by the Pharisee, whose own sins have been overlooked in the scramble to get at the failings of others.

It is, then, worth considering whether DANA would not be more useful, if worked on broader lines. All sections of the community should be subjected to criticism, and all who are capable of expressing their thoughts in a rational and pregnant way should be asked to write. There is no reason why Catholics, for instance, should fear to take part in such an enterprise. Indeed if Catholicism is to be the living force now that it has been in the past they must be prepared to give a reason for the faith that is in them, to face present problems. It is true that things sometimes happen in the Catholic world, which make it difficult for Catholics to appear in public, and to give a rational account of themselves. Catholic men of science have often been condemned by ecclesiastical authority, on purely scientific points, and the resulting situation is often embarrassing for the intelligent Catholic. But it should not be forgotten that those same authorities have sometimes turned out to have been wrong. Some centuries ago the Italian astronomer Galileo was condemned for having seen that the earth went round the sun. The condemnation did not alter the movements of the heavenly bodies, and we now know that he was right, and that they were wrong.

A Catholic man of science once said : " We thank God for Galileo " ! and there is no reason why Catholics should shrink from such facts as these. The church does not claim to be a dispenser of falsehood, nor does she ask her children to aid her in patching up a logically untenable position. But she does claim to hold within herself truth in one of its aspects, and she maintains that that aspect cannot be ultimately in contradiction with others, though there may be a temporary misunderstanding, We thank God for Galileo, because his misfortune was the means of our realizing the limitations of ecclesiastical efficiency. We thank God for Galileo, that it is through him that we know how to think and act in the face of similar situations in our own day.

UILLIAM MACSHOULA Dúisce

[The foregoing criticism of the policy of DANA by Mr. W. Gibson, which we gladly print, calls perhaps for some comment. The general ideal which Mr. Gibson puts



forward is precisely the ideal of DANA. We assuredly do not hold that "obscurantism and the other ills which impede our national advancement" are the exclusive failings of Irish Catholics. In the last number of DANA, for instance, Mr. John M. Robertson handled scientifically and dispassionately the claims of both Catholicism and Protestantism, and in other articles the pretensions of Protestantism are freely criticised. Certainly nothing is more alien to the spirit of DANA than to hold up, as some recent publicists have done, the ignorance and obscurantism of the Catholic people of Ireland to the derision of the Orange party, which is, all things considered, probably on a lower moral plane itself.

At the same time, as Catholicism is the religion of the vast majority of the Irish people, it is, perhaps, natural that those who seriously criticise religious affairs should be mostly concerned with Catholicism. After all, Irish Protestantism is so largely a mere phase of political ascendancy.

Another interesting question is raised by Mr. Gibson in his contention that a man should confine his criticism to "the thoughts and doings of those with whom he is most closely in touch, with whom his judgment may be of some weight." Presumably Mr. Gibson refers to public, not private, criticism. In any case the advice is sound; but it is often difficult to act on. Should an Irish Nationalist, say, never criticise Unionism, but always follow Nationalists? Are we always to play the part of "candid friend" to our own side? The *rôle* is never a pleasant one at the best, but even the "candid friend" is criticising people with whom he does not agree. Criticism in the very nature of the case must always come from a more or less "external standpoint." The essential thing to demand is that it be honest, competent and fair. In the interests of "mental efficiency" a man may properly criticise a belief or a policy which he regards as wholly false or vicious; the conditions are that he shall be courteous, that he shall never substitute abuse for argument, and that he shall fairly listen and give publicity to the opinions he criticises. That certainly is the ideal of DANA.

THE EDITORS,]

## LITERARY NOTICES.

SAN FRANCISCO AND OTHER POEMS, by F. W. GROVES  
CAMPBELL. Gay and Bird, 1904.

We have seldom met with a book in which there were so many instances of bad taste, along with so many gleams of unquestionable poetry, as in this. The following passage from "An Episode in Hades"—in many respects a remarkable poem—contains, for example, an image which the grimness of Dante could hardly carry through; it describes the effect of the first sound of Orpheus' lyre among the shades :

" E'en so it came, and suddenly the shades  
Leaped as we, after death, would leap did we  
Behold a star or some small thing we knew.  
And as it came and floated o'er the abyss,  
Lo! like a sickened stomach when it feels  
A first sweet waft of air, and almost turns  
With its intolerable load, all Hell was moved!"

Mr. Campbell's power of technique is too defective to provide a satisfying framework for the unchallengeably beautiful images which under the influence of happy moments he now and then captures. We must confess, however, that there is something in the wilful faultiness of these poems which interests us more than the work of many poets who have profited better by their training in the bardic colleges. It is much that he is wrapped up in his theme, as only an original poet can be, and is free from egoism and affectation. We would censure him mildly for not having fallen in with the growing tendency of Irish writers to print and publish in Dublin.

P.

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PULSE OF THE BARDS. By P. J. M'CALL. Dublin: Gill,  
O'Donoghue, 1904

Mr. P. J. M'Call belongs to the brotherhood of Gerald Griffin, Banim, D. F. McCarthy, Callanan and their compeers rather than to the modern company of Irish verse-

writers. His latest volume, *Pulse of the Bards*, is exceedingly pleasant reading. Of the four sections into which the contents are divided, the "Translations" and the "Miscellaneous Songs" are very much of the same character and degree of merit. The translations are without stiffness, and the original songs have an unmistakable Irish flavour as genuine as the versions from the Gaelic. The humorous and characteristic sketches are uniformly the best things in the volume, and they are excellent indeed, vivacious, entertaining, and well versified. The faults of technique here do not displease; they almost give an added piquancy. I might mention "Kitty in the Lane," "The Growling Old Woman," "The End o' the World," "Mike Molloy's Letter." Lover need not have been ashamed of any of these.

He is least successful in his most ambitious flight, the "Historical Ballad" section. Here his usual spontaneity and verve fail him. There is a wooden stiffness about these poems that make them seem almost exercises in verse-making. Nevertheless, there are two honourable exceptions. One is the "Lament of the Lady Nuala O'Donnell," which has true feeling and grace. I quote the second stanza:

I hear the wrathful winds of heaven  
 That pushed our prow with might and main  
 And strove till they had almost driven  
 The homeless chieftains home again.  
 To-night these winds ring in mine ear,  
 As oft they rang at port and door;  
 They are shrieking "Nuala, Nuala,  
 "Ulster is no more!"  
 Wind on wind shrieks—"Nuala, Nuala,  
 "Ulster is no more!"

The other is the "House of Credè," in some ways quite unlike anything else in the whole volume. The rhythm is carefully balanced, and there are pictures, outlined and coloured in a few vividly suggestive words.

"*Pulse of the Bards*" does not, I think, show any marked advance on *Songs of Erin*. Both have the same scope, are identical in subject and manner, but to my mind nothing in the later volume equals "Brown Bear o Norway" for power and skill of verse. In the matter of technique Mr. M'Call is by no means perfect. There are often crudenesses; he does not study the metrical value of words; he can treat three undeniably long syllables

as an anapaest. These lapses are the more unhappy since he undoubtedly has an excellent ear for the essential melody of verse. His rhyme is facile and unhackneyed in effect; his songs have a taking lilt—they should go well to music.

\*             \*             \*             \*

GERALD THE WELSHMAN. By HENRY OWEN. D.C.L.  
London: D. Nutt, 1904.

Mr. Brown Johnson, in his recent work, "The Rise of English Culture," would fain establish the theory that all the documents and records of mediæval times are wholly fictitious—forged by the Benedictines in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. His arguments, though set out with the greatest erudition and industry, are by no means convincing, and for the present we need not refuse to believe in the very vivid and striking personality of our old friend Giraldus Cambrensis, as he is generally called. Born of a noble family, indeed regal on the mother's side, of great personal beauty, a hotheaded Welshman, though half of him should have been Norman, always ready for a fight, yet a gentleman at heart through it all, in spite of his marvellous use or abuse of vituperation. Deeply impressed with a sense of his own importance—for did he not write a whole book "De Rebus a se Gestis"—the bitter enemy of the vices and follies of the clergy, yet a stern upholder of the dignity and privileges of the Church, shrewd, observant, critical, but childishly credulous, learned in all the learning of his time, an associate of princes, a counsellor of rulers, and a ruler himself, Gerald de Barri is surely no ghost or mere symbol for the literary activity of a group of writing Benedictines. We know most of the important events of his life—his education, first in England, then in Paris; his entering into public life as Canon of St. David's, his uncle's bishopric, his ecclesiastical feuds, his quarrel and reconciliation with Henry II., his journeys through Wales, to Ireland, to Rome, and during his last great fight on behalf of St. David's to preserve its independence, his failure because no man stood by him, his retirement to Lincoln in 1203, where he occupied himself with literature till he died about 1223 and was buried in St. David's, where his tomb is still shown.

A clear and scholarly account of his life and writings was prepared by Mr. Henry Owen and printed in 1889, and is now given to us in a new edition, revised and enlarged.

His writings fill eight volumes in the Rolls series ; they are in Latin, of course, and Latin greatly superior to that of most of his contemporaries. The *Gemma Ecclesiastica* and the *Speculum Ecclesiae* deal with affairs of the Church and contain, among other things, a detailed picture of the indolence and ignorance of the monks and clergy as well as their more positive vices—covetousness, luxury, unchastity. In the *Instruction of a Prince* there is to be found a history of the times of Henry II., also some picturesque character sketches of Henry, his queen, Eleanor, and his rebellious sons, to which Maurice Hewlett is greatly indebted in *Richard Yea-and-Nay*.

But Gerald is especially interesting as our chief authority on mediæval Ireland. On the whole he is fairly trustworthy, though he displays an uncritical readiness to accept the marvellous tales that were told him by the Irish. Yet where he got his information for himself he was shrewd and discriminating. He distinguishes the Irish hare from the English, which our naturalists only learned to do some fifty years ago, yet he ventures to testify on his own examination to the old fable of the barnacle goose. He will not accept the story of St. Patrick and the snakes, but gravely tells how a man of Caerleon “who in our time entered on the downward path by going a-courting on Palm-Sunday in a pleasant and convenient spot,” was straightway possessed by devils, with other edifying circumstances.

The narrative of the conquest of Ireland was in part written for the glorification of his own kinsfolk, and especially the Geraldines. In it he gives his plan for the conquest of Ireland, and finds the ideal ruler for that difficult country in the strong man armed.

F. M. ATKINSON.

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