

Ireland 40

THE

IRISH IN LONDON.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED ON MONDAY, DEC. 6TH, 1852, AT THE  
MUSIC HALL, STORE STREET,

BY THE REV. SAMUEL GARRATT, B.A.  
MINISTER OF TRINITY CHURCH, LITTLE QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S-  
INN-FIELDS.

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at Home and Abroad.

*December 1852.*

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## IRISH IN LONDON.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL GARRATT, B.A.

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I FEEL it, Sir, to involve a measure of responsibility to address this audience on any subject, but more especially on that which has been committed to me. I am aware that it is as a witness I am expected to speak. Having been engaged for two years in labouring in a part of St. Giles' crowded with Irish, those who have invited me to speak on this subject suppose that I ought to know something about them. And in fact in what I have to say I am obliged from the circumstances of the case to depend mainly on what I have seen myself, or heard from others engaged in the work, and especially those zealous co-operators in every Christian enterprise in this metropolis, the City Missionaries. I cannot refer you for my authorities to books, but, if you wish for confirmation, the Irish in London are our neighbours, and I can at least say this—Go and see.

It is a strange feeling which comes across our



minds, when we remember of whom the Irish population of London are the lineal descendants and representatives. For it is as certain as any fact of history, that there was a time when the Celt or Kelt or Gaul was as proverbially great and terrible as he is now the reverse. These Irish who crowd our courts and alleys are the genuine descendants of the race who at one time peopled France, Portugal, a part of Germany and the north of Italy, who more than once threatened Rome with destruction, and spread themselves even beyond Europe into the heart of Asia Minor.

In Asia Minor, they gave name to the tract of country called Galatia. Those churches of Galatia to which Paul addressed an Epistle were churches of Celts. There is every reason to believe that when Paul preached to them he preached in Celtic, and that substantially the same sounds which now so charm the inhabitants of Connemara were those in which the Galatians heard the Gospel, when they received the Apostle as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. And perhaps we may trace in the Epistle to the Galatians some traits of the Celtic character. The Epistle to the Galatians is just what might be addressed to Irish converts in London. There is the same disposition to receive with affectionate warmth those who preach the Gospel to them, the same willingness to be in bondage and want of the full appreciation of the freedom of Christ, the same openness to the witchcraft of seducing teachers, and we find the same difficulty which is intimated as existing among the Galatians in raising the tone of practice, and maintaining the purity of doctrine. Celts in

Galatia and Celts in London have much in common, and the Epistle written to the one is most strikingly appropriate to the other.

The Irish in London are still more closely connected with the Waldenses. The language of the Valleys, when Cromwell interfered in behalf of the persecuted Protestants, was almost the same as Irish. The Lord's Prayer as used by those holy martyrs differs very slightly from that which is contained in the Irish prayer-book. And strangely dissimilar as they are in circumstances, the Waldensian Protestant and the Irish Roman Catholic, the one breathing the pure mountain air and rejoicing in the liberty of the Gospel, the other shut up in our close courts and a slave to the priest, not only are both Celts, but both belong to the same division of the great Celtic family.

The Gauls who sacked Rome, the Galatians to whom Paul preached the Gospel, the Piedmontese whose sufferings for the truth are painted in Milton's verse, and which is infinitely better chronicled in Heaven, all find their successors in the subjects of this present lecture. We go into the Rookeries of London, and meet them there.

We are all familiar with this word Rookeries, and with some of the dismal associations connected with it. They have been rightly termed the plague-spots of London, and have drawn down upon us much just censure from foreigners. They think it marvellous that there should be a class of persons in the midst of such a city as ours, so utterly destitute of all the comforts of life as the inhabitants of these places. One fact is generally lost sight of, but it is a most



important one, that this Pariah class, whose condition is so wretched and has been sometimes considered so hopeless, consists almost exclusively of Irish Roman Catholics. There is enough of sorrow and poverty and vice among our English poor to make the heart bleed. But, almost without exception, those fearful instances of barbarism, rooms crowded with different families, and all the accompanying misery are found among the Irish Roman Catholic population. I have never seen it so stated in print, but as far as my own observation goes, it is so exclusively, and the information I have received almost uniformly confirms the statement.

There are two classes of Irish in London between which there exists a very marked distinction—the native Irish, and those born in London of Irish parents. An Irishman on his first arrival in London is called in the language of the courts “a Greek.” When he has eaten his first Christmas dinner he goes by the name of Irishman, but his children born in this metropolis are termed “Cockneys.” Between the Irish and the “Cockneys” there exists a most decided animosity, even greater than that subsisting between either of these two classes and the English. They are both such good friends of mine that I do not presume to decide between them. But I will endeavour to sketch out some of their characteristics.

#### THE NATIVE IRISH.

Imagine an Irishman just arrived from the green mountains of Kerry, in Drury Lane. Perhaps he has

come alone, leaving his wife and children to follow when he has laid up enough to bring them. And in this case they have to wait long, for it is seldom that the Irishman earns more than enough to keep himself alive. But he does not lose his affection for them. He says, and says truly, that “the days are weeks and the weeks are months,” till he sees them again. Or perhaps he brings them over with him, and the man, and his wife, and half a dozen shoeless and stockingless children, are looking about a dark court to find a night’s lodging. They are sure to meet some one with whom they have some sort of acquaintance or connection. Or if not, the Irishman, however poor, never wants hospitality. They show it in what seems to us a strange way. The family is all welcomed to the fourth corner of a third floor back-room, in all the other three corners of which some family is domiciled. The landlord of this room has let two of the other corners, keeping the third and fourth for himself, and then, when these poor “craturrs” are shivering in the cold outside, it is not in his heart not to let them occupy the fourth corner, for one night, rent free. He knows that under the new Police Act he is liable to be fined for overcrowding his room, but he runs that risk and thinks himself doing right.

You must not suppose that this wretched way of living is felt by them to be uncomfortable. They have no taste for any thing different. The misery of an Irish hovel is proverbial, and though I think that some of them do miss the hills and the valleys outside, yet the accommodation inside is not worse than they have been accustomed to. Their habits are set



immeasurably lower, as far as the comforts and decencies of life are concerned, than those of our English poor. And it is one grand problem which is ever occurring to the minds of the thoughtful observer, how they can be raised.

It is difficult to say with what feelings an Irishman enters London. Many reasons seem to bring them here. The idea that London is paved with gold still prevails in Ireland. With their native elasticity of hope they fully anticipate a flow of prosperity as soon as they reach this city. They are often encouraged in this by gentlemen, who, either from ignorance, or the wish to be rid of burdensome neighbours, urge them to the step, and make a small subscription to pay their passage. And from some cases which have come before me, I am inclined to hope that there are not a few in whom the wish to escape from priestly influence has something to do with their leaving Ireland. The Irish who have recently arrived are less rooted in Romanism than those who have lived long in London. We see even in this the breathing of God's Spirit, which is making itself felt over the length and breadth of the Sister Isle.

But it is also true that these fresh arrived Irishmen are much more ignorant than the others even of the doctrines of the Church of Rome.

It is clear that the priests in Ireland do not take so much pains in instructing them as the priests in England. For the most part they know nothing. They cannot express one dogma of their faith distinctly, and are not at all acquainted with those distinctions in which the Roman Catholic poor in this country are

trained. You must speak to them as if they were children. And they are more easily reached by the heart than the head.

The Irishman has not been long in London, before he finds reason to wish himself back again. London is not paved with gold. Nothing is to be done here without strenuous exertion. And though an Irishman sometimes works hard when he is at work, he never likes hard work. He is too fond of talking, and smoking, and drinking, and shrinks from exertion. Besides which, it is very difficult for him to get work. Most likely he knows no trade, and if he does an English artisan will hardly work with him. Our poor Irish neighbours feel most keenly the dislike in which they are held. It does exist to a great extent, and they exaggerate it.

So far as it is owing to their habits it must not perhaps surprise us. But whatever be the cause of its effect is to isolate the Irish community in London, and keep it from rising even to the sufficiently low level of the neighbouring English.

These native Irish if they come from Connaught or Munster have a very imperfect knowledge of English. This tends to separate them still further from others, and gives rise to a question of great interest—the proper medium of communicating religious instruction. It is a question encompassed with difficulty, and I trust you will bear with me, while at the risk of wearying you, I endeavour to make that difficulty apparent to a Saxon audience.

What is the language of the Irish in London? Those born in London have learned English from infancy. It is their mother tongue, and they



know no other. But the native Irish whom I am now describing speak both English and Irish, and understand neither perfectly. They do not mix two together. The languages have so little in common, that they will not readily unite into a Patois, and these people have in fact no medium of communication in which they are well versed. They know something of Irish and something of English, but are thoroughly at home in neither.

There is a mystery in the Irish language not unlike that which rests over the Etruscan monuments. In each we have the unmistakable traces of a once civilized race. It is impossible to imagine the Celtic population of Ireland forming the Irish language. It would be as reasonable to suppose the inhabitants of modern Athens designing the Parthenon.

Ancient Irish is as regularly formed a language as Latin, and more flexible. It seems well adapted for expressing varied modifications of thought. The men who were accustomed to distinct forms for the different cases of their nouns and forms of their verbs, and who exhibited by separate symbols those various moods of subjunctive, conditional, potential, which in English we only arrive at by walking on the crutches of auxiliary verbs, cannot have been barbarians. And yet it is in this light the Roman historians speak of the Celts, or Gauls.

The other branches of the great Celtic language, the Welsh and the Gaelic, have I believe been robbed of their resemblance to their ancient source by the adoption of a Phonetic alphabet. In Irish, the difference between the written words and the pronounced words is so great, that one is driven

to the conclusion, that in its palmy days, when the written language now called ancient Irish was vernacular, its pronunciation must have been totally different. By way of example, the word "comfort," which we are apt to look upon as so thoroughly English, is really Irish. The ancient Celts, I doubt not, pronounced it as they wrote it, "comfortadt." But the Irishman of the present day has lost the sound as completely as the thing. He calls it "coretuckt." This change of pronunciation is to a great extent regulated by fixed rules. Certain letters are modified in their sound or altogether dropped. And as those changes are in a measure marked by certain points placed over the letters in the manuscripts, this thorough alteration in the pronunciation must have taken place before the manuscripts were written, when the Celtic race was civilized enough to alter the language of fixed purpose and make literary canons.

Modern Irish is a distinct language from ancient Irish. It differs from it in cutting off the inflexions of the verbs. For instance, if I want to express "They said" in ancient Irish, it is accomplished by a single word, "duradar," but in modern Irish it would require two words "duart sheead," as in our own language.

And in addition to this, the words used in ancient Irish are many of them quite distinct from those employed now in the vernacular tongue. The language of Munster has deviated more widely from the standard than that of Connaught. But in both the spoken language differs from the classical language



of the manuscripts. A hundred years ago the Franciscans of Louvain, who prepared some Irish Catechisms, seem to have been aware of this, for I find it recorded of these catechisms, that "the plainest and most obvious Irish is used therein, preferring, after the example of St. Augustine, rather to be censured by grammarians, than misunderstood by the people." Truly "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." The Bible is unhappily written in ancient Irish. This, as being the literary language of Ireland, was used in the translation instead of the "plainest and most obvious."

I believe myself that the difference of the grammatical forms has something to do with the obscurity of the translation. The Irish themselves attribute it to the difference in words. But whatever the cause, the evil exists. It is less felt in Connaught, where the Irish language is more cultivated, and a larger number are accustomed to hear and read the manuscripts in which all that remains of Irish lore is wrapped up; but among a Munster population the consequence is most disastrous. The Irish in London are chiefly from Munster. And I do not think it too much to say, that they have not the Holy Scriptures in their own tongue. I have heard from an Irish Missionary to whom the language is vernacular, that he is in the habit of taking the English bible and translating it, instead of reading from his Irish bible. Here is in fact another of that strange series of mistakes in our manner of dealing with the Irish, to which much of their present ignorance must be attributed. First we used every effort to destroy

their language, and to replace it by English. When that failed, after leaving them for centuries to live and die without the knowledge of the truth, in the hope of extinguishing Irish, we at last turn round, and give them the Bible, not in the Irish which they speak now, but in that which perhaps their ancestors spoke, when they lived in Gaul and sacked Rome. We keep back from them the knowledge of salvation, unless they choose either to learn English or study old Irish. If the reading and hearing of the Irish Bible is to form a prominent part in the instruction of the Irish speaking people, let them have it written as they converse. Let some competent Irish scholar give us a modern Irish Bible, in which the Celt may read "the story of Peace," as he calls it, in the words in which he thinks and speaks. Till this has been done the effect of the Irish language has not been tried. It is as idle to think of changing a language as destroying one. I believe it would be easier to do the latter than the former. The Irish in London do gradually forget their own mother tongue and speak English, but they never speak ancient Irish. And the evident interest with which even those who seem to know English as thoroughly as Irish listen to an Irish speaker whom they do understand, and perhaps still more the delight which the sound of ancient Irish when read, imperfectly as they understand it, excites within them, does hold out a promise of much blessing from the use of that most obvious instrument for good, a vernacular version, enabling men to hear and read in their own tongue the wonderful works of God.

When Paul preached to the Galatians he preached



in Celtic; when the Waldenses prayed they prayed in Celtic. Let us act in this respect towards the Celts in London, as Paul acted towards the Celts in Asia. And it may be, the Celtic Protestants of our slums and back courts shall shake hands with the Celtic Protestants of Piedmont—witness with them for the truth of the Gospel against Babylon the Great—suffer with them, if such be the will of God, now, and reign with them hereafter, at Christ's appearing and kingdom.

The native Irishman does not share the Saxon's love of independence. He must lean on some other arm. Like the ivy he needs support, and cannot stand alone.—This may in part be national, but in a great degree it results from an entire subjection of mind to his priest. So long as he remains a Roman Catholic, he never thinks of questioning his priest's authority. It seems a relief to him to transfer, as he supposes, the whole responsibility of his soul's salvation to his spiritual guide. "As soon as I have committed a sin," I heard a woman say, "I just runs to my dear Director, and tells him, and then he says to me, Dear daughter, you must not do so again." She evidently felt it enough to have opened her mind to her confessor. Having so done the responsibility she thought was his.

Better instructed Romanists do not by any means transfer their personal responsibility to the priest. It is not the object of the Church of Rome to quiet consciences, but to keep them in constant restlessness. Such however is the darkness of these native Irishmen, that multitudes of them really believe that if they confess to a priest they may leave it to him to do

all the rest. And this is the substance of their belief. Most of them are unable to read either English or Irish, very few of them have seen, and fewer still possess the Bible. They will often bring out some book of devotions as the word of God, and seem quite unconscious of the difference. They take their religion from the priest, and obedience to the priest is the chief part of their religion. So long as they remain Romanists they are incapable of being affected by arguments, and when they become Protestants it is difficult to keep them from transferring to the minister the same blind faith which they have reposed in the priest.

Among these native Irish there have been numerous conversions in London. The most successful labourer in this work is Dr. Armstrong. Indeed the result of his efforts is such as to call for devout thankfulness to the Giver of all Grace. No pains have been spared to stop the progress of Divine truth in Bermondsey. But the more there has been of opposition, the greater has been the blessing. And in spite of every difficulty there is a rich harvest of immortal souls, for which those engaged in gathering it will have to thank God to all Eternity.

It is through the heart that these native Irish are to be reached, and not through the head. Indeed it seems to me that God is himself, without any apparent means, opening their hearts to receive instruction. One and another becomes willing to be taught. An impression is made on their minds that God is with us. And they come to learn. Thus it is manifestly, as it always is really, God's work and not man's.



Some of those poor creatures were reached by the Gospel, in the midst of social wretchedness, which I would not dare to describe in this room. And in some cases it has been blessed to the conversion of men and women so situated, that to the eye of man they seemed below its reach. God does in this way mark out distinctly that no circumstances can hinder the truth from doing its appointed work. It has made glad many a heart in the midst of poverty, wretchedness, and misery, and shed a sunbeam through what without it would have been a den of darkness.

And here, Sir, we come at once upon a great principle, which is written in Scripture, and exhibited in the history of every mission on the face of the Earth—that the truth of God, in the hands of the Spirit of God, can work in any heart under all circumstances. None are sunk so low but God's Grace can reach them. We have not to wait for the issue of some preparatory process before we offer men the Gospel. The New Zealanders were cannibals when Marsden commenced the mission, and he did not seek first to civilize them, and then to Christianize them, but taught them of Christ in the full confidence that by so doing he used the only lever which could raise them from their degradation.

This is not a single case, but an example of all cases. Tahiti, Hawaii, Greenland, Labrador, and the whole continent of Africa from Sierra Leone to the Orange River, all bear their witness to this great fact, that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to the rudest barbarian as well as to the most polished Greek, and the great regenerating principle, which needs no precursor, admits of no rival, but results in

all that brings happiness to man, as well as glory to God. Where is there a savage nation that has been elevated by any civilizing process without the Gospel? Where is there a barbarous tribe to which the Gospel has been preached, which has not risen into civilization? It is the universal order. At all events the Irish in London form no exception. They can be reached by the Gospel, and by nothing else. It has not been found that the most debased condition has been a barrier which it could not pass. But the inmates of crowded rooms, with every circumstance against them, have welcomed the message of life, and become heirs of everlasting palaces.

We are now looking for the sure result in the altered tastes and habits of these men. There is more difficulty in this than is sometimes thought. It is no easy problem how to enable them to live differently from those around them. I should like every Irish court to be planted with a model lodging-house inhabited by convert families, and work provided for them as at Dingle in Ireland. In this way we might see gradually springing up around us colonies of Celtic Protestant Christians, bright spots in the dark masses, shining amidst the Irish in London as lights in the world. This can only be brought about by the efforts of Christian men of business. Such plans as these just call into requisition that knowledge and practical skill which God has not given to be expended solely in the acquisition of wealth. It would need also an outlay at first, though any such plan ought in the end to be self-supporting. The fear which would probably suggest itself to many, that any marked improvement in the social habits of Protestant Irish



would hold out a temptation to false profession is a mistaken one. If accompanied with the increase of labour necessary to make the plan answer, it would require the whole force of their Christian and Protestant principle to induce them to take advantage of it. The Irish Roman Catholics neither love labour nor love cleanliness, and Irish converts would take hard work and its accompanying social advantages as a duty rather than a boon. We can only expect habits so deeply rooted to be gradually overcome, and strive to impress on them what, with all her professions, Rome will never really teach her children, that "those that have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works."

#### THE IRISH BORN IN LONDON.

The Irish born in London constitute a totally distinct class; unlike the English and also unlike the natives of Ireland.

Their language is English, and in the ease and gracefulness with which they speak it they far excel their Saxon neighbours. They are never at a loss for words, and there is often a propriety in the way in which they express themselves, and a pleasant glow about their thoughts, which one cannot but admire.

Many of them are well instructed in the doctrines of the Church of Rome. They know, which the native Irish seldom do, the subtle distinctions between *Latria* and *Dulia*, on which the advocates of Rome base their defence of the invocation of Saints. They are also with singular unanimity agreed in rejecting the personal infallibility of the Pope, and placing infallibility in the Pope and a Council. They are

acquainted with the doctrine of Transubstantiation, which the native Irish are often happily ignorant of, and though they seldom have either a Bible or a Testament, frequently know by heart the passages of Scripture quoted by Romanists in favour of that and other errors. Nor are they without some little knowledge of historical names.

A poor woman, living in a wretched room in a most dismal court, surprised me by the following conversation: "You are a Roman Catholic, I think?" "Yes, sir, sure I am, and all the genius of the country is becoming Roman Catholic also. Ah! sir, we know a little of history, too. We know how the Church has been persecuted the last three hundred years." "Indeed! I said: pray when do you mean?" "Oh, sir, in Queen Elizabeth's time to be sure, when so many Catholics were put to death, to say nothing of Cromwell in Ireland." "You have forgotten," I replied, "Queen Mary." "Oh, Queen Mary, sir; she was only avenging the wrong done to her mother."

In discussion in their own houses, as well as elsewhere, with these London-born Roman Catholics, I have often been surprised at the intelligence they have exhibited. Friendly discussion is the way to their hearts. Any one who knows, like Mr. Cohen, how to meet them with open frankness need have no fear of not gaining their confidence. I have heard that gentleman address some hundreds of them for more than an hour on the Great Apostacy, and show the exact fulfilment of the prophecies of the Man of Sin and Babylon the Great in their own Church, with manifest impression, and without ex-



citing any hostile feelings. All that is required in conducting controversy with them is to be honest and kind. When you tell them that their religion is described in the Bible as an apostacy, that gives no offence, because it is a fair argument and they will try to meet it. If you call it "Popery," that does give offence, because it is a term of reproach, and can neither be proved nor disproved. So also you may call the consecrated host "bread." They expect you as a Protestant to do so, but to call it "a wafer" seems to them a mockery of what they esteem sacred, and they resent it. But it is a very great mistake to suppose they are irritated by controversy. Cardinal Wiseman does not like it for very good reasons, but his flock do; and they show in it much good humour. Their snare is levity—it is difficult to keep them serious. But when really in earnest, it is very affecting to see the inward struggle between a traditional faith and the truth of God's word. Some of them, and it is of these I always entertain the greatest hope, are very zealous in their own religion. They are frequent in their attendance at chapel, and also at confession. But it is easy to see how heavy a burden this last and most essential part of obedience to their Church is felt to be. The great majority of avowed Romanists never go near the confessional, and to such their Church holds out no hope even of Purgatory. For constant neglect of confession she has no forgiveness. And thus every earnest Roman Catholic is unhappy. His only hope is in confession, and confession to a priest is often little short of a present hell.

There is one fact, not perhaps well known to

those unacquainted with the Irish, but which ought to be known. The Irishman's nationality depends upon his faith. If he is a Protestant, he is in his heart a subject of Queen Victoria. If a Roman Catholic, he has another allegiance, and owns an authority paramount to hers. I will read you a quotation I have met with from the "Tablet," the organ of the Jesuits, respecting the feeling of the Irish Roman Catholics in their own land.

"It is strange to witness this new phase of the yearning wherewith Ireland for so many generations has turned her heart to France, as to a place from whence cometh help. We believe of course that the danger of invasion is very much overrated, but the eye of the peasant glistens when the name of Louis Napoleon is mentioned, and his heart bounds when he hears of the coming empire, which in his mind is the inheritor, not merely of great victories and great deeds, but of hopes that have been nursed in the sad and sickly heart of his fathers, and have been handed down to him as a stern accompaniment of the anguish which eats into his heart, while with thin and wasted lips he murmurs, 'How long, O Lord, how long?' Yes, these hopes (how could it be otherwise under the established rule?) are nourished in Ireland, and the day when the Vicar of Christ—if this too, as it seems probable, is to happen—shall place the imperial crown upon the brow of the third Napoleon, and give him the benediction of the Church, will bring joy and exultation and hope to the down-trodden peasant of this land."

The "Tablet" writes of Irish in Ireland. But it is equally true, though not equally known, of the



Irish in London. The Roman Catholic masses in the heart of this metropolis are bound by no tie of affectionate loyalty to our Queen and country. England is to them but a foreign land. They look on the Emperor of the French as the Protector of Romanism, and it would not grieve them to see him triumph over a nation of heretics. Such is the state of feeling of Irish Roman Catholics in London. But on the other hand no sooner does an Irishman become a Protestant, than he becomes also loyal to his Queen, and attached to his country. From that moment he looks on his own interests and that of this nation as one, and he counts himself as much concerned in the safety and honour of England, as if he were an Englishman.

I simply state the fact. It is one which would be confirmed by every one who knows the heart of the Irish in London. They belong to us nationally or not, as they belong to us religiously or not. The neglect of all effort, for centuries past, to lead these degraded masses into the light and liberty of the Gospel, has resulted in leaving, in the very heart of London, a population, living in the midst of us, but estranged from our religion, our laws, our manners, and our government. There is, as every one knows, far more of sentiment about the Irish poor than our own. What Napoleon said of the world is far more true of the Irish part of it than the English, "The world is ruled by the imagination." A thought, an idea has a dominant influence over the Irish mind, as it has over the French. And as that makes the Irish Protestants the most loyal of subjects and the most ardent of patriots, so does it also make the Irish Roman Catholics the devoted adherents of that foreign power in which

they recognise the Vicar of Christ, and favourably disposed to every one connected with him. I fear, Sir, the time may come, when for her own sake England may wish that she had cared more for the souls of the Irish in London. It will ever be found that to do God's will and follow God's word is the truest policy. Had England honestly sought to diffuse the light with which God has favoured her among the Roman Catholic courts and alleys of her own metropolis, there is no reason whatever for thinking that God would have suffered the effort to be ineffectual. All might have been reversed. The moral degradation of our masses might have been arrested by the life-giving influence of a pure faith. And instead of a nation living in the midst of us without becoming one with us, we might have had an Irish phalanx as brave and as true as those at Waterloo, and bound to us by every tie, political, social, and religious.

But to judge aright of these London-born Irish, we must look a little at their teachers.

From the Catholic Directory for 1851 I find that in the so-called "Archdiocese of Westminster" there are 113 priests, 46 churches and chapels, 2 religious houses for men, 9 convents, and 5 schools for the poor. Of all these there is one of the religious houses the priests of which possess incomparably more influence among the Roman Catholics of this part of the metropolis than any other priests—the Oratory in King William Street. They have just opened a large School and Mission establishment between Holborn and New Oxford Street.

The Oratory of St. Philip consists, as you all pro-



bably know, of apostates from our Church. And from all I can hear, I do not doubt that, having had the blessing of a Protestant education, Mr. Frederick Faber and his associates are vastly superior in power, attractiveness, and earnestness, to the common run of Roman Catholic Priests. Our withered branches are greener by far than their hothouse plants.

But in the depths of idolatrous superstition the perverts go beyond their new guides. And Mr. Faber is teaching the Irish in London to fathom an abyss of blasphemous worship of the Virgin which they did not know before.

I hold in my hand a book of Hymns written by that gentleman for singing and reading. He speaks in the preface of the influence of Wesley's Hymns and the Olney Collection among the English poor, and says, which you will be glad to hear, that "Catholics even are not unfrequently found poring with a devout and unsuspecting delight over the verses of the Olney Hymns, which the author himself can remember acting like a spell upon him for years, strong enough to be for long a counter influence to very grave convictions, and even now to come back from time unbidden into the mind."—Had Mr. Faber a pious mother? Has he had to unlearn first at Oxford and then at Rome her gentle teachings? Does she live to weep over his apostacy? Or was she taken away from the evil to come? Oh! if my voice could but reach that gifted but unhappy man, how earnestly would I ask him to yield himself again to that hallowed influence, and to read, in his mother's Bible, God's woes against an

Apostate Church—God's warning voice, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."

When Hobart Seymour was at Rome, a priest remarked to him, in all simplicity, that the religion of Italy was daily becoming less and less the religion of Jesus, and more and more the religion of Mary. It is not the fault of Mr. Faber if such is not the case with his Irish flock in London. This book is entitled "Jesus and Mary," and the motto on the title-page beneath a medallion of the Virgin Mary, with a glory round her head, holding the Infant Jesus in her arms, is this: "Behold Mary was our hope, to whom we fled for help to set us free, and she came to our assistance." Alas! alas! he has forgotten "Jesus Christ who is our hope."

But what is inside the book? I turn to page 64, and there I read the "MONTH OF MAY. PIOUS AND THERE I READ THE "MONTH OF MAY. PIOUS ASPIRATIONS TO THE MOTHER OF GOD FOR EVERY DAY IN THE MONTH. (FROM THE ITALIAN)." Observe while I read it how all the glories of the Lord Jesus are attributed to Mary.

1. "Joy of my heart! O let me pay  
To thee thine own sweet month of May.
2. Mary! one gift I beg of thee,  
My soul from sin and sorrow free.
3. Direct my wandering feet aright,  
And be thyself mine own true light.
4. Be love of thee a purging fire,  
To cleanse for God my heart's desire.
5. Mother! be love of thee a ray  
From Heaven, to show the heavenward way.



6. Mary! make haste thy child to win  
From sin, and from the love of sin.
7. Mother of God! let my poor love  
A mother's prayers and pity move.
8. Oh Mary, when I come to die,  
Be thou, thy spouse, and Jesus nigh.
9. When mute before the Judge I stand,  
My holy shield be Mary's hand.
10. Oh Mary! let no child of thine  
In hell's eternal exile pine.
11. If time for penance still be mine,  
Mother, the precious gift is thine.
12. Thou, Mary, art my hope and life.  
The starlight of this earthly strife.
13. Oh, for my own, and others' sin,  
Do thou, who canst, free pardon win.
14. To sinners all, to me the chief,  
Send, Mother, send thy kind relief.
15. To thee our love and troth are given;  
Pray for us, pray, bright Gate of Heaven.
16. Sweet Day-Star! let thy beauty be  
A light to draw my soul to thee."

She is called the joy of the heart. She is asked to free the soul from sin and sorrow—to be the true light—to win her devotee from sin and the love of sin—to shield him from the Judge—to save him from Hell. The gift of spared life is attributed to her. She instead of Christ is the hope, and the life, and the day star and the gate of heaven. If this be not gross idolatry and foul blasphemy, I know not what is. And this is the teaching of the favourite Spiritual

Director of the most devout of the Irish Roman Catholics in London.

On the other side of the river, St. George's Cathedral is the chief resort of Roman Catholics. I need not tell this audience that every Roman Catholic who knows the doctrine of his Church believes that when the words of consecration are pronounced by the priest, supposing everything done properly and with a right intention on the part of the officiating minister, the piece of bread on the altar called the host is changed into the body, blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I happen to have at home one of these hosts. It is not a consecrated host. But it is made from the same cast of which multitudes of hosts have been made and consecrated. That, by universal confession both of Romanists and Protestants, is a piece of bread and nothing more. I do not call it a "wafer," for that term is never used by Roman Catholics, and is very offensive to them. It is a piece of bread. But according to the Church of Rome, if that piece of bread, instead of being brought to me, had been taken to a Romish Priest at St. George's or any where else, he could, by pronouncing the words *Hoc est corpus meum* and willing it in his mind, have changed it into the very body, blood, soul and divinity of Him who as man sits on the right hand of the Father, and as God fills heaven and earth.

It then becomes "the Adorable Presence," and he falls down and worships it as God.

At certain times this adoration takes place in various chapels in London, not only at mass but continually night and day. It is thus noticed in the Directory for last year as exhibited at St. George's.



"In Advent and Lent there are spiritual exercises every evening. The Adorable Presence is day and night in the Chapel of the B. Sacrament. Look for the Red light! It is there." We remember the command, predictive, as I doubt not, of this very abomination, "When they say unto you he is in the secret chamber, believe it not; for as the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." And we shudder at the lying direction to look for the object of adoration—for the presence of Him before whom the angels bow—to a red light, in a dark corner of St. George's. But our poor Irish Roman Catholics—and would they were alone in it!—believe the lie, and go and worship a piece of bread which the baker has baked in the tongs, and fall down to it, and say unto it, Thou art my God.

This, Sir, is the spiritual debasement in which through the hypocrisy of liars having their consciences seared with a hot iron, our dear Irish Roman Catholic neighbours are sunk. You ask for Missionary spheres, and behold they are at your doors. A large proportion of this metropolis is thus brought in some respect below the level even of the heathen. And I see not how the young men of this city could better employ themselves than in working among these priest-ridden masses, and bearing a message of peace and liberty and hope, to those over whom Satan has thrown the spell of this fatal witchcraft.

It is not necessary to show to a young man of Christian energy that a work is easy, in order to induce him to engage in it. Probably many of you have felt that there was an adaptation to the young

man's mind, in that message of Christ to Ananias respecting the young man, Saul of Tarsus; "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name sake." And the work among the Irish is not easy. It is not that there is any difficulty in the way of access to them, nor is it the much that is repulsive about their habits which makes visiting them somewhat painful. That which really calls for patient perseverance is the extreme difficulty of arriving at a satisfactory result. It is very difficult to bring the London-born Irishman to the point of renouncing Romanism, though very easy to bring him near to it. And on the other hand it is easy to persuade the native Irishman to call himself a Protestant, but most hard to raise his moral tone to that which becomes a Christian profession. I totally distrust the mere outward change. It is of no use to make men Protestants in name, unless the Spirit of God make them Christians in reality. And even then, so deep is the injury which the early training of a Roman Catholic inflicts upon him, that if we are to measure our Romish converts with our own converted poor, those labouring among the former are apt to be disheartened. There is no industry and no truth where the Church of Rome has sway. And those emancipated from her grasp have to learn by a slow process how to speak the truth and to labour truly to get their own living.

This moral degradation is not peculiar to the Irish. Wherever a nation has fairly learnt Rome's lessons you find it so. Look at Italy, sunk in sensualism and treachery. Look at the Roman Catholic cantons of Switzerland compared with the Protestant, where the



very appearance of the houses reveals the religion of their inmates. And look at our own land. When men have been engulfed in the apostacy or are on the road to it, how the moral sense has been blinded! Two young perverts called on me, who once knew though they did not love the truth, and who were hoping to be educated for Jesuits. I was horror-struck to find how they had lost since their apostacy all the edge of moral consciousness. I showed them Liguori's apologies for stealing—which probably some of you have heard—and they could see no harm. In fact, in the thoroughly trained Romanist the moral principle has been extracted. His right and wrong is the approval or disapproval of his priest. Stealing is no sin when the Church permits—lying is no sin when the Church counts it necessary for the man's position. And if his director wills it, he must say, "Evil be thou my good," and think himself doing God service.

By this foul system the Roman Catholic part of the Irish nation has been robbed of its moral strength, and nothing but Divine grace can restore it. That only will make the poor Irishman industrious and truth-loving. You must wait for that precious seed to work in the heart, and have long patience for it, and not be discouraged by many a cold blast and many a deadly blight. Labourers in this field have need of that exhortation and that promise, "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Those of you who have read Uncle Tom's Cabin—and who has not?—will not have forgot Squire St. Clair's attempt to palliate the horrors of

slavery in America, by comparing it with the condition of the masses in England. I am sure Harriet Beecher Stowe, notwithstanding this mistake, has the hearty respect and warm affection of every true-hearted Englishman and Englishwoman. Oh! Sir, it was not by the hand of a man that God delivered his people Israel from the iron chariots and iron bondage of Sisera; and it may be that it is His will, passing by the statesmen and legislators of the United States, to use Harriet Beecher Stowe as His honoured instrument for breaking down the accursed system, and give it its fatal blow by the hand of a woman. And pardon me, Sir, if I so far quit for a moment my subject, as to beseech respectfully the ladies of this audience to be among the first to follow the advice of one, to whose help and encouragement the whole work among the Irish in London, like so many other Christian enterprises, is most largely indebted, and who while seeking to emancipate the Romanist from his priest, and the factory girl from her oppressor, does not forget the slaves of the West. Be among the first, mothers and sisters of the young men of London, to respond to the Earl of Shaftesbury's appeal, and memorialize your Christian sisters on the other side the Atlantic to use their influence with their fathers, husbands, brothers—to give them no rest, till they wipe out for ever that foul spot which dims the brightness of their stars, and casts reproach on our common Christianity itself.

Squire St. Clair, in the sense in which he meant to draw a comparison between the English poor and the American slaves, was undoubtedly wrong. We repel the charge with indignation. There is not



a poor man in all London, however naked and starving, English or Irish, who, as far as his temporal condition is concerned, would think for a single moment of changing places with Uncle Tom, in his best days, in the model slave state of Kentucky. Not one. Why do our poor so dread the Union? Because it has some faint resemblance to slavery.

But the Irish in London, though they know it not or will not consider it, are bound down under a far heavier bondage. Only their oppressor is not, as Squire St. Clair supposed, the peer but the priest. The slave must do the bidding of his master whatever that may be—so must the Irishman of his priest. Obedience is enforced on the slave by the bodily lash—on the Romanist by the soul scourge of one who seems to him to hold at his disposal the fire of Purgatory and the torments of Hell. The slave may think as he pleases—but the priest of Rome claims the subjection of the mind, and demands each thought to be submitted to his scrutiny and ruled by his will. The American bondsman, if a Christian, looks forward to death as the time when the slave shall be free from his master—but the slave of Rome believes that his eternity depends on the fiat of him who lords it over him in time. And thus it comes to pass, that in the very heart of London there exists a race of men like the Negroes in America—with fine natural susceptibilities, more capable than their Saxon neighbours of intellectual development, debased—crushed—dwarfed—unable to stand erect—as men always are, when ages of oppression have done their work.

The impression I am most anxious to leave on the young men of London is this, Sir,—that Rome's re-

ligion unmans a nation. It produces a slothful, indolent, and improvident character. It either divests the man of the sense of personal responsibility, or plunges him into a hopeless despair. It makes the will of a fellow man to be his law,—and the word of a fellow man his rule of faith,—and the direction of a fellow man the arbiter of his own destinies and that of his wife and children for time and for eternity. Hence the crouching spirit, and the untruthful spirit. For Rome teaches the reverse of the Bible, and bids her bondsmen not so much to fear God as to fear the priest, to fear man. This influence of the Romish system lasts when the faith of Rome has been relinquished. It forms the grand difficulty in the way of Missionary effort. It is not his being a Celt that makes the Irishman in London what he is. There is nothing in Irish air or Irish birth that is unproductive of energy or industry or truth. Wellington was an Irishman; and among those whose names are held in honour and respectful love in our own Church, for bold straightforwardness, as well as manly eloquence and Christian love, are some whose very names declare them Celts. It is not Irish air in infancy, or Celtic parentage, that has made the Irish in London what they are. It is nothing else but the withering curse of that anti-Christian system, which blights where it falls, and through the soul itself crushes and tramples on the man.

We cannot help seeking to penetrate the future. Hope is the parent of all effort. And though truth has compelled me to draw a dark picture of the Irish in London as they are, nothing can be farther from



my wish than to describe it as a hopeless state, or to present any other than a bright prospect of the Irish in London as we trust they shall be.

We must not be too much discouraged by the slow progress in moral uprightness and social refinement among Irish converts. Even in the days of Paul there were some nations over whom national habits and peculiar superstitions had a stronger hold than over others. Of these, as we have seen, the Celts or Galatians were one example, and the Cretians were another. What can be worse than the character Paul gives of the Cretan converts? "The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." And if it is found that time is required for the working of grace in the heart, before men who have been taught by the Church of Rome that lying is a venial sin, and if expedient no sin at all, learn that open-hearted candour which adorns the Christian, or before those who had been debased by the slavery of the soul became active, energetic, industrious members of society, we must not be discouraged,—perhaps we ought not to be surprised.

A slight knowledge of our own hearts may suffice to show us how very hard the struggle is against deep-rooted habits and constitutional sins. We must expect it to be so in the Celt as well as in the Saxon. And when it is remembered in addition to this, how deep the gulf of misery is out of which the Irish in London have to be raised, it were most unwise to measure their advance by that of others, or to expect the noon-day when we should be thankful for the first streaks before the dawn.

Who does not remember the disappointment we felt when on entering the Exhibition last year we looked for the Koh-i-noor diamond, and instead of a mountain of light saw only what looked like a piece of common quartz? It was hard not to distrust its genuineness. Look at it how we might, it was still dull. Even gaslight would not bring out its colours. But now the rough edges have been cut, and the faces polished, and the precious stone sparkles with all its brilliancy, the brightest gem in our Queen's diadem and in the world. And it may be that these Irish, even when won for Christ from the enemy, are but uncut brilliants. There may be the principle within, but it needs the work of the great Polisher to draw out its lustre. The earthy substances, and the dark spots, and the rough outsides, are still there—but one day, when the sharp cut of loving discipline and constant friction with truth have done their work, they shall shine out gloriously: "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."

It has been said of the Celts by Dr. Arnold, that they "could communicate no essential points of human character in which other nations might be deficient; they could neither improve the intellectual state of mankind, nor its social and political relations." Whatever may have been the case with the old Gauls of whom he is writing, as it respects the Irish in London I more than question the assertion. A very little acquaintance with them is sufficient to discover, in spite of all their social degradation, a peculiarity of character which would blend most usefully with that of their Saxon neighbours. The



English labourer, with all his manliness and honesty, is often wanting in intellectual acuteness and in imaginative glow. In both these characteristics the Irish excel. There is an ingenuity of thought which contrasts strangely with the clumsiness of hand, and a perception of what is beautiful which is incongruously associated with the most total want of all comfort.

I do think that a few rays of Irish imagination, a little more play of fancy, more exuberance of joyousness, and more brightness of hope, would greatly add to the happiness of our own poor. They live too much in the present, while the Irishman lives too exclusively in the future. I would bring down the one to the present routine of daily duties, and raise up the other to brighter anticipations. I would put more good sense into the Irishman, and more poetry into the Englishman. And in this way I cannot but hope, that even intellectually, morally, and socially, they may do each other good; and that the English character retaining its own solidity may acquire the gracefulness of the Irish, and while equally useful become more pleasing, demand as much of our approbation, and more engage our love.

But there is another view in which the future comes before us. Whether we open the page of Scripture or the page of history, it is impossible not to see a dark cloud over it. There is no use in concealing our convictions. They may be wrong, then the events will prove them so. They may be right, then it is right to express them. And it is my deliberate conviction that the apostacy of Rome will be permitted in the providence of God to gain a tem-

porary but thorough triumph. Whether by the arms of Crusading hosts, or by the faithlessness of England's own sons, or in what other way this will be accomplished, I do not venture to express an expectation.

There is no denying that in spite of every check the current of opinion among those who influence society is setting Romeward. Nor is it likely that the despotic rulers of Europe, owning no control but that of the Pope, will long see England free and Protestant without attempting her subjugation. I believe they will do so, and unless England speedily repent of her national transgressions, of which at present there is no symptom, I believe they will succeed. And then over the whole face of Europe, all the nations and people and languages will bend their knees and prostrate their souls before him who affects to bear the name and wield the power of Christ.

But while on the upper surface of society the tide is going towards Rome, at the very bottom among the lowest class, among the Irish not only in London but every where, there is a tide from Rome. These men have no influence. It would not affect the general religious aspect of the nation, if instead of being Roman Catholics or Protestants, they were heathen or Mahometans. But though they can do nothing, they may suffer much. They may glorify Christ by patient endurance of persecution for his name sake. We may be training martyrs. It is in this light I look upon the work among the Irish in London. I trust that however dark the days that are coming, God is lighting lamps to shine brighter as the night grows blacker. There is much in the Celtic cha-



racter to justify this hope. Slow in acting, they are patient in enduring. When they once have their minds opened to the truth, they embrace it with a cordiality and love which seems to say that they will not let it go. And I think if we look at the records of the past, we shall find that, for the most part, God has honoured with the crown of martyrdom men poor in this world but rich in faith like the Celtic Waldenses of Piedmont or the Celtic Protestants of London. It may be that God will suffer England once more to fall under the power of the apostacy, and yet enable some of our despised Irishmen to keep alive the light of truth in the recesses of our city, and when the pomp and splendour of this world is given to the beast, to overcome him through the blood of the Lamb, and not to love their lives unto the death.

Permit me, in conclusion, to glance forward yet further. Our best hope points to a future about which there is no doubt. These masses—the Irish in London—are masses of immortal souls. They are awaiting a destiny of immeasurable bliss or immeasurable woe. God is gathering here as everywhere else his Election of Grace. It is becoming apparent, that no depth of religious error and no debasement of circumstances can prevent the accomplishment of God's designs and the manifestation of his power. Forget the present. Look onward a few brief years. All that is now high will have been laid low. Norman, and Saxon, and Frank, and Celt, will be known no more. The inhabitant of a palace, and the inmate of a hovel, will be then on an equality. The diademed emperor and the ragged beggar will be on a level.

All the outward tinsel which distinguishes man from man will have vanished, and the only distinction be that which is real and inward and unchangeable. That will still remain. What if then, among the company of the saved, we should see a band gathered from the Irish in London? No longer clothed in rags—for they shall be arrayed in the spotless garment of the Redeemer's righteousness, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. No more to live in the dark back-room on which the day never shines, but to dwell for ever in palaces of light beneath the broad beams of Christ, the Sun of Heaven. Never again despised and trampled on, —but the peers of angels, and kings and priests unto God. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more," and instead of the dark alleys in which they now live, where nothing meets the eye but blackened walls and smoky chimneys,—they shall gaze with rapture on the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, and drink of its living fountains. And when from the whole of that vast multitude which encircles the throne, there ascends one united song of praise and thanksgiving, and men of every nation and people and tongue are sweeping their golden harps—those who in this London have never had the heart to touch the harp of their own Ireland, shall then be found among the harpers, thanking God for having snatched them out of Babylon, and swelling the chorus—"Glory be to Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb."



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