

## WHITHER?

BY MARY A. MCMULLEN (UNA).

[An Irish paper of a recent date says that this Spring "there is a continuous stream of young people leaving Drogheda to embark for the far West." Years ago it was like rending the heart-strings to say farewell to Ireland. Has the love of land grown weaker, or is the country changed? We may bury under the cypress our hopes of an Irish nation, when the Celt walks quietly out of his home to give possession to the Saxon.]

Whither, oh, whither, so swiftly rushing,  
Far from your ancient and storied land?  
Where can you seek for more fruitful valleys,  
Breezes more bracing, or scenes more grand?  
Where? You are leaving your hearts behind you,  
Here will they linger though far you roam.  
Why do you turn from the land that loves you?  
Why are you hastening away from home?

Wherefore, oh, wherefore, my sons, my daughters,  
Flee you away to a stranger shore?  
Thousand before you went o'er the waters,  
Went—but alas! they returned no more.  
Now is their clay but the soil of strangers,  
Lost are their children to me for aye;  
What do they care for the hills of their fathers  
Watched through their tears as they sailed away.

"Ah!" do you sigh, "we can stay no longer?  
Strangers are lords of our rightful soil;  
Theirs is the wealth of the teeming valleys,  
Our the struggle, the woe, the toil;  
Right has departed, and we must follow."  
Why, oh, my sons! You have strong, true hands—  
Better to fall for your homes than perish  
Toiling unknown and in distant lands.

Whither, for still you are going, going?  
Oh! will you leave me alone—alone—  
Here with tyrant to mock the anguish  
Wrung from my heart for my children gone?  
Lo! you may see on the world's broad pages  
Written my doom as you leave the shore:  
Ireland, one of the oldest, the proudest,  
Grandest of nations exists no more.

Whither, oh, whither? the plains, the mountains,  
The rivers are calling; all are yours—  
Yours, if you strive for them. Win and hold them  
Long as the ocean or earth endures.  
Stay where your hearts are, my sons, my daughters,  
Lust to your nation's, your mother's cry;  
Stay, ere I weep out my soul in sorrow,  
Cover my brow in the dust and die!

## A REMARKABLE CHAPTER.

(Continued.)

In respect to the great calamities which Anna Maria announces as impending over mankind, as well as the splendid triumph which will follow for the Pope and the Church, together with the renovation of the entire world, one may say that such is the general object and the common end of all the prophecies, whether ancient or modern, which bear upon these latter times. Each sees, it is true, has added or dwelt more at large on some special circumstances, but they all agree in two leading features. First, they all point to some terrible convulsion, to a revolution springing from the most deep-rooted impiety, consisting in formal opposition to God and His truth, and resulting in the most formidable persecution to which the Church has ever been subjected; and, secondly, they all promise for this same Church a victory more splendid and complete than she has ever achieved here below. We may add another point upon which there is a remarkable agreement in the catena of modern prophecies, and that is the peculiar connection between the fortunes of France and those of the Church and the Holy See, as also the large part which that country has still to play in the history of the Church and of the world, and will continue to play to the end of time. Pius IX., indeed, is reported to have addressed these encouraging words to the Bishop of Poitiers, when speaking of the calamities which the French were enduring:—"Let them console themselves, and hope in the midst of their terrible trials, for France shall not perish. God has great designs in her regard, and she will be more than over the firm support of the Church." And Mgr. Droux Brézé, Bishop of Moulins, in an allusion which he delivered after his return to his diocese, declared that the Holy Father had said to him, "No, no, France shall not perish; if France were to perish it would be a sign that those evil days which are to precede the end of time had arrived."

The Revolution first attacked France, which we have seen bruised and lacerated by its fangs, and from thence it has extended, and yet has to extend, its ravages to other lands, but everything leads us to expect renovation to spring from the same quarter whence the evil arose. "France," says P. Calixte, "the first to be punished for excesses, will also be the first to arise, by a sudden and, as it were, miraculous restoration under a good and wise monarch. She will then aid the other nations to stifle in their bosoms that revolution which they have received from her." These anticipations may be said to express the hopes and confident expectations of Catholics, as they are also supported by the general voice of modern prophecy reckoning from the first formation of Christendom.

We need scarcely add that in recording any unfulfilled prophecies either of Anna Maria Taigi or of others, however well attested, we are not presuming to pass any confident judgment respecting them. We know that the gift of prophecy, like the gift of miracles, is possessed by the Church of God, but, apart from and previous to any pronouncement

of the Holy See, we have no title to do more than express with all submission an opinion in regard to any particular prophecy as in regard also to any alleged miracle. One of the errors of which we are especially bound to beware, is that of fixing the precise time for the accomplishment of this or that prediction. "Many of the faithful," says P. Curieque, "strike upon this rock of dates;" and he proceeds to quote a very apposite remark of the Curé de Malétable (who is said himself to have received supernatural lights): "We must be very reserved," says the Curé, "in our applications and, above all, in fixing epochs. I have myself often been deceived by judging of things after this manner in which we commonly judge of the distance of objects which we view against the horizon. If, for instance, you look at several summits of mountains in the same direction, you may perhaps be able to calculate with tolerable accuracy the distance which separates you from the nearest, but, as the wide valleys which are on the opposite side are hidden from your sight, you readily believe, and are often mistaken in this belief, that the second peak is very near the first; nay, you sometimes fancy that both rest on the same base. He for whom the Lord vouchsafes to lift up a little the veil which conceals the future, is liable to fall into this error when the epoch of certain future events remains concealed: he judges that these latter facts follow close upon their precursors, and this often is not the case." "If the seer himself may thus be deceived," adds P. Curieque, "what of us short-sighted ones?" Precipitation in fixing the date for the fulfilment of prophecies is the parent of subsequent incredulity. Persons who have suffered this disappointment come to despise all prophecy save that which they are bound by faith to believe, as being contained in the inspired record. But surely this attitude of mind is an unfortunate one, to say the least. One who thus puts aside almost with contempt all modern prophecy suffers a loss, since assuredly, if God has bestowed this gift upon His Church, it was intended for our consolation, encouragement, and support, as well as to maintain fresh in our minds what is so easily lost, the remembrance that we have no abiding-place amongst these gross, material, and transitory things which go to build up our present earthly state, but that we seek "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," looking for the setting up of that spiritual kingdom which shall finally break in pieces and supplant all the empires of the world. "Despise not prophecies," says the Apostle; "but prove all things: hold fast that which is good." In these few words we have both a command and a caution, summing up all that we need for our direction and guidance.

## ANNA MARIA'S GIFT OF HEALING.

The power of healing was communicated to her in a vision not long after her conversion, at the time she inhabited the house in the little Strada Sdruciollo, near the Chigi palace. We possess the account put on record by Cardinal Pedicini, to whom she frequently related all the particulars. She was seriously ill at the time, and during one night great fears were entertained of her life, when, towards the dawn of day, the Lord Jesus appeared to her. His demeanour, as she described it, was that of affectionate confidence. He was arrayed in a violet-colored garment, over which he wore a magnificent blue mantle, the wide folds of which he spread over her bed. "She told me," says the Cardinal, "that His beauty and grace were marvellous to behold. He took her hand, and kept it pressed closely in His own, while He held a long conversation with her. It was then that he told her that He chose her for His spouse, and that He communicated to her the gift of healing the sick by the touch of that hand which He held clasped in His own. He also cured her instantaneously of all her own maladies." So intense had been the joy of that interview that, when Jesus left her, she felt a pang of sorrow so poignant that it extracted from her a loud cry of anguish, which was heard all over the house and speedily brought all the terrified inmates to her bedside. She reassured them as best she might, for she did not tell them of the vision, saying only that she was perfectly cured; and, in fact, shortly afterwards she arose as usual, and went to Communion at the Madonna della Pietà, no vestige remaining of her late illness.

The witnesses who made their depositions in the canonical process testified to a very great number of miraculous cures which had been wrought by her and duly attested. Cardinal Pedicini alone had taken notes of hundreds of which he had cognisance at the time they were performed; and thousands more, he added, have never been recorded. Indeed amongst the different supernatural gifts which she received there seems to have been none which she more liberally used for the benefit of her neighbor. We have seen her exert it even in favor of animals. The greater number of her cures were operated during the first years which followed her conversion, when, as we have related, her services were continually requested on behalf of the sick; and it may be added that, in devoting so much of her time to this external work of charity, she acted in strict obedience to her confessor. Her miraculous cures, however, were not all performed by the immediate touch of her hand; commonly, when called to the bedside of sick persons, she used to invoke the Blessed Trinity, then make the sign of the Cross devoutly over them, and give them her image of the Blessed Virgin to kiss. Several cases are recorded of her having healed persons afflicted with that most dreadful of all maladies, cancer, which may be regarded as well nigh incurable by human remedies; the means she commonly employed being the application of oil from the lamp which she kept ever burning before her Madonna. One of these cases was that of a gentlewoman belonging to the house of Albani, who could not resolve to submit to medical examination. Her confessor went to beg Anna Maria's assistance, who gave him some of the said oil, at the same time bidding him to exhort the sufferer to have faith. Its application removed the tumour that very night without the least pain. In the first fervor of her gratitude the gentlewoman expressed a strong desire to be made personally acquainted with her benefactress, and engaged to furnish as long as she lived the oil for her Madonna's lamp. As time went on, however, she failed to keep her promise, and God punished her avarice by sending her various troubles and maladies, which entailed great expenses upon her. Mother Doria, of the Convent of St. Dominica e Sisto, from similar motives of modesty had concealed at its commencement the same terrible disease with which she was afflicted. Growing worse, she sought