

LIBELLING A NATION.

(From the *Nation*.)

BRITISH writers are honouring Irish themes fast now with a good deal of particular attention. In spite of the great topics and pet whims of the day—the Eastern embroglio, the Ritualist rebellion, the Indian famine, the price of meat, the pranks of Spiritualism, and so on—these active penmen who cater for the minds of the British public, find leisure to say their say about this island and its people, and, no doubt, find plenty of readers to believe in their accounts of us and to admire the style of the narration. Last Summer Mr. Punch had one of his humourists here for the holidays, and this gentleman, considerably combining pleasure and business, “did” the emerald isle by rail from the capital to Killarney, and sketched the impressions produced by his tour for the London *Charivari*, in a series of scraggy papers, intended, of course, to be funny, but, in truth, so excessively dismal, that, as a certain critic declared, to read one, or to hear it read, was enough to make a man “take to drink.” And the example of Mr. Punch sheds a genial ray which the press of the Modern Babylon by no means fails to borrow. From the *Times* to the halfpenny *Echo*, and from the *Graphic* to the *Penny Illustrated Paper*, all the organs, whether serious or comic, or only dull, keep us Irish pretty continually in their eyes and before their minds, and the consequence is, a constant fire of leading articles, which, if not actually insulting, are insultingly condescending; an inexhaustible series of sketches of a sort of “Irish life” which Irishmen, strange to say, can never discover for themselves, and a perpetual flow of cartoons, of the Baron Munchausen school of fancy, explained and adorned by letterpress, expressed in such a dialect as never yet was heard on land or sea. Nay, even the new sixpenny weeklies, a class of high-and-mighty organs, manufactured by the deftest hands for the cream of British readers, deign to trouble themselves a little now and then with our affairs, and whilst the *Whitehall Review* makes society in Dublin the target of its high-toned scorn, *Mayfair* discourses of Mr. Butt, the ins and outs of the Home Rule party, and the salient personal traits of Waterford’s new member and the Major.

Plays, too, and books are written to represent us to the Saxon. An ex-editor of *Punch* makes a drama out of the story of a Lord Clancarty. A couple of obscure tourists penetrate to the heart of Connaught, and, after a few weeks spent in studying the country folk—from a side-car or the window of a hotel—produce a pair of novels, intended to point the moral that Irishmen are a shocking crew—a horde of reckless drunkards, wildly boisterous in their cups, but cool and cunning enough when an act of sneaking treachery, or of blood for revenge or greed, recommends itself to their degraded natures. The sort of literary assassin who writes such books as these would have it believed by his readers that the very few decent persons to be met with in Ireland are Englishmen. One of the two novels just referred to has been cast in the shape of a play, and is occupying at present the boards of a London theatre. Its ignorance is intense, and its ferocity is savage. It strives to substitute for the Irish peasant of life and of Bouicault’s drama—the bright, generous, witty, and affectionate Celt—a besotted and ruthless creature whose only pleasure is drink and whose only mode of enterprise is murder. Had any other people been so dealt with in book or play, the spirit of condemnation would rise in strength; but since it is only the Irish who are attacked by a nameless liar, the few voices of honest anger are drowned in the chorus of praise. The malignant novel is sought after at all the libraries. The absurd and fantastic play draws crowded houses. Another stab in the dark at Ireland is applauded by the worthy Briton, and another cause for mutual alienation and distrust is added to the many between the peoples.

(Concluded in our next.)

CARDINAL MANNING ON THE PAPAL ALLOCUTION.

At the Pro-Cathedral, Kensington, Cardinal Manning, in the course of a sermon founded on the text, “I am the resurrection and the life,” said—That which is true of individuals is true also of Christ’s Church on earth. There is in it a life against which the gates of hell cannot prevail; there is in it a divine liberty which can never be bound, and a power which, though it may be temporarily embarrassed and held in check, must in the end prevail. What if the Eastern and the Romish questions rise together? And what if men have to deal with both at the same time? True, indeed, it is, men thought the Vicar of Jesus Christ was buried in the Vatican, deposed from his sovereignty, bound as in the tomb. They little counted on the power of resurrection, and they have little read the history of the last 1,800 years, or they would have known what would happen. It is the law of the Church of Christ, the law, above all, of the Head of the Church, to be bound and to be buried from age to age; but it is the law also of the Church and of its head always to rise again. The Romish question (continued the Cardinal) was this:—Christ gave to His Church and to the head of the Church, in all things pertaining to His Kingdom, an absolute independence of all civil earthly or temporal power. From the year 800 down to 1870 the Pontiffs had held a true and proper Royalty and Sovereignty in Rome; as true, as proper, older and more sacred than that sovereignty to which we all bowed with every fibre of our hearts and every motion of our will—the sovereignty of our most gracious Queen. The Cardinal then described how Rome had been taken possession of, though the use of the Vatican had been allowed to the Pope, and he was invited to go freely through the streets. Now, suppose some conquering Power by violence established in the ancient Palace of St. James; that it permitted the use of Windsor Castle and Buckingham Close to our gracious Sovereign; that it told all the world that the Queen

of England was free, and that she might really come out as before and pass to and fro between the streets of London and the parks and suburbs—that is to say, consecrating, by the presence of Her Majesty, the sovereignty of those who had taken possession of her own. Would Englishmen like that? No, and Pius IX. knew very well the duties of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. He said, “I will not look on the deed, my eyes shall never sanction it, I will live and die within the threshold of my Palace.” Yet there are Englishmen who will write every day to say that these are only the complainings of an old man who chooses to say that he is a prisoner. There are two kinds of imprisonment—there is the imprisonment by iron fetters and the imprisonment of deep moral degradation. Pius IX. is, indeed, not bound by fetters of iron. He is bound round about by a sense of his own dignity and the supernatural office he bears; and he knows it would be deep moral degradation to put his feet over the threshold of the Palace where he lives so long as another Sovereign claims to rule over the city which the providence of God made his own. After describing the oppressive laws under which the clergy now suffered in Rome, Cardinal Manning concluded as follows:—I have no desire to be a prophet of evil. For 12 months we have had all the threatenings of a war in the East. God only knows at this moment whether the danger is to burst into flame or to be extinguished. Each nation in Europe is arming to such a point that it must make war or be well-nigh bankrupt. Pius IX., as the Vicar of our Lord, will never strike the staff of war, but whatever war is kindled will involve the whole of Europe, and whatever war involves the whole of Europe will involve Italy and Rome, and then will come the solution, but not brought about by us. Scorners may scorn, but God setteth up the water-clouds. The world is at this moment under the sway of revolution, which began in 1789, bursting out again in 1793, 1830, and 1848, then extending to Italy and continuing for a long period, ending, as men thought, in 1870, when they believed the Romish question was buried, though, as our Holy Father told them, it was only begun. The world is at this moment under the influence of revolution. On the one side are the powers of anarchy, all united in the wish that Rome should continue as it is. On the other side, are the Christian and the Catholic world and the powers of order who believe in God. Those two arrays are marshalling and approaching nearer to each other. Collision is some day inevitable. All I pray from my heart as a Christian and an Englishman is, that when that day comes England may not suffer.

GENERAL NEWS.

Ireland’s national anniversary was celebrated in a befitting manner in the great capital of France. A dinner at Vefour’s, gotten up by gentlemen of Irish descent, took place. Judge Connolly, of the Court of Cassation, presided. There were present quite a number of notabilities, including Colonel O’Brien, Colonel M’Dermott, the composer O’Kelly, Count Nugent, Viscount O’Neill de Tyrone and his sons, Dr. O’Loughlin, Mr. John O’Leary. Professor J. P. Leonard and his son—in all twenty-seven. O’Connell looked down on the company from an elegant *encadrement* of gold and greenery. The bust of Marshal MacMahon held as of right the place of honor, for of all the *anciens Irlandais* certainly he is the man who makes the greatest figure in the Europe of the day. Then there were portraits of other distinguished Irishmen—orators and men of the sword and pen. But the most curious feature of the whole festival consisted of the personality of *anciens Irlandais*, French in speech, in manners, in habits of thought—in the very cut of their beards—they showed their Irish origin in their faces as clearly as Marshal MacMahon does, or Marshal O’Donnell did. A very jolly *symposium* was that which kept Vefour’s cooks busy on the 17th of March, 1877.

The *Germania*, on the occasion of the eighty-first birthday of the Emperor William, says:—“In a room where the bailiff is about to tear down the gilded curtain rods, no one thinks of drawing the cork of a bottle of champagne. The echo would be a melancholy sound, and no one could quaff his cup with joy. Our country is just in this state, for its inhabitants are driven by misery in crowds to the pawnbroker’s, so that they may have the first necessities of life. The *Kulturkampf* has changed into a gloomy desert quarters that were the most flourishing, intelligent and fair of our country, without which Brandenburg-Prussia would long since have been suffocated in the marshes of the old March and drowned in the marshes of the new. Were we then to make festival for this anniversary, we should be mere impostors and hypocrites. This we do not want to be. So we wait for better times.”

M. Legros, the etcher, has made a sensation in England. The *Athenæum* says of his new portrait of Cardinal Manning, that, “had Titian or, above all, Tintoretto, painted such a head, and given so much vigor of character to his transcript, we should have hailed the type as historical, one which in that time and in life was portentous.”

The *Daily News* has been informed from Rome, that the Bible Society at Philadelphia have been forced by financial reasons to recall from Rome their missionary, Mr. Van Meter, who leaves the schools he has established in charge of a Wesleyan and a Baptist missionary, both from America. It is clear then that the Americans have at last become aware that they are only throwing money to the winds in their efforts to rob the poor Romans of their faith.

In view of the recent movement for the preservation of the Irish language, the Rev. P. O’Leary, Rathcormack, Cork, writes as follows: “I have access to MSS. which contain a large stock of Munster lyrical poetry, ranging as to dates over the last two centuries. Some of these lyrics I have seen in print, with English versions annexed. As a general rule these versions, especially the poetical ones, are frightful caricatures of the originals. I am convinced that a great part of the prejudice which outsiders feel against our language has been produced by the sight of these caricatures.”