

THE REAL AND THE IDEAL.

The author of the following is an Irish poetess, blind from early childhood.

'Tis long ago! we have toiled and traded,
Have lost and fretted, have gained and grieved,
Since last the light of that fond faith faded:
But friends—in its day—what we believed!
The poet's dream and the peasant's stories—
Oh, never will time that trust renew!
Yet they were old on the earth before us,
And lovely tales—had they been true!

Some spake of homes in the green wood hidden,
Where age was fearless and youth was free—
Where none at life's board seemed guests unbidden,
But men had years like the forest tree:
Goodly and fair, and full of summer,
As lives went by when the world was new,
Ere ever the angel steps passed from her—
Oh, dreamers and bards, if that were true?

Some told of a proud and stainless standard—
Of hearts that only in death grew cold,
Whose march was ever in freedom's vanguard,
And not to be stayed by steel or gold.
The world to their very graves was debtor—
The tears of her love fell there like dew:
But there had been neither slave nor fetter
This day in her realms had that been true!

Our hopes grew strong as a giant-slayer;
They told that life was an honest game,
Where fortune favored the fairest player,
And only the false found loss and blame—
That men were honored for gifts and graces,
And not for the prizes folly drew;
But there would be many a change of places
In the hovel and hall, if that were true!

Some said to our silent souls, what fear ye?
And talked of a love not based on clay—
Of faith that would neither crave nor weary,
With all the dust of the pilgrim's day:
They said that Fortune and Time were changers;
But not by their tides such friendship grew;
Oh, we had never been trustless strangers
Among our people, if that were true!

And yet, since the fairy time hath perished
With all its freshness from hills and hearts,
The last of its love, so vainly cherished,
Is not for these days of schools and marts.
Up, Up! for the heaven still circles o'er us;
There's wealth to win, and there's work to do,
There's sky above and a grave before us—
And, brothers, beyond them all is true!

IRISH HISTORY IN IRISH SCHOOLS.

'New York Tribune.'

WEAK are the ways of "statesmanship," and especially of English "statesmanship," so far as all Irish affairs are concerned. We are glad to seize the opportunity to direct attention more to places of English effort to deal with the problem of Irish education.

The Irish youth, it seems, are not to know Irish history! What would be thought of an American school system which took care that the pupils should know nothing of American history? Of course, the cases from one point of view are not alike; but the question is, whether an Irishman has not a right to be acquainted with the history of his country? Irish history cannot be legally taught in Irish schools!

Now, the shame of this is that it is keeping up, in a small way, the numerous and outrageous provisions of the old Irish Code, with all its harassing details, and with all its sanguinary penalties. Why shouldn't Irish history be taught in Irish schools? Why should English statesmen be so shamefaced about the sins of their ancestors? To us this seems the greater folly because we believe that an Irishman well read in Irish history would be infinitely more likely to be a good citizen. An Irish school which does not teach Irish history is an anomaly and an anachronism.

SHADY DOINGS OF THE WELLINGTON EDUCATION BOARD.

AN exchange from the province of Wellington calls attention to a provision in the Ordinance, exempting children attending private schools from paying the capitation rate, on a certificate being produced from the teacher that the child had attended three months at school previous to July. It then asks, "What is the meaning, then, of the Board's attempting to collect the rate in defiance of this provision, or without distinguishing between those legally liable to pay, and those who are not. Of course (our contemporary remarks) it cannot be on the assumption that parents are ignorant of the provision. But nevertheless it is perfectly true that some have paid the fee in ignorance, and are entitled to have it returned."

Commenting on this conduct, "Argus," in the Wanganui 'Herald,' unveils his mind in these terms:—"The miser said to his son, 'Get money honestly if you can, but get money.' The Education Board follow the same principle, and draw funds into their exchequer by means which, to say the least, are questionable. To serve a notice calling upon parents to pay 5s per head for all children not exceeding four, between the ages of five and fifteen, under a penalty of 40s, without inserting a clause to the effect that outside education exempts from the tax, deserves the strongest reprobation. Under the Ægis of non-responsibility, the Board attempt that which would stamp shady on any ordinary business transaction."

HISTORY OF OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

By the Abbé J. E. DARRAS.

(Translated from the French for the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.)

14.—PRESENTATION AND EDUCATION OF MARY IN THE TEMPLE—THE ESPOUSALS.

It was under the shadow of the sanctuary, amidst a host of young virgins, confided to the care of the Sacerdotal tribe, that the childhood of Mary was passed. (1.) This historic fact—formally recorded by tradition—was already so well established in the VI. century, that Mahomet himself thought it necessary to enregister it: "Speak of Miriam," says the Koran, "relate in what manner she quitted her parents, how she went towards the east of the Temple, and covered her face with a veil, which hid her from their sight." (2.) Astonishing conformity of evidence! The aureola with which Catholic faith surrounds the celestial form of Mary, pierces the clouds of Mohametanism, and its ray illuminates all succeeding ages. The Presentation of the Immaculate Virgin in the Temple of Jerusalem is an event which forms an epoch in the annals of the human race. The doctors and fathers, unanimously state that Mary was thenceforth brought up under the care of the priest Zachary, her kinsman. The sanctuary of the most High had, from the time of Moses and in the sequel of Jewish history, been surrounded by pious women and young virgins. The Temple of Zorobabel, after its restoration by Herod, had a quarter specially appropriated to the service of women, isolated by cloisters, having two doors, one opening on the city, the other on the Temple. (3.) In this sanctuary of prayer, recollection, and pious labors, with none but angel-witnesses, glided away the first years of the humble Mary. At the period of the age of majority, which, with Jewish women, counted at fourteen years, Zachary consigned the young Virgin into the hands of her parents at Nazareth, that she might there be espoused according to the Hebraical law. A temporal posterity was the glory of women in Israel. All the blessings of the ancient covenant were linked with it. The future of the world depended on the perpetuity of the race of Abraham, which was to give to the earth the blessed seed through which the nations were to be saved. Mary, sprung from the Royal line of David, must, according to the terms of the Mosaic law, espouse her next of kin. Now, the Booz of the new Ruth, was a holy old man, named Joseph, son of Jacob, and brother of Cleophas. He was descended from David by the line of Solomon; even as Mary was descended from him by the ancient line of Nathan. Mary was espoused therefore to Joseph, according to the accustomed rites, in the Hebrew month of Sebeth (23 January, 737.) It was in the interval that elapsed between the ceremony of espousals and that of the definitive marriage that took place the glorious message of Gabriel to the Immaculate Virgin (25 March.) Nazareth, theatre of this divine annunciation, means, in the Hebrew language, "Flower." Thus, says St Bernard, "Jesus Christ, the flower of Jesse, would be born of a flower, in a flower, in the season of flowers."

§ IV.—THE VISITATION. BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. MAGNIFICAT.

15. After the celestial communication, "Mary, rising up, went into the hill country, with haste, into a city of Juda; and she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost; and she cried out with a loud voice, and said, 'Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord.' And Mary said: 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because He hath done great things to me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is from generation unto generation, to them that fear Him. He hath showed might in His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy. As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.' And Mary abode with her about three months, and she returned to her own house." (4).

(1) Gregor. Nyss. Orat. de Nativ. (2) Koran, cap. xiv, vers. 16. (3) Josephus. lib. v, cap. xiv, xvi. (4) Luc, 39—56.

THE WRECK OF THE ATLANTIC.—The Rosary in the Rigging. The 'Pilot's' correspondent from Halifax, writes:—"Incidents without number have been related of the wreck and the manner of rescue; but the following, which was told me by a passenger, has not, so far as I am aware, been made public. During the weary hours on the rigging that morning, when some thirty or forty men tenaciously clung to the shrouds, many partly naked, with the lower limbs frozen and stiff with the cold, the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin was recited by an Irish emigrant passenger, and all who surrounded him—Catholics and Protestants alike, responded fervently and devoutly. Some of the Protestants—the gentleman in particular, who was a cabin passenger, belonging, I believe, to New Ross, Ireland, said it was the first time he had ever heard the Rosary recited, and standing there in the presence of death, with many stouter than he dying around him, he thought the prayer of that humble emigrant—who supplicated the Virgin Mother for protection, was the most beautiful he had ever listened to. Like many others around him he cheerfully responded 'Lord have mercy on us' and 'Pray for us,' with as much devotion as the most devout Catholic. The incident made a deep impression upon him, which may be beneficial to him hereafter. The supplication to the Holy Mother of God by these almost exhausted men, was not unheeded. The heroic fishermen of Prospect came to their rescue, and landed them safely upon the island."