

THE UNVARNISHED TRUTH.

(Rev. Father Clarke, in the Month.)

A TRAVELLER in Donegal not long since asked a parish priest of a large village there respecting the general morality of the country, and was assured by him that the serious sins committed in his parish from one year's end to the other could be counted on the fingers of the hand. Another traveller asked a priest in one of the largest of the American cities a similar question, and the answer he received was that all the city through there were few boys of thirteen or fourteen who had not already lost their innocence. Out of our Catholic young men, said an American Bishop I believe nine out of ten are practical infidels, or at least neglect the practice of their religion altogether. This loss of Faith is in almost every case the result of previous moral corruption. Pittsburgh, where there is a large Catholic population, is said to contain more bad houses, in proportion to its population, than any other city in the world, and the age at which boys begin to frequent them is scarcely credible. Cincinnati is not much better, and in Chicago I heard the saddest accounts of the unblushing effrontery of open vice.

But why need they go, I shall be asked, to the large cities? Send them to Canada, establish them on the Western farms where labour is in great demand, let them join the Catholic colony of Bishop Ireland, send them where they will remain under the care of the Catholic priest, and thus you will avoid those frightful evils, and yet secure to them the benefits of emigration. Admirable in theory, but in practice of little avail! There may be a few hundreds here and there flourishing under the benevolent supervision of priest or bishop. But as a general rule, whatever the cause may be, Irishmen will not remain in Canada. Out of those who emigrated there in the course of 1882, nearly half (I think 50,000 out of 114,000, but I am quoting the figures from memory) had crossed the American frontier before twelve months had passed. From some other cause, which I do not pretend to explain, the proportion of Irish emigrants who settle in the cities of the States is lamentably great as compared with those who choose a country life. In this they afford a striking contrast with English immigrants who are generally farmers. We often read brilliant accounts of the settlers who are emigrated by Mr. Tuke's benevolent exertions, or even by the Government Emigration Fund. I have no doubt that the elaborate care exercised by those who have devoted weeks and months to their charitable task ensures for those whom they send out a comfortable position. I would go farther, and say that those whom the Government expect fare, in general, unmeasurably better in America than they would have done at home, as regards their material and worldly success. Far removed from the pinch of poverty, and from the recurring famine from time to time, with good wages, plentiful food and work, to be had by all who are willing to work, they fare well enough as regards this world. No just complaint can be made by those who are induced to cross the Atlantic, that they have been allured from their homes by false or exaggerated representations. The accounts sent home of their prosperity are true enough, and if they are selected instances yet I do not think they are unfairly selected. But if we followed up the history of any cargo of emigrants sent forth from Mayo or Connemara, we should find after a few years, that while some few remained in Canada, or in some Catholic settlement in the States, keeping up to their religious duties and prosperous alike in body and soul, the great mass had either drifted into the big cities, or else were living in the country out of the reach of Catholic church or Catholic school. Of these two later alternatives I scarcely know which is the more prejudicial to faith and morals. In the cities the children grow up too often corrupt in morals, and through the corruption of their morality lose their faith; in country districts they lose their faith simply from lack of Catholic teaching, and when in later life they go, as most of them do, to find employment in the cities, they either are Catholics only nominally, or else are so ill-instructed in their religious duties as to fall in most cases an easy prey to indifference, or vice, or even to open and professed infidelity.

It is this which seems to me the worst of all the miseries of wholesale eviction. It is not so much the children starving by the roadside and the delicate women turned out without food or shelter; it is not so much the breaking up of the ancestral home and the rending of the very strings of those who, rightly or wrongly, regard their long tenure as constituting a sacred claim which it is a sort of sacrilege ruthlessly to set at naught; these are not the ultimate woes of eviction. It is not the piercing wail of old men and women left behind which makes God's minister unable to restrain his tears as he accompanies the sorrowful party back from the railway station where they have parted with son or daughter, bound for the distant shores of "New Ireland." This is but a transient evil. It is not the houses standing empty and the cottages falling into ruin, for, after all, if their inmates are benefited by their change of home, if boys and girls, who would have been miserable in their hopeless poverty at home, are to be happy and prosperous across the Atlantic, priests and bishops would rejoice at their departure. It is the knowledge that souls which would have been saved at home will be lost abroad; that boys and girls, who would at home have been reared in piety and purity, will too often learn all that is foul and impious in the tenement houses and courts and alleys of American cities; it is the sad prospect of young men who would at home have been stalwart champions and obedient sons of Holy Church, living riotously, setting the law of God at naught, drifting into infidelity, listening with laughter and applause to blasphemous, infidel lecturers like Ingersoll; it is the thought of poor girls, who at home would have been crowned with the beautiful crown of virgin modesty, now exposed to the corruptions of a large city, perhaps walking the streets in open sin; it is the number of baptized Catholics who live without God and die without hope. This it is which is the bitter reflection of the zealous pastor who sees the Irish peasants quit their homes in Mayo or Donegal for a home across the sea.

It is true that when whole families emigrate together some of these evils are diminished: that boy and girl emigrating on their

own account are exposed to certain risks which are avoided when father and mother accompany their children, and the inmates of the old home in Ireland are transferred one and all to their new home in the States. But while some dangers are less, others are far greater. Those who have been carefully trained in the Catholic Faith in their early days go out with an ægis which it is their own fault if they discard: whereas the children who emigrate with their parents in their early childhood incur a danger worse than almost all the dangers I have already mentioned: they run a risk more perilous to them than the temptations to immorality, neglect of religion, infidelity, indifference, which beset one who emigrates in early manhood or womanhood. This danger is one which is greater than any of those I have already mentioned as threatening the Faith in America.

NO INQUIRY.

(Dublin Freeman, August 30.)

WE publish this week the Lord Lieutenant's reply to the letter of his Grace the Archbishop of Tuam, with respect to the confessions of Thomas Casey, the informer in the Maamtrasna murder cases. His Excellency has arrived at the conclusion that the verdict and the sentence in the case of Myles Joyce were right and just. What effect this decision will have throughout the country it is needless for us to express. The disappointment, the disgust, will be as deep as was the indignation occasioned by the terrible story of the informers. His Excellency states that he has made the fullest inquiry which the circumstances of the case admit of. It is the first official announcement we have of an inquiry at all. We have no desire to cast any doubt upon the earnestness and sincerity with which Earl Spencer devoted himself to satisfying the public mind; but who believes that a full, exhaustive, and searching inquiry was held? Were both sides heard, and if so, who represented the relatives of Myles Joyce? His Excellency, we are sure, will not regard it as throwing any suspicion upon the *bona fides* of what is termed the fullest inquiry, if we assert that five-sixths of the people of the country will fail to see the genuineness of an investigation held in Dublin Castle *in camera*, although the object was to ascertain the truth of a confession made by an informer in respect of what has been termed a judicial murder. It will be viewed in this light. Casey's revelations accused the Government, through its officials, of foul and barbarous practices in the trial of prisoners, and with regard to Myles Joyce in particular, of procuring, under revolting circumstances, his execution for a murder of which he was alleged to be innocent. In such a plight the Executive should feel the overwhelming urgency of clearing itself. Joyce's life was sacrificed. It could not be recalled. How best to remove the charge from the Executive than to hold an "inquiry" in a chamber of the Castle, where the circumstances of the trial could be probed and the strongest case for the Crown established? This will be the popular reading of his Excellency's most disappointing reply. It will be further held, that when Myles Joyce stood in the dock, and when his conviction was the object of the Counsel for the Crown, Thomas Casey's muttered, half-audible deposition was a precious and sacred thing. His oath now, when it is turned against the Crown, is discarded. Casey's oath is as reliable at present as it was when he swore against Joyce. He was an infamous witness on the table, and many, no doubt, still consider him to be infamous. But his depositions were in the former instance eagerly accepted by the Crown, acted upon, and submitted to a jury. Why should not his equally reliable testimony to-day be freely and publicly investigated? It is mere trifling with the serious issues involved in this gravest of charges to state, as in the reply of his Excellency, that "there was ample evidence at the trial of Myles Joyce, given by three unimpeached and independent witnesses, to convict all the prisoners without the evidence of Thomas Casey and Anthony Philbin." If this be so, why were Thomas Casey and Anthony Philbin, murderers upon their own showing, examined? The Crown knew of the three unimpeached and independent witnesses, and they knew too the value of an informer's oath. According to his Excellency's letter, Casey and Philbin were not required at all, yet their evidence was deemed of sufficient importance to warrant the Crown in condoning their self-confessed guilt in consideration of the testimony they could bear against Joyce and the others. These are the reflections suggested by the Lord Lieutenant's letter, and it will be for the reason here indicated that the public will refuse to believe that the inquiry alluded to was either real or searching or can command any confidence.

The means to which the Castle Press resorts to attain its political ends are usually such as most honest men would shrink from; but the attempt of the *Mail* a few days ago to frighten Mr. Carl Rosa into striking that terrible song called "The Wearing of the Green" out of the programme of his concert is calculated to cover the whole *Mail* party with ridicule. The Royal Black Hobahs must be in a very bad way when a national song, even though it refers to the past, can give them "a fit of the shivers."—*Nation*.

The *World* is responsible for the following:—"Lord Rowton has been twice to see Her Majesty during the last three weeks, and there is no doubt, I believe, that he has been consulted by the Queen on the present condition of public affairs. The noble lord is regarded by Her Majesty as the depository of the political ideas of Lord Beaconsfield, and she attaches, therefore, considerable importance to his opinions. Lord Rowton has been telling his noble friends that the Queen will not sanction a creation of Peers to swamp the majority in the Upper House. The Queen is unwilling that the Royal prerogative should be used for the purpose of solving the crisis; but if it is to be invoked, she will prefer to use the prerogative of dissolution rather than the prerogative of creating Peers. There will, therefore, be a dissolution before a creation of Peers; and, of course, Lord Salisbury has expressed his readiness to abide the issue of an appeal to the people.