

Poet's Corner.

TO MY IRISH GOLDFINCH.

Two exiles are we, and alone,
This morn of New Year's day;
Dejection's tones are in your song,
There's sadness in my lay;
And when you pause the interlude
That fills the space between
Seems like the cadence, low and sad,
Of some old Irish *caoine*!

Around our room there seems a gloom,
The gloom of our regret,
That we are exiled from a land
We can't and won't forget!
Against your cell you beat your wings,
Vain efforts of the will!
But ah, my bird, my prisoned heart
This day beats stronger still—

Beats stronger still to fly away
O'er ocean's flashing foam,
And visit scenes and kindly friends
Of boyhood's cherished home.
And in the New Year's merry sports
To take a joyous part—
'Tis this, and this alone, could ease
The longings of my heart.

But let us fling the shutters back
And hail the glad New Year;
Who knows but it may hold for us
Bright fortune and good cheer?
And ah, my bird, the morning beam
Should doubly glad our eyes,
For see!—it streameth from the east,
And that's where Ireland lies!

Cheer up, my bird, be brave of heart,
Compatriots are we;
And though we're caged in exile here,
Our souls at least are free;
For you, my bird, must have a soul,
I feel it in your song,
If heaven's the home of melody,
You must to heaven belong!

In sympathy through sorrowing for
That land beyond the wave,
Let us, like Irish exiles all
The wide world o'er be brave!
And on a wing more swift than thine
We can this New Year's Day
Revisit all the well-loved scenes
In Ireland far away!

Come, twitter round the hazel hedge
That sheltered thy young nest,
While I beside you sit and talk,
A wearied exile's rest.
We're back on Ireland's soil, my bird,
Her breezes round us play,
Away with gloom and feelings sad
Let's whistle "Patrick's Day"!

PATRICK SANSFIELD CASSIDY.

CATHOLIC GROWTH IN KENTUCKY.

(From the *Boston Pilot*.)

DEEPLY interesting to Catholics everywhere will be the just-published "Centenary of Catholicity in Kentucky," by the Hon. Ben. J. Webb, of the Louisville *Catholic Advocate*. It is more than two centuries—1673—since Father James Manquette, the famous Jesuit missionary and explorer, visited Kentucky; and he was probably the first white man to tread its soil. Daniel Boone, the founder of its first permanent settlement in 1776, though not himself a Catholic, was a descendant of one of the early Catholic colonists of Maryland. Contemporary Catholic pioneers were William Coomes and Dr. Geo. Hart after an Irishman.

Catholic emigration—largely Irish—to Kentucky set in in earnest about ten years later. The first Catholic colony, made up of Maryland Catholics, was begun on Pottinger's Creek, in 1785; and was followed within the decade by others of similar character at Hardin's Creek, Scott County, Bardstown, Cartwright Creek, Rolling Fork, Breckinridge County, and Cox's Creek, or Fairfield.

The first priest missioned to Kentucky was the Rev. M. Whelan, in 1787. Three years later, came Rev. William de Rohan, who built Holy Cross Church, the first erected in the State. There were giants in those days on that far Western Mission, and the story of their labors, privations and successes is a fitting sequence to the Acts of the Apostles. In 1795 came Father Stephen T. Badin, the first priest ever ordained in the United States, and who, during the next quarter of a century, laid broad and deep the foundations of the Church in Kentucky. The first American-born priest to officiate here was the Rev. John Thayer. He was a Bostonian, a convert to the Faith, and had

been a Baptist minister. The year 1805 witnessed the advent of Father Charles Nerinckx, whose legacy to the young Catholic community was the Loretto Society which he instituted for the schools; Rev. Urban Guillet and his brethren of the Trappist Order, who established a monastery on Pottinger's Creek; and the Dominican Fathers, under the direction of Rev. Edward Fenwick, who founded the since well-known Priory and ecclesiastical training school of St. Rose.

Other priests, now eminent in the annals of the Church in America, all, or part, of whose lives were spent on the Kentucky mission, are: Rt. Rev. B. J. Flaget, first Bishop of Bardstown; Father, afterwards Bishop, David, founder of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth; Rev. Ignatius A. Reynolds and Rev. John McGill, who later filled respectively the Episcopal Sees of Charleston and Richmond; Rev. Robert Abell; and pre-eminent among all, Rt. Rev. M. J. Spalding, hardworking parish priest, Bishop of Louisville, and finally Archbishop of Baltimore and Primate of the Church in the United States.

It was during Bishop Spalding's administration of the Diocese of Louisville that the "Know nothing" atrocities took place. The foreign-born Catholic population of the country were mainly adherents of the Democratic party. The "Know nothings" aroused popular prejudice against Catholics by declaring that the Church was hostile to free government, and that Catholics, in allying themselves with the Democrats, chose the party most in accord with their own hostility to republican institutions. No need to dwell on the bloody consequences of this horrible slander in Louisville. Bishop Spalding's influence with Mayor Barbee saved the churches, but 100 poor Irish and Germans were murdered, and twenty dwellings burned to the ground.

The following comparative statistics are sufficient eulogy of the zeal of pastors and co-operation of people in the building up of the Church in Kentucky: In 1795, one priest, 1,500 people; in 1884, two bishops, 193 priests, 353 churches and stations, a Catholic population of 200,000, or one-eighth that of the whole State; fifty-seven colleges and academies, and 100 free schools, which instruct 16,344 pupils; and nine asylums and four hospitals for the orphaned and infirm members of the flock.

AN ULSTER PROTESTANT VIEW OF THE NATIONAL QUESTION.

(From the *Coleraine Chronicle*.)

THE National League has now the making of the social condition of Ireland in its hands. By inculcating regard for human life and private property, by fixing the minds of the people on practical and constitutional reforms, by elevating popular aspirations above the wild justice of revenge, and concentrating them on principles and objects which may alike command the sanction of religion and the policy of the State, the League may do great and beneficent national service. It is idle to ignore the hold which it has over the vast majority of our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen. That hold may be made either a curse or a blessing. We would fain hope that it will be turned to the latter account. We certainly do not think the Nationalists are beyond the persuasives of calm reason. Their tactics are not unfrequently marked by thoughtlessness and impetuosity, by lack of calculation of means and ends; but we have seldom found them indifferent to moderate outside opinion, whether expressed by Liberals or Conservatives. Any person who has watched the Nationalist movement must have observed its fascinating influence over the Roman Catholic masses. Neither Liberalism nor Conservatism possesses such powers of fascination. Its leaders are men who seem capable of swaying multitudes at pleasure. These multitudes will soon have the franchise. For good or ill, Nationalism is on the eve of acquiring omnipotence in Ireland. Some nervous people may be inclined to exclaim—What, then, will become of us? We hope no personal harm will befall anybody.

The Union between Ireland and England will be preserved intact. The British Government will be quite able to maintain order and administer law. But the practical aspect of the situation is this—Ulster is again under a wave of agricultural depression. Not a single article of produce is bringing at the moment a high price, whereas there are many leading articles selling at very low prices. Profit on grazing is almost *nil*. Oats are exceptionally low in price; neither in flax, pork, nor potatoes is there any counter-balance of gain. Farmers will find it as difficult to make up the November rents as in 1878 or 1879. There is no blame attached to the landlords now. They are passing out of the controversy. The question now lies between the legislation of 1881, and the land policy of the National League. Day by day, without hatred of landlords as individuals, without many public manifestations, without any denunciations of Liberal remedies, the conviction is growing stronger in the entire agricultural class that nothing short of the occupier becoming the owner of his farm on fair terms can successfully solve the problem. Landlords and tenants are alike anxious that the Government should advance the money at as low a rate of interest as possible, extending the repayment over a sufficient number of years. These are some of the circumstances under which a revival of the land agitation seems inevitable. There is no hesitation in the Nationalist camp. The din of preparation betokens a battle for the land the like of which Ireland never before witnessed. We are simply calling attention to passing events. We ask the calm, thinking people of Ulster to look at them without either religious or political prejudice. The reduction of the franchise will make various important changes in Ireland. Subject to the control of England and Scotland, the Nationalists are about to direct the destinies of Ireland in a far more effective sense than has hitherto been accomplished. Social discontent is conspiring with political changes to make the land policy of the National League a captivating object to both North and South. Whether a rival object will be set up by Conservatives or Liberals, time will disclose.