

THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

(From the *National Press*)

"I LOOK forward to a land both old and young; old in its Christianity, young in its promise of the future. A nation which received grace before the Saxon came to Britain, and which has never questioned it; a Church which comprehends in its history the rise and fall of Canterbury and York, which Augustus and Paulinus found, and which Pole and Fisher left behind them. I contemplate a people which has had a long night and will have an inevitable day. . . . I dimly see the Ireland I am gazing on become the road of passage and union between the two hemispheres and the centre of the world. I see its inhabitants rival Belgium in populousness, France in vigour, and Spain in enthusiasm."

Thus wrote John Henry Cardinal Newman, the first rector of the Catholic University of Ireland. And what, we may ask, did this illustrious oratorian and spiritual child of St Philip Neri do towards rebuilding that Ireland which he saw "amid the encircling gloom," within which shone his own "kindly light?" Let Eugene O'Curry's lectures answer. They tell us stories of our land which were centuries old before the days of Paulinus or of Patrick. They tell us of a race that had its own peculiar language, manners, customs, and laws in a state of appropriate perfection, surpassing that of any people west of Palestine. And they tell us too of a people so civilised and spiritualised that with one voice and with one cry they accepted from Patrick the most august mystery of the Trinity. The language which was the instrument of thought of so noble a race is still within the reach of the Irish people. That language is not yet corrupted or cleaved into widely sundered dialects, as is too often impudently asserted. And not only is our beloved home-tongue the same in the four provinces of Ireland—slight difference of "accent and propriety" excepted—but an intelligent Irishman can transact business with an intelligent Scotchman, the former speaking everyday Irish Gaelic and the latter speaking the Gaelic of the Highlands of Scotland. Furthermore our spoken language is the same as our written language; and our alphabet, about which so many stupid things have been said and written, could be mastered in less than ten minutes by any person who can read English. And lastly, the Irish language of our homes and of our elementary books, conveys infinitely more meaning to the people, both old and young, in the maritime counties skirting our melancholy ocean from Derry to Waterford, than does the simplest and the most expressive language of the stranger, be it couched ever so sweetly.

A very considerable section of the teachers of the National schools has always been thoroughly National. Large numbers of them, especially when their lot is cast in Irish-speaking districts, cherish the old tongue with the most parental care, and therein give regular and systematic instruction in their schools. The First, Second, and Third Irish Books are supplied at a nominal price by the Commissioners of National Education, and are consequently within the reach of the poorest classes. The present system of primary education is, however, very sadly inapplicable to children whose parents and companions mainly think and speak in Irish. While giving due place on the programme to the English tongue, on account of its commercial advantages, instruction in Irish should be compulsory in all Irish-speaking districts, and teachers, both male and female, seeking appointments in such districts should be duly qualified to give instructions in the vernacular. Nearly all the concessions of legislatures and executives to popular sentiment and common sense have been yielded to agitation. Further agitation in the public Press and in the British Parliament will secure the boon indicated in the preceding sentence. The Christian Brothers, notwithstanding the tendencies of town education, are nobly battling on behalf of the national tongue with a patriotism and a public spirit which is beyond all praise. The same may be said of the nuns of many places, especially those of the Loretto communities. The Catholic University and St Patrick's College, Maynooth, have made ample provision for the teaching of Irish. But the Training College for teachers and the Queen's Colleges are still lamentably deficient in this respect. The pressure of public opinion, judiciously applied from time to time, might soon lead to the rectification of this condition of things.

We sometimes hear of the scarcity of suitable text books for students of Irish who are advancing beyond the elementary stage. Here are the titles of some Irish books published or sold at very moderate prices by Gill and Son, Upper O'Connell street, Dublin:—*The Fate of the Children of Tuireann*, *The Fate of the Children of Lir*, *The Youthful Exploits of Fionn*, *The Lay of Oisín on the Land of Youth*, *The Pursuit of Diarmid and Grainne*, *The Tribes of Ireland*, *Reliques of Irish Jacobite Poetry*, *Joyce's Irish Grammar*, *Father M'Sweeney's translation of Professor Windisch's Irish Grammar*, etc. The same publishers have some excellently well-preserved copies of the "Bardic Remains of Ireland," by James Hardiman, with a portrait of Carolan. These books have translations, notes, and vocabularies, so that an intelligent student who speaks Irish could easily, with some application and sustained energy, in a compara-

tively short time, become fairly proficient in the language of our ancestors. Nor has the religious aspect of the movement for the preservation of the Irish language been overlooked. The *Maynooth Catechism* has been translated into Irish by a Galway priest, and carefully revised by Mr John Fleming, editor of the *Gaelic Journal*, and published with the imprimatur of ecclesiastical authority: The *Imitation of Christ* has been republished in Irish by Father Walsh, a Vincentian priest, assisted by Mr Fleming, and two prayer books in Irish have been produced by Father Nolan, aided by the accomplished lay gentleman already mentioned.

MR. B. R. WISE ON HOME RULE.

(Sydney *Freeman's Journal*.)

MR B. R. WISE certainly owed some *amende* to Ireland in the old country where in his *Macmillan* article he so infamously maligned Irishmen in Australia and we are glad to see that he has paid it. Interviewed during his late visit to England by the *Pall Mall Gazette* as a "rising Australian politician" (curious these mistakes of Home papers), he of course could only refute the stupid statement of Lord Knutsford that to grant Home Rule to Ireland would cause disunion in the colonies—"the colonies would go in disgust"—as well as between Great Britain and Ireland. If this is a sample of the intelligence of the Conservative Colonial Office, Lord Carrington's late criticism of that department was fully justified, and one wonders which particular "globe-trotter" it was of the many of the tribe who so stuffed the ear of Lord Knutsford. Mr Wise might have had no difficulty in saying that the colonies were much more likely to "go in disgust" if Home Rule to Ireland were not granted, but what he did say was that it would be impossible to find ten candidates in the whole of New South Wales opposed to Home Rule, or if found, one of whom would be returned for any constituency if he expressed such a view. "Australians," said Mr Wise, "do not wish to mix themselves up with English party politics, but perceiving the advantage which they themselves enjoy under Home Rule they cannot, either through sentiment or through reasoning, be brought to believe in the policy which denies Home Rule to Ireland." This is almost good enough to wipe out the memory of that *Macmillan* article, if anything could; but all the same the writer of that article could not help repeating here his old jibe against what he calls the alien Irish element in local politics. Speaking as an Australian, so long, he says, as Home Rule is refused so long will the Irish in Australia continue to "hold aloof from national questions, and isolate themselves both in politics and social life." Well, do they? We should have thought that in late politics here the Irish were in evidence enough at any rate for Mr Wise and his friends, and when he says he believes that "a large measure of Home Rule would remove much if not all of the present bitterness in colonial party warfare." We may ask where, arising out of this or any other Irish question, is there any such party bitterness to be found?

WHAT PEOPLE SAY.

Mrs M. L. Morgan, Clifton, Aratapu, Auckland, N. Z., under date 24rd January, 1892, writes:—

Dear Sir—Some two years ago, having previously enjoyed fairly good health, I was taken seriously ill, and found it very difficult to get relief. At first I treated myself, thinking that I should soon be well again; but my illness grew upon me and I was completely prostrated, and unable to do anything. I sought medical advice from our local doctor, and he prescribed for me. My ailment was described as black jaundice and gall-stones, and at times I suffered much pain. Our doctor's treatment did not do me much good, as the attacks were frequent and very severe. Some months passed, and I felt that I was becoming hopelessly ill. My friends were shocked at my sallow and changed appearance, and more than one has told me since that they never expected to see me well again. I went to Auckland for change of air and scene, and to seek further medical advice. I got it, and for time seemed to improve, the change evidently doing me good; but it was not *tonic* enough, for after a week or so I was again laid up.

All the medical advice I got in Auckland seemed unavailing, and I returned home with very little to hope for. Here I suffered several attacks, and had to lay up repeatedly. My husband had a very poor opinion of patent medicine, but seeing Clement's Tonic advertised as of such wonderful effect in serious cases, and being quite at a loss to suggest any other untried remedy, he brought me home a bottle, and we determined to try it. At the same time we resolved to say nothing of the medicine we were using until fully satisfied of its effects. The first dose did me good, and I improved rapidly. Friends who would not have been surprised to hear of my death were really astonished at my rapid recovery. I was soon satisfied as to the value of Clement's Tonic, and gladly recommended it to others, and so did my husband. The storekeeper spoke to him one day, and asked him if he had been recommending Clement's Tonic, for he was almost sold out, and had only one bottle left. "Give it to me," said my husband: "I wouldn't be without it for anything." By the time I had taken one bottle I was able to get about my work again. Friends thought the improvement only temporary, but I am thankful to say that such has not been the case. Every dose did its work, and after a fortnight I only took one dose a day, in the early morning. I have used only three bottles, and have the fourth in the house. I do not take it regularly, but fly to it on the least symptom of anything being wrong, and I have many times proved it to a good preventive of returning sickness. It is now eight or nine months since I recovered, and Clement's Tonic has kept me in good health all through. I can again get on with my house and dairy with comfort and pleasure. I am pleased to be able to recommend Clement's Tonic, for I have found it a true friend, and am convinced that it will give health to many now suffering if they will only give it a trial.—I am, Sir, yours gratefully, M. L. Morgan