

'Twas by Blackwater,
When snows were white,
'Twas by Blackwater,
Our foes for the slaughter
Stood full in sight;
But we were ready
With our long spears;
And we had no fears
But we'd win the fight.

Their bullets came whistling
Upon our rank,
Their bullets came whistling,
Their bay'nets were bristling
On the other bank.
Yet we stood steady,
And each good blade
Ere the morn did fade
At their life-blood drank.

Hurrah! for Freedom!"
Came from our van;
Hurrah! for Freedom!
Our swords--we'll feed 'em
As but we can--
With vengeance we'll feed 'em!"
Then down we crashed,
Through the wild ford dashed,
And the fray began!

Horses to horses
And man to man--
O'er dying horses
And blood and corpses
O'Sullivan,
Our general, thundered:
And we were not slack
To slay at his back
Till the fight began.

Oh! how we scattered
The foemen then--
Slaughtered and scattered
And chased and shattered,
By shore and glen--
To the wall of Moyallo,
Few fled that day--
Will they bar our way
When we come again?

Our dead freres we buried, --
They were but few,--
Our dead freres we buried
Where the dark waves hurried
And flashed and flew:
Oh! sweet be their slumber
Who thus have died
In the battle's tide.
Innisfail, for you!

(To be continued.)

ST. COLUMBKILLE'S CONVENT, HOKITIKA.

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THE EARLY CHURCH

(A Series of Lectures by REV. P. J. SHEEHY, Manly College)

VI.—THE ATTACK OF PHILOSOPHY ON EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

Before I come to speak of the systematic persecution of the Christian Faith organised throughout the vast extent of the Roman Empire, and lasting till the opening of the fourth century, I must bring before you a brief sketch of the intellectual attack against Christian doctrines on the part of the philosophers. It synchronised, of course, with the physical attack and was no less dangerous. In brief, it was a determined effort to paint the Christian religion as something vulgar, fanatical, nonsensical, not to be compared with the sublime body of doctrines brought together in an eclectic scheme of philosophy.

Philosophy was a Greek creation which from the second century B.C. had come to make its way to Rome and to the West, and, in spite of attempts made to check it, to make considerable progress. In the days immediately pre-Christian, Cicero employed the last years of his enforced leisure in rendering accessible to Roman readers, in a popular form, the most important results of post-Aristotelian philosophy, and thus formed the nucleus of the philosophical literature of Rome. It was only very gradually, however, that the Roman mind took to philosophy. That mind was essentially practical and regarded this pursuit of ideas as futile and enervating. Moreover, the bands of philosophical preachers and lecturers that swarmed over the Empire were suspected by the Roman Government. They were friends to the mobs who came to hear them, they were ever throwing mud at the Government, praising democracy, stirring up the masses to the overthrow of the existing order of things; and so on occasions we find the Roman authorities expelling the more remarkable of these philosophers from the city of Rome as dangerous to the established order.

But by the close of the first Christian century this temper of the Roman Government had completely changed; philosophy was no longer regarded as hostile to the civil authority, and was in fact encouraged. Thus, for instance, Pliny in one of his letters expresses his delight at the glorious revival of intellectual life in Rome and praises the Emperor Trajan for taking special interest in education and for highly honoring teachers of rhetoric and philosophy. The Emperor Hadrian sought the society of philosophers and appointed public lecturers on philosophy in Rome. The Emperor Antoninus Pius appointed such lecturers in all the provinces with public salaries and with many immunities, chief amongst them being immunity from taxation. In the reign of the philosopher Emperor Marcus Aurelius, philosophy became the fashion even amongst the women. In subsequent reigns, one had to study, or make a pretence of studying philosophy in order to get on in the Empire. The philosophers received State salaries when appointed to schools; they were allowed much freedom of speech even when they criticised the Emperors; they were sometimes given the honor of statues after death. From the end of the first century on to the close of the third century of the Christian era, then, despite the practical character of the Romans and despite the scandal brought on philosophy by the lives and conduct and avarice of a great part of the teachers thereof, it is certain that the larger part of cultured Roman society throughout the Empire regarded philosophy as the best guide to the highest morality. It was regarded as an essential part of the training of the young and was taken up after the conclusion of the grammatical and rhetorical course. Logic, physics, and especially ethics were studied and had assumed that function of forming the inward life which nowadays we assign to religion. It was the age of philosophy. The number of philosophers and pseudo-philosophers throughout the Empire was very great, greater than that of the shoemakers or fullers or jesters or the followers of any other profession. The philosopher's robe was everywhere to be seen. Epictetus says that in the seething crowd the number of true philosophers was very small; spurious philosophers abounded, wandering about the Empire from town to town, vulgar, abusive, vicious, and each school or sect of philosophy abused every other. But this must not make us lose sight of the consideration and respect given to true philosophy. Without going into the various schools of philosophy we may mention the three relations in which the better philosophers were exercised.

First, there was the house philosopher. It became the fashion of the great Roman families to have such an official resident in their midst. He was the educator of the

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