

few acres of rocks with Hans Harman's whip over my back. Mrs. Motherwell had not sufficient confidence in my superior economic theories to give up the Rectory and try the experiment, and she showed her customary good sense, for I have long ago discovered that I had more to learn from Darby than Darby had from me. He's the only person in these parts who is not a humbug or a plunderer. Every ear of corn that grows it's he that raises it and it's we who blast it. We build a pier in the spot where it's most convenient for the sea to come and swallow it, and we taunt him with his genius for bungling. We run up ridiculous chimney-shafts where there is no ore, and we have the impudence to twit him with his lack of enterprise in mining."

"You surely do not deny that copper is to be found, or that the people would be the better for working it?" said Mr. Neville.

"Talk of your trumpety copper-mine! Why these peasants have created a gold-mine where nature never intended one. They have beaten the alchemists. With their bare hands they have scraped gold out of the granite rocks, and the moment we could catch a few glistening grains with them, we, superior people, knocked them down and robbed them. They have just three little possessions that they value in life—their cabins, their faith, and their day-dreams about an impossible Ireland. What visible function does English rule perform in their eyes, except subsidising Hans Harman to hover at their door, his excellent sister to poison their faith, and the police to send their boys into penal servitude for being boys? Why, the principal fault of the Irish as a nation is that they have not cut our throats many a day ago. I don't know what saved us, except their superior sense of humor—they hate us less because they very properly laugh at us more—at our airs and our ignorance, and our cant and our hectoring; our broken-backed piers and our copper-mines that won't work! Father Phil, give me a pinch of your snuff if you can't give me a pinch of your patience."

"Rector, let me have the privilege, sir, of dipping in that snuff-box after you on behalf of the Irish race at home and abroad," said the American Captain, with majestic grace.

"My dear sir," said Joshua Neville, "I trust you will permit me to make a short memorandum of your views. I am only anxious for light. I should much rather be shown to be in the wrong than that the Irish people should suffer by my being in the right. But do I understand you to hold—really, you know—that charges of indolence and improvidence now, for example, are purely the creation of ignorance or malice?"

"Not a bit of it. Hans Harman quite properly calls them indolent. Their rent is three times Griffith's valuation—"three Griffiths," as they call it. They could increase it to four Griffiths if they were more industrious. They're not such fools. Indolence is one of the best products of this country. Irish indolence is Nature's anaesthetic for Irish misery. Only for the comfortable feeling it diffuses through the bones, they would have died long ago under the knife of operators like our friend Harman. You think an Irish peasant is wasting his time when you see him lolling in the sun, sucking a black pipe? My dear sir, you never made a greater mistake. He is a Bank of England Director, counting his treasures. He is a ragged philosopher up among his stars. He is a barefotted anchorite of the desert beholding visions. When you think he is idling, he is really quitting the rocks and the "three Griffiths" of his miserable present, for the boundless estates which he holds, rent free, in the past and in the future. Ask Father Phil!—is there a hut amongst these hills where you won't find a family who can look back upon a genealogy of kings and saints, and forward to the joys of heaven with a firmer faith than they can count upon their breakfast? Believe me, a people who can get that much bliss out of a black pipe are more sensibly employed than in getting up an additional pound of flesh for us, landlords and parsons, to slice away at."

"Oh come, that would be an argument for the lotos-eater," said the ironmaster, gravely shaking his head.

"There is a great deal to be said for the lotos-eater. I could never understand what was wrong with lotos-eating. What more blessed esculent than lotos does your nineteenth century produce for you, with all its thundering steam-ploughs and puffing and blowing? That gospel of work for work sake, and noise for noise sake, is the greatest superstition of an age that turns up its impudent little nose at the Pentateuch. I can understand St. Peter of Alcantara preferring to walk bare-footed on sharp thorns, during a life which he regarded as a mere hop-skip-and-a-jump to an eternity of joy unutterable; but here is an age of fanatics, whose highest heaven it is to live in the boiler of a steam-engine, and go shrieking about the world, tearing through everything sacred and peaceable, and scorching up every bright green thing in nature, for no earthly object that I could ever see, except to make all the world as uncomfortable, hot, and mad as themselves. I do verily believe men and women endure as many torments in the course of a London season in out-maneuvring, outshining, and out-boring each other as would have entitled them to canonisation in the ages of faith, if their penances had been offered up with the proper dispositions. So it is with your Parliament men, so it is with the whole pushing, brawling, pack of reformers, scientists, and hydra-headed quacks, who are the boast of their age.

Let us alone!

Time driveth onward fast,

And in a little time our lips are mute.

Let us alone!

With all my heart I echo that immortal song of the lotos-eaters—for I am a bit of a lotos-eater myself—(a tobacco pipe and fishing-rod happen to be my own particular vehicle for imbibing the aroma). If Hans Harman could find out where the Irish peasant grows his lotos crop, he would rack-rent it most unmercifully. But that is where Paddy has the advantage over his oppressors—that within that smoky cabin of his and within those lean four bones of his he possesses a gleaming paradise of hope and memory, and his high and mighty lord away in London, who abuses Paddy as a lazy-bones, in reality envies him his knack of lying on his back in fields of asphodel, dreaming of past glories and future heavens, and only wishes that yawning in the bow-windows of a club in St. James's Street were as delicious a way of idling."

"I hope you will not publish a volume of sermons in praise of idling," laughed Mr. Neville.

"I am too idle to do anything of the sort; but, my dear sir, idling is one of the lost arts. It is almost as extinct in Western Europe as the Greek and Roman classics were in the days of Attila and Genserich. Christendom flocked to Ireland as to a university in those days to learn the alphabet and the Apostles' Creed. Take care the nineteenth century may not have to resort to Ireland again to dip its fevered brow in our cool mountain streams, and relearn the ancient art of idling like a gentleman and dreaming like an angel on a regimen of potatoes in a palace of thatch."

"Hands up, there, Rector; you are laughing at us now," observed the American Captain, reproachfully.

"At least I practice what I preach. Ask Deborah Harman if I am not the most abandoned lotos-eater—ask that excellent creature how I have neglected a divine call for the purchase of little Papists!"

"Our boys can starve or lounge agen any born nation that ever I bored for ile in," said Captain Mike; "but bust me if I ever onderstood before that slow starvation was such a rosy means of livelihood. Likely that's why they all died in the famine times as tame as a Dakotah flat, when they could have gorged themselves with rations of prime pork and hot corn if they took half the trouble in fighting that they did in dying. I see it all now—'twas only their way of enjoying life, and I'm bound to say the British Constitooshun provided on the most liberal terms for that peculiar species

**Auckland Readers Note!**  
124 QUEEN STREET

J. R. CUNNINGHAME, M.P.S., "THE PRESCRIPTION CHEMIST," has opened an Up-to-Date Pharmacy. GIVE HIM YOUR SUPPORT.