related to the present or the future of Ireland; but they refused to stigmatise the patriot brave of all history, who had bled and died for liberty. This would not suffice, and the painful fact became clear enough that the monstrous test resolutions were meant to drive them from the association. On the 27th of July, 1846, the Young Ireland leaders, refusing a test which was a treason against truth, justice, and liberty, quitted Conciliation Hall, and Irish Ireland was rent into bitterly hostile parties.

Not long afterwards the insidious disease, the approach of which was proclaimed clearly enough in O'Connell's recent proceedings—softening of the brain—laid the old chieftain low. He had felt the approach of dissolution, and set out on a pilgrimage that had been his lifelong dream—a visit to Rome. And assuredly a splendid welcome awaited him there; the first Catholic Layman in Europe, the Emancipator of seven millions of Catholics, the most illustrous Christian patriot of his age. But heaven decreed otherwise. A brighter welcome in a better land awaited the toil-worn soldier of faith and fatherland. At Marseilles, on his way to Rome, it became clear that a crisis was at hand; yet he would fain push onward for the Eternal City. In Genoa the Superb he breathed his last; bequeathing, with his dying breath, his body to Ireland, his heart to Rome, his soul to God. All Christendom was plunged into mourning. The world poured its homage of respect above his bier. Ireland, the land for which he had lived and labored, gave him a funeral nobly befitting his title of Uncrowned Monarch. But more honoring than funeral pageant, more worthy of his memory, was the abiding grief that fell upon the people who had loved him with such a deep devotion.

(To be continued.)

Civilisation and the Renaissance

(By JOHN C. REVILLE, S.J., in *America*.)

The Renaissance is one of the most striking phenomena in the history of civilisation. It is in one sense a great step forward, while in another it marks a decided movement towards a lower ideal than that of the Middle Ages. Its very name is something of a usurpation. It seems to imply that the literature and the arts to which it pretends to have given a new birth had entirely disappeared from the world and that under the wand of its wizards, they had sprung to life again. Nothing could be more untrue. The first stirrings of that revival had long ago been felt. To go no further than Dante, the great Florentine had sounded an unmistakable note, but with no base harmonies mingling in its echoes, of a genuine humanism, yet with St. Thomas, he is essentially the interpreter of the Middle Ages. Even in the Gothic cathedrals, at which the Renaissance was to direct its gibes and sneers as if they were the relics of a barbarous age, the true humanistic note is found, though for the most part subdued and in a minor key, in some of the appealing figures that beam down from the portals and the stained glass of those marvellous monuments of faith and genius.

The Renaissance was bound to come. Every law of civilisation and progress called for it. It is to be regretted that when it came it passed, not entirely but in many of its most striking manifestations, under the hands of men who debased its ideals and turned its waters into channels overgrown with weeds of corruption and death. The movement of the Renaissance, says Godefroid Kurth, in *The Church at the Turning Points of History*, was in keeping with the laws of accelerated motion: it was but the "natural, progressive and uninterrupted development of the society of the Middle Ages unfolding from century to century down to the opening of the present age." The seed was cast in the Middle Ages. The Renaissance gave the perfect flower. The centuries that preceded it had been slowly accumulating intellectual and artistic capital. That capital had come from the Fathers of the early Church, from the cloisters in which solitaries in their eastern lauras, Benedictines and Dominicans in their cells on Alpine heights and in southern vales, had gathered the treasures of the past, from the chairs in which Abelard and Thomas had taught; from the schools in which Bede, Alcium, and Rhabanus Maurus had labored with cowled monks or purple-clad courtiers. Emperors like Charlemagne, kings like Alfred and Alphonso the Wise, Popes like Sylvester II., Gregory VII., and Innocent III. had added to the noble deposit their princely gifts; poets like Dante and the troubadours of Provence and the minnesingers of Germany had given of their golden mintage. Every artist, every doctor and singer in the long file of the great men of the past had contributed a mite to the growing pile. At the close of the Middle Ages, about the time of the Fall of Constantinople 1453, or the founding of the Vatican Library by Pope Nicholas V., the world became fully aware of the immense store of resources at its command. It felt its power. It naturally wished to use it. Unfortunately it did not always use it well. While the more prudent members of that admirably equipped civilisation invested wisely, others squandered their resources in the pursuit of false gods, and were lured into dangerous paths of adventure.

In the civilisation of the Middle Ages at its height, the point of view was correct. The angle from which artist and doctor, poor and rich, king and peasant, surveyed the world, led their gaze up the mount of vision to God. A civilisation that bounds its vision with any other concept is doomed to failure. It is not true, as John Addington Symonds would have us believe, that in the Middle Ages man had lived "enveloped in a cowl." It is not true that he had not seen the beauty of the world, as that neo-pagan states in the same place, *Renaissance in Italy*, or had seen it only to cross himself, turn aside and pray. If St. Bernard may not have been thrilled by all the beauties of a Swiss landscape in the easy fashion in which a modern humanist looking for artistic sensation might be, it was because he was intent on great problems too deep for the esthetic distractions of a mere tourist. But the eyes of Francis of Assisi were not closed to the beauty of his lord the Sun and his sister the Moon, to the loveliness of the flowers and the murmurings of the streams in the Umbrian hills. The sermon of the Poverello to the birds and that of his disciple Antony of Padua to the fishes, tell us of the most intimate and tender communings with nature. But fair as was the earth, the virile race of the Middle Ages would not let their gaze be riveted on its beauties to such an extent as to close out the sight of nobler things. The Middle Ages were not flawless. Dark pages are to be found in their annals. Depths of depravity and savagery are occasionally revealed which frighten us. But the compass which guided them was set towards those polar truths without which no civilisation can live. For them the soul was more than the meat, God more than man, eternity was more than time. Hence they ever looked upwards to the mountains from which cometh help, not downwards into the lowlands where shadows flit and pass away. Theirs was a noble view of civilisation. The contributions which they made to it form one of the heirlooms of the race.

The centre of the civilisation during the period of the Middle Ages was God, that of the Renaissance was man. Hence the name frequently applied to the movement which it embodies—"humanism." It pretended to have discovered man, and the world in which he lived. Has not John Addington Symonds said: "The Renaissance was the liberation of the reason from a dungeon, the double discovery of the outer and the inner world"? The dungeon irradiated with the serene light of the Angelic Doctor, in whose darkness Dante glimpsed such splendors, cannot have been so narrow or noisome. As to the discoveries of the outer and the inner world, especially of the latter: those ages which humanists like John Addington Symonds so ridicule, had, in most instances, in some shape or other, found the key to them.

But, in spite of its follies and though it does not by any means measure up to all the claims made for it, the age of the Renaissance is one of the great epochs of history. What is best in it, it owes to the Christian civilisation that preceded it and to the fostering care of the Church. It is impossible not to be thrilled by its accomplishments, though the admiration its triumphs cause is rather dulled when we remember the sorry use to which some of its most accomplished scholars put their gifts. In spite of the disgust with which much of the work of Poggio Bracciolini fills us, we follow his journeyings through the libraries of Europe for the rescue of old manuscripts with something of the romantic interest with which we follow the wake of the Santa Maria of Colombus to the West, or that of Magellan's Victoria in