THOMAS DAVIS

and Young Ireland

1845–1945

THOMAS DAVIS
AND YOUNG IRELAND

HOGAN'S STATUE OF DAVIS

THOMAS DAVIS AND YOUNG IRELAND

Edited by

M. J. MacMANUS

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FOREWORD

WITHIN a few days of the death of Thomas Davis, Thomas Francis Meagher referring to the dead patriot's "generous sentiments, liberal views and enlightened principles," said, in an oration at Conciliation Hall, Burgh Quay, Dublin: "In the day of victory, to which he had so often looked with a panting heart and a glowing soul, they will beckon us to the grave, bid us pluck a laurel from the nation's brow, and place it on his tomb." This book represents a wreath of such laurels and they are placed with reverent and affectionate remembrance on the grave, not only of Thomas Davis but on those of his comrades in the Young Ireland Movement, of whom Meagher himself was not the least.

It is safe to say that no period of Irish history has produced a more remarkable group of men than the Young Irelanders. Davis, who more than any one man, inspired, created and moulded the Movement; Mitchel of the unconquered and unconquerable spirit; Gavan Duffy, the master journalist of his time; Smith O'Brien, a knightly figure, the soul of chivalry; Meagher of the Sword; Doheny, whose "Felon's Track" is a classic of Irish revolutionary literature—add to these names such others as John Blake Dillon, Kevin Izod O'Doherty, James Clarence Mangan, Thomas D'Arcy Magee, Denis Florence MacCarthy, James Fintan Lalor, Samuel Ferguson, Thomas Devin Reilly and the women writers of the *Nation*, "Eva" (Mary Eva Kelly), "Speranza" (Lady Wilde) and the rest, and you get a blossoming of native genius such as no other decade witnessed, at least in the realm of Anglo-Irish literature.

No one can question the sincerity, the integrity, or the nobility of purpose of the men of Young Ireland. Theirs was a cleansing and a resurgent movement; they taught the people to look within, not without, for their freedom; they quickened the pulse of the nation; they re-awakened interest in Ireland's history, legends, traditions and antiquities, and they composed songs and ballads which kindled a new fire in the souls of a depressed people. It can with truth be claimed for them that they were the real fathers of the Sinn Féin that in our generation made the Ireland that we know. Their doctrine, like that of Sinn Féin, was a

doctrine of tolerance and brotherhood ; their aim, an Ireland free and unfettered.

In our time we have seen many of the objects of the Young Irelanders achieved. But that blending of Orange and Green which was one of Davis's dearest ambitions, has yet to be accomplished. The restoration of the Irish language to its proper place in the nation's life has yet to be effected.

If our people keep the example of the Young Irelanders before them, if they work with the same clarity of vision and the same singleness of purpose, if they are willing to make a tithe of the sacrifices of the men whose centenary we now celebrate, there need be no doubt that victory will come.

Seán T. O'Ceallaigh

THE GREATNESS OF THOMAS DAVIS

By Francis MacManus

The prophet I followed throughout my life, the man whose words and teachings I tried to translate into practice in politics, the man whom I revered above all Irish patriots was Thomas Davis.—Arthur Griffith.

This man so empty of peacock talents.—W. B. Yeats.

I never loved any man so much.—Daniel Owen Maddyn.

Come quickly, thou celestial nectar-bearer ; Mr. Davis of the " Nation " is thirsty ! And what is the draught to soothe his parched vitals—no half-and-half liberty—no small-beer freedom.—Punch.

When Thomas Davis died on September 16, 1845, at his mother's house in Baggot Street, Dublin, he was only thirty-one years of age. For his contemporaries, his associates and his companions, and for all those thousands of readers whom his writings had drawn to *The Nation*, the death was a descent of bleak and bitter winter into the middle of a promising spring. Those who had known him familiarly and had been informed by his hopes, his thoughts, his genial spirit and his charity, and even those who had known him distantly, fell to the laments and the tears that were more sincere, one may be sure, than are the tears and the laments allotted publicly to most public men. Great Irishman he was ; and more important, he was a good man. His unselfish goodness, unrestricted by vanity and even by any thirst for power, which is rare in men who attain even half the influence he possessed, passed over to succeeding generations as part of his growing creative fame. He became an example of regeneration, a guide for a statesman of Griffith's stature " in the hard way of fitting practical affairs into idealism ". He became the example that could occasionally taunt with irony. For it was after his death, after our history had struggled across the devouring abyss of the Great Famine, that Thomas Davis, a dead man, began to shape Ireland.

Surrounded by circumstance of his fame, one finds it difficult to remember and just as difficult to realise that his life was so brief. According to the biblical span, he was just entering his prime ; according to the late and surprising rush of his verse, he was just beginning a career as a poet who might have achieved a fame not principally dependent on the feelings of brave patriotism which he shared with his audience ; and according to the tenour of his prose writings, especially those papers and essays which he wrote week after week during his last years for *The Nation*, he

was defining a wide and generous notion of nationality that, had he lived, and especially under stress of the dreadful history which rounded off the decade with ghastliness, might have made him an active politician with such a powerful following as only Parnell commanded. But he died at thirty-one; and even that short span gives no just idea of the brief period,—the few years one might say,—given him for the making of the personality which impressed his contemporaries so deeply.

It was late in that life when he began to flourish in private society as well as public, and one wonders why, remarking at the same time that the answer, if there is an answer, is a task for a biographer doing a full-scale portrait with plenty of materials. Davis was the youngest child of a Surgeon of Artillery in the British Army who died one month before his birth in 1814, and of the daughter of a family that had been founded in Ireland, in Cork, by a Cromwellian settler and had intermarried with Irish and Anglo-Irish. There were two brothers and a sister, an invalid, to whom Thomas Davis was devoted all his life. It should be noted, therefore, that Davis was the youngest of a family, and the youngest like the eldest of the family often lives on the fringe, as it were, unable to take part in the games and gambols of the older children, and that the comparative isolation encourages self-reliance, dreaminess, and even the appearance of dullwittedness. Moreover, he was posthumous, and posthumous children are often petted, and petting does not make the strange world less strange to a growing child. Again, his family lived a more or less closed existence among the genteel folk of Mallow, in the society composed of officers and their wives and of professional people; and although this isolation of a little garrison world within the world of Ireland might not have had immediate perceptible effect on the child's formative years, it would have its effect when, in later years, he would ask himself: what am I among all these millions of people? what is my relationship to them and theirs to me? Who are my people? He would need to go outside the garrison for the answer. And lastly, Thomas Davis suffered from delicate health, a corroding affliction that does not help to form a character open and free and sociable. At any rate, at the school in Dublin whither the Davis family had come when Thomas was four years old, the child was accounted slow-witted and difficult, and in Trinity College and among his mother's friends and acquaintances, he seemed to be a withdrawn, abstracted figure, earnest but remote, playing no games, walking a good deal on his own, reading books in vast quantities, and, to use a kinswoman's words knowing "no more than a fool how to take care of the little money his father left him". In other words, his was not then the kind of personality that attracts diverse men and makes them say, "I never loved any man so much." But he became such a personality; and it is in expounding this change in Davis, and the causes of it, that the full-length biographer will find his most formidable and fascinating task. The transformation, for such it was, is crucial. Davis changed not only the social tendencies of his mind, as did many of the big and small ascendancy gentry after him, but he also changed his personality. It was as though in discovering he had a country he also discovered he was a man.

There was in Trinity College at the time a Scholar who eked out a living in a garret by coaching undergraduates. His name was Thomas Clarke Wallis and he called himself "Professor of Things in General, and Patriotism in particular." Davis knew him and through him met Dillon. Wallis claimed to have changed Dillon from a Whig to a popular Nationalist and to have "loosed the tenacious phlegm that clogged Davis's nature, and hid his powers from himself and the world". It was a big claim such as a biographer could not completely admit, for the Davis who left Trinity with a degree in 1836 and who was called to the Bar in the following year, is not yet the Davis that men loved. Between 1838 and '40, he travelled in England and on the Continent, and of that journey which must have been, as journeys have been for many men, a roundabout way of discovering his homeland, we have none of his notes, none of his letters, nothing that would help us to discern the changes in the son of the Surgeon of Artillery. However, we do know this: when, in 1840, he made his famous speech to the Historical Society in Trinity and pleaded for Irish historical studies, he was full of the exultation of discovery. What am I among all these millions of people? Who are my people? His answer, more implicit than explicit, was in that famous speech, and the rest of his life was spent in defining the answer, in drawing out its implications and expounding them, and in applying the complexity of facts and principles to the Ireland, "still a serf-nation" that needed knowledge and dignity before she would be fit for liberty. *Punch* was right for all its rather cruel joking and its absolute error about Davis's desire for blood. Mr. Davis was thirsty and the draught he desired was no small-beer freedom. There were only five years to run till his death, five years for teaching and writing. This was his life; this was the active span wherein he was the personality that attracted contemporaries not only with admiration but with genuine love.

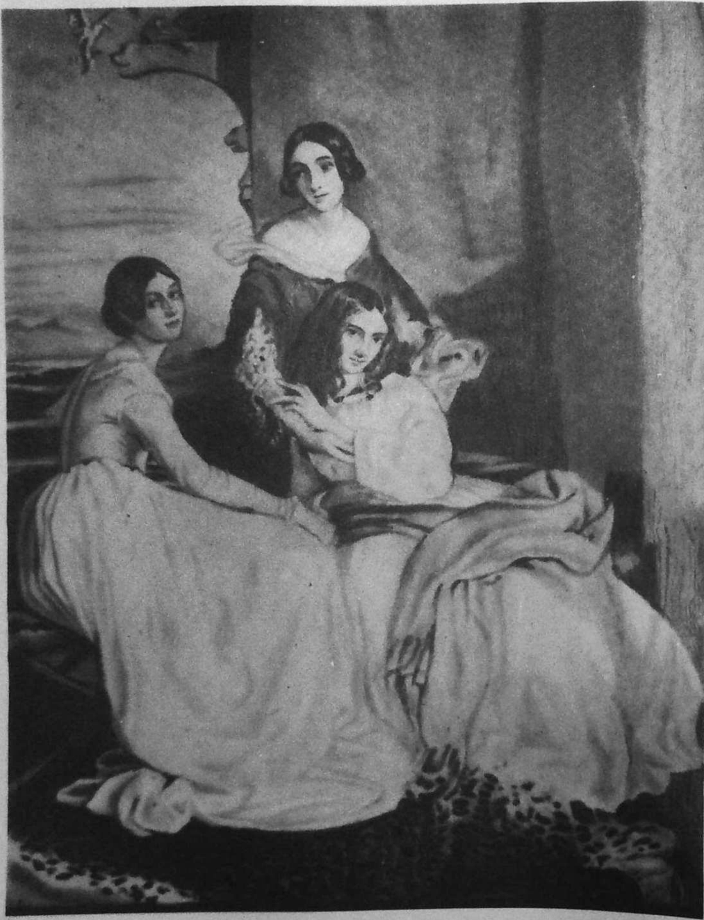
During those five years he flourished. His papers on the Irish Parliament of 1688 were published in *The Citizen*, and the historian Lecky gave them praise high enough to warrant Davis a place as a professional historian. In the *Morning Register*, one of the two chief Dublin daily journals and organ of English Whig government in Ireland, he published essays in which he tried to define an Irish attitude, an Irish state of mind. It was wasted labour in so far as the conservative readers of the *Register* were concerned, but for Davis himself it was labour that clarified his mind and brought him closer to the problems of nationhood. In 1841 he met Gavan Duffy whom he introduced to Dillon, and so the triumvirate was formed which, in the spring of the following year, would walk and talk in the Phoenix Park and plan *The Nation* and the Young Ireland Movement. From the publication of their paper till his death, there were only three years, and during those three years the vital part of his work was done. He flourished as a teacher, sincere, earnest, generous, critical and creative, but "so empty of peacock talent", so lacking in the literary ability to communicate himself as Tone or Mitchel communicated themselves, that many a reader of later generations, ignorant of the man's life, would come to the essays and read them and fail, with some disappointment, to be touched strongly by the personal attraction which made Davis so loved and so praised by his contemporaries and survivors.

The writings need the gloss of biography and history. Some writers give all their personality to their work so that their work stands secure and independent as a house or a cathedral; indeed, with good writers, their work is their personality, and more often than not, the man who walks and talks and eats and plays does not matter. With Davis it was not like that. He was not primarily a writer. He was primarily a teacher who used the pen as the most convenient instrument for his teaching. This is the distinction that his friend and colleague, Gavan Duffy, described; and

it is the distinction that runs through the fine words written about Davis by that brilliant writer but confused Irishman, T. W. Rolleston :

" His songs were things which he paused to do—often hastily, and by the way—as he was pressing forward to his aim. Yet his poetry, written as it was straight from the heart and on the themes that vitally interested and moved him, was not only a powerful auxiliary to his work as a political guide and teacher, but has high and enduring attractions of its own, and has added peculiar fragrance to a memory worthy on so many grounds of being cherished by his countrymen. It was in his poetry that he most intimately revealed himself. And though Thomas Davis was extraordinarily fertile in ideas, and indefatigable in methodic industry, the best thing he gave to the Irish people was not an idea or an achievement of any sort, but simply the gift of himself. He was the ideal Irishman. North and south, east and west, the finest qualities of the population that inhabit this island seemed to be combined in him, developed to their highest power, and coloured deeply with whatever it is in character and temperament that makes the Irish one of the most separate of races. The nation saw itself transfigured in him, and saw the dreams nourished by its long memories and ancestral pride coming true. Hence the intense personal devotion felt towards Davis by the ardent and thoughtful young men who were associated with him, and the sense of irreparable loss caused by his early death. He stood for Ireland—for all Ireland—as no other man did, and it was hardly possible to distinguish the cause from his personality. Yet perhaps the best evidence of the potency and the nobility of his influence was the fact that this sense of loss was overcome by the recollection of the ideals he had held up, and that his memory was honoured by the undaunted pursuance of his work, and the maintenance of the pure and lofty ardour with which he wrought."

Such was Davis.



Annie Hutton (seated on right), to whom Davis was betrothed, with her two sisters. From the painting by Sir Frederic Burton

THOMAS DAVIS'S FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE

By Joseph Hone

I HAVE before me a pedigree of Davis and other details of his family which supplements the information in these regards given in Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's biography. The Davis family, no doubt of Welsh origin, lived in Essex in the early seventeenth century, and a certain John Davis—of whom it is recorded that he was drowned at a picnic—married a Miss Osborne (whence Thomas Davis's second christian name) whose mother, Susanna Van Doward, was a Dutchwoman. This John Davis (1742–1788) of Broomshill in Essex, was Davis's grandfather. His son, after serving as a surgeon in the Peninsula war, came to Ireland in the course of his duties, and there met and married Mary Atkins. He was settled for a while at Mallow, where the four children were born, and he died at Exeter while on his way to take up some new appointment in Portugal. It was through his mother, as is well known, that Davis traced back his line to the O'Sullivan Beare, a Richard Atkins who died in 1738, having married Anne, the daughter of Murtagh O'Sullivan Beare. She was Davis's great grandmother. Anne's son was John Atkins of Fountainville, Co. Cork, who married a first cousin, Mary Atkins, and had two sons and four daughters, the fourth of whom was Davis's mother.

Davis's father died shortly before Davis's birth, and the widow remained for a while at Mallow, where her mother was living. Her mother died in 1817, and the next year Mrs. Davis removed to Dublin, where first she lived in Warrington Place and then at 61 (now 67) Lower Baggot Street. As her four children had all small inheritances it is probable that Mrs. Davis was not herself left badly off, and she was able to send Thomas to one of the best Protestant schools, as a preparation for the University. We may be sure, however, that the family lived simply, and had no hankering for the convivial side of Dublin life or the social glamour of the Castle. The eldest son John Atkins adopted his father's profession and was perhaps already out in the world when Davis was growing up. Davis alone had a University education. James Robert, the second son, was appointed early to a lawyer's office, and soon established a respectable practice of his own at 25 College Green. The sister Charlotte was studious and thoughtful, and Davis used to say of her that he wondered how one so frail of body could display such intellectual energy. The mother is little more than a name in the records that survive. We only know that Davis held his mother in great affection, and that they differed in political sympathies.

In Duffy's book Davis is seldom seen at a distance from the main purpose of his life. There is a chapter in it headed "The Recreations of a Patriot", but it consists chiefly of an account of historical and antiquarian researches made during a tour of Munster and Connaught in 1843. Davis was fond of walking, and recommended his friends to his own habit of going four miles an hour for two hours consecutively.

So far as its known he only once took a holiday outside Ireland, and then he went through parts of Wales, round Capel Curig and Trefoiew, in the way he could best become acquainted with them—on foot. Duffy quotes letters of his to Patrick Robert Webb, " Vagabond in Wales ", revealing that taste for the sombre and mysterious in scenery, rent mountains and darkling mists, to which Goethe gave immortal expression in *Mignon's Song*.

" *Dahin! Dahin!*
Geht unser Weg! O Vater, lass uns ziehn.

His betrothed Annie Hutton teased him while he was reading Spenser's *Fairy Queen*,— " You would tire of purling brooks and scented meadows in a month ", she said.

Davis, even when he was most deeply engaged in public work, found time to preserve friendships unconnected with his public work, such as that with the above mentioned Robert Webb. Maddyn says that Davis and Webb were like brothers together, "faithful and loving". Webb is entered in the *Trinity Calendar*, as the son of Robert, Privatus, of County Limerick and he was related to Smith O'Brien's wife. " A young man of leisure, cultivation and literary tastes ", says Duffy, " and though conservative in training disposed to follow his friend into new fields." I have not been able to discover anything about Webb's later life, so that he evidently never cut a figure in public, on one side or another. He married soon after leaving College, and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of a Dublin merchant, joined with him in affection for Davis who spent many happy hours in their house, which was also in Lower Baggot Street. Davis's letters attest the value which he set up on this intimacy with "Robert and Bessie". Of a similar order was Davis's relationship with the painter Frederick Burton who did the cover design for *The Spirit of the Nation*, because as he said, " I could refuse Davis nothing," and also the drawing in Duffy's book. Burton should have found a biographer, for he had a most interesting and varied life. From Mungret in Limerick he came to Dublin as a boy and was already an associate of the Royal Hibernian Academy at the age of 21. A marvellously handsome young man he gained popularity in Dublin society, which is to be credited for having appreciated his precise yet subtle talent as a water-colour portraitist—he painted most of the pretty and opulent women of the Dublin of the forties. But his true circle was that of the scholars; Ferguson, Stokes, O'Currie and Petrie. He went to Aran with Petrie, and there made the sketches for his " Blind Girl at the Holy Well " and his " Aran Fisherman " (now in the National Gallery); and we may be sure he was encouraged by Davis to continue in such depicting of Irish scenes and character. But—another romantic—he was attracted to pre-Raphaelitism and to the medieval art of Germany, and in 1851 he settled in Munich, where he knew King Ludwig of Bavaria and embellished the fairy palaces of that " mad " King, Wagner's patron, with copies of pictures from the Munich galleries. Later he wandered through German forests, studying scenes of a village life that was still medieval, and making drawings that were compared to those of Cranach and Holbein. In 1875 he was appointed Director of the National Gallery in London. Lady Gregory knew him in London in his old age, and she tells in *Our Irish Theatre* how she used to delight to hear him speak of Davis and other figures of the Young Ireland period. He had never read John Mitchel's *Jail Journal*, because, he said, " When Davis took me to see him I did not like his northern appearance."

Burton was a close friend at Elm Park, Drumcondra, the house where Davis met Annie Hutton and found his greatest happiness. It has been thought that Davis perhaps was introduced to the Huttons by Burton; but some letters recently discovered, and now published by the Cuala Press—Annie Hutton's letters to Davis written during their short engagement—we learn that he was brought there by Thomas Hutton, Annie's father, who met him at the *Nation* office. Hutton was already a subscriber to the *Nation*, and the introduction may have been effected at his request by young John Pigot, an occasional contributor, who was a frequent visitor at Elm Park. Thomas, the head of the celebrated firm of coachbuilders at Summerhill, was a wealthy man with liberal sympathies, who had married a highly accomplished woman from Co. Down. Mrs. Hutton's interests ranged over a wide field, philosophy, art, politics; she took lessons in painting from Burton and had visited the Continental galleries with her daughters, of whom Annie was the youngest and the favourite. Annie combined sweetness with distinction; and it is not surprising that Davis, when he first met her at dinner at the Huttons on the 22nd of December, 1843 (the date is given in her letters), should at once have lost his heart to her, as she did hers to him. We may imagine that Davis, in spite of the personal preoccupation, neglected no effort to bring the Huttons to his Irish way of feeling; and Annie, who once compared him to Fichte, the German metaphysical patriot—she was learned as well as pretty—was no doubt easily converted for reasons of the heart. But her parents succeeded in resisting Davis's persuasiveness and would never make confession of nationality as understood by him. They would have had him confine his movement within the limits of antiquarian research. Nevertheless their opposition to the hasty engagements of their daughter was dictated by private rather than political considerations. Annie was delicate and only eighteen, perhaps she did not yet know her own mind. Davis was no money-maker, and the little capital he had he managed like a child. The Huttons themselves were very well off, but Annie was not the only child they had to consider—she had two sisters and seven brothers. So, as we learn from Duffy, and this is confirmed by the new letters, it was not until the end of July 1845, that Davis was accepted as a suitor by the family. In one of her letters of August, Annie recalls the poignance of past separations and refers to separations still to come, for no marriage-day was fixed, and she was to be brought to Rome for the winter. But she wrote, " O, I am very happy; a happiness beyond all I had ever dreamed of . . . . I am going to play Irish airs now, how I wish I could sing them." Davis planned to join her in Rome; but four weeks later he lay on his death-bed.

She went to Rome that winter, as had been intended, and perhaps then began that translation of the " Embassy in Ireland of Monsignor Rinucinni," which Davis had suggested she should undertake. This big work was left incomplete at her death in 1853, but her mother piously continued it and published it twenty years later. Her relationship with the Davis family during the few years that she lived after Davis's death centred round Charlotte, to whom she wrote on her return from Rome: " I feel as if your friendship and love were a thing to live for, as if I have again an object in life." When Duffy returned from Australia in the eighteen-eighties he found Charlotte in London and had from her and from James Davis's daughter such of the family history as he gave in the biography of Davis. Charlotte, then a tiny but spirited old woman, was called " Aunt Cleury " by the family, and her surviving

grandniece remembers the tradition of her fiery devotion to the memory of Davis and how it was said that she had for years refused to visit James because he had been critical of his brother's ideals. James married an Atkins cousin from Co. Cork and occupied the house in Lower Baggot Street until his death in 1892. His daughter married a Mr. Studholme with property in Offaly, and his son, a learned theologian, the Reverend John Atkins Davis, was rector of Ettagh-with-Kilcolman in the same County for many years, and is buried in Ettagh churchyard. Davis's eldest brother, the surgeon, remained like James in Dublin. He lived in Waterloo Road, and became Deputy Inspector of Military Hospitals, Royal Artillery. He drew up a vast collection of pedigrees relating chiefly to Southern families, and left these to the Office of Arms in Dublin. His hobby earned him the names of Pedigree Davis and Who's who Davis. Some years ago I met in London a Mr. Davis, Attorney-General for Saskatchewan, who told me that he was descended from a brother of Thomas Davis, and the ancestor in question must have been this Who's who Davis, since the Offaly rector died unmarried.

[*Note:* Frederick Burton did at least two portraits of Annie Hutton, one a water colour in which she appears with her two sisters, and the other a chalk drawing. A copy of the Burton group was made by Mrs. Hutton. There is also a bust of Annie Hutton by Christopher Moore, the sculptor of the fountain in Pearse Street. At the Burton Exhibition held in Dublin in 1900 there were shown two drawings of Davis and a painting of Mrs. Hutton.]

DAVIS AND THE MODERN REVOLUTION

By Frank Gallagher

"When the Irish read and reflect with Davis, their day of redemption will be at hand."

IT was Arthur Griffith who wrote that and he wrote it in a memorable year. He wrote it in the year 1916, seventy-one years after that fateful day when Davis' colleagues met in the *Nation* offices and, despite the contemporary cult of self-restraint, wept unashamedly.

He had gone—the genius amongst that brilliant band. The man was dead who could put his hand to anything, rhapsody or satire, essay or treatise, poem or ballad, and yet who never dishonoured this facility but was sincere in all things.

To the young men of the years that enfolded the Rising of Easter Week, Davis was a revelation. There is no need here to criticise the things and thoughts of the past, but eloquence had become stale and idealism blunted and faith shaken in the first fourteen years of this century. As they had after the agony of the Parnell split, so now the young men hungered for a new national evangel. They found an old one that was new. They found it in Davis. He was almost the exact contrast to the louder voices of their own day—solid rather than showy, durable rather than effervescent, honest rather than brilliant, penetrating rather than persuasive. Where there had been much flattery and cajoling they found some sharp words and some bitter truths; where there had been well-organised intolerance they found breadth and understanding and moderation; where there had been the wreathing of unpleasant issues in vague words, there was a startling forthrightness, a fearless assertion. Nothing was burked. Davis believed in physical force if physical force was necessary; Davis believed in separation, if nothing less would give us full sovereignty; Davis believed in an Irish Ireland; in our own culture being our only gateway to the culture of the world; he believed that the Irish tongue, Irish games, Irish festivals, Irish customs, were the best in all the world—for Irishmen. Davis not only expounded a faith: with all the arts of prose and rhyme he battled for it.

From a man's writings it is not easy to pluck a single sentence that more clearly expresses than any other his whole aim and purpose. There is such a sentence in a passage he wrote on Sidney Smith which to his contemporaries must have contained Davis's whole ambition:

"to sap tyranny, to ruin cant, to make men happy."

In these ten words Davis described the uses to which Sidney Smith put his gifts. They were the uses to which he himself put his own gifts. He was the enemy, long sworn, undauntable, of every form of tyranny and despotism and lived only to overthrow them; he hated cant and humbug from his very soul and ever itched to expose them; he was the friend of happiness and yearned with all his strength to make his nation happy and through it to give happiness to the world.

Although to the young men of our days of insurgency Davis came as a voice startlingly appropriate and modern, he wrote in a time so different from ours as to be almost another epoch. He spoke to a nation of eight millions, many hundreds of thousands of them in deepest want. They were a disarmed and partly disillusioned people. They had no Government of their own, no local councils, their only representatives were a tiny and ineffective group in another country's Parliament. Their fathers had barely emerged from the long night of the Penal Laws. The marks of that indescribable persecution were still upon them, upon their souls no less than upon their faces. Their standard of living was desperately low and they were forced to see the rich produce of the land they worked shipped out to absentees while they sat at bare tables. They were without any sustained system of education and the language which contained their culture and their strong character as a people was being forcibly taken from them. In addition to all this, faction both local and national was encouraged until at times prolonged conflicts among the peasantry completed their helplessness to resist any wrong. There was widespread intemperance. Such were the circumstances in which Davis wrote; such was the Ireland to whom he spoke.

Yet the astonishing thing is that the young men of the Easter Week generation hardly noticed that Davis wrote for another time. So sure the truths that were said, so wise the counsel given, so fearless the courage, so bold the assertion, so truly directed the sharp shaft, that Davis became part of the thinking of the re-awakened Ireland as if those close-set pages of the *Nation* were but printed on the eve of the founding of the Volunteers at the Rotunda, that November of 1913.

Thoughts that seemed to belong only to the opening years of the twentieth century had been given form by this Young Irelander three generations before. He anticipated Connolly with "the people of the country are its wealth" (and Lincoln with "by the People the People must be righted"); he anticipated the Gaelic League with "Nothing can make us believe that it is natural or honourable for the Irish to speak the speech of the alien, the invader"; he anticipated the dangers to democracy of "the violence and forwardness of selfish men"; he anticipated the abstention policy of Sinn Féin by his emphasis on the anti-Irish character of the British Parliament; he anticipated the struggle against State control by his condemnation of centralisation as creating an official despotism and as "at least as great a foe to freedom, to spirit and to prosperity as aristocracy"; he anticipated the modern agricultural policy with his flaming phrases "no patriot will repose while this gifted old nation is the farm of the foreigner"; he anticipated and warned against the soul destroying nature of the civilisation mass-production was begetting; he even anticipated Ireland's rôle in European wars with his:

> "Ireland has no quixotic mission to hunt out and quarrel for—not being able to redress—distant wrongs, when her own sufferings and thraldom require every exertion and every alliance."

He even anticipated the modern industrial revival in which we would be wise to pay more for goods we made ourselves than the foreign manufacturer would charge for them, for the money spent at home would keep our people at work.

It was this up-to-date quality in Davis's thinking that made him one of the unseen builders of the independence movement more than sixty years after his death. That man of thirty-one, the whole of whose evangelical life was fitted into five years, lived on to be the most potent influence in shaping the thought of Arthur Griffith, and through Arthur Griffith, in releasing the young minds of the new century from the fogs and shibboleths of parliamentarianism. But Davis did even more for those young minds.

All through his writings Davis has a manliness not equalled by any other writer of his time, Mitchel not excepted. Mitchel excells in forcefulness, Davis in forthrightness. What was necessary to say he said it. He was stern with the people when he pointed to their faults. He told them they had failed in their insurrections because they had neither discipline nor generalship—their victories were those of a mob. He protested against the name-calling of opponents. They would never secure liberty by calling the Duke of Wellington a coward or a dotard. He condemned their political impatience. He spoke with scorn of noisy mobs: "the mob," he said "which meets to make a noise and runs away from a stick, a horse, a sabre is a wretched affair." He warned the people they would get nowhere by mere turbulence and was contemptuous of the way "we fell to agonies of gratitude" the moment Britain gave us back some little of what she had taken from us. Be tolerant of others' opinions, respect others' consciences, he told them. "If we are too idle, too dull, too capricious to learn the arts of strength, wealth and liberty, let us not murmur at being slaves."

The Ireland of Davis's day needed these stern words. But they sank deep too into the minds of the young men who were to become the Irish Volunteers. Davis's hatred of indiscipline, of mobs; his urgings of self-denial, uprightness, truthfulness, self-confidence, the capacity to keep one's own counsel—all that went straight into the hearts of those who were to create the best disciplined, most sacrificial, least talkative, most tolerant national movement in our history.

Two things Davis stressed unceasingly. They stand shoulder-high out of all his writings: Self-reliance and unity. He asked Irishmen to demand their rights, not to beg for concessions:

> "'Tis not the rich crumbs that fall from the proud man's table we covet, but the right to have even a frugal table for ourselves. Dogs may claim the former and be grateful—the latter can only be acceptable to men."

How this, read and meditated upon in the early days of Sinn Féin, must have turned young men's minds from senseless compromises!

Bluntly he told the Irish people that their country had no friends who would come to help her and upon herself alone depended her triumph:

> "Were she prosperous she would have many to serve her though their hearts were cold in her cause . . . . Your country needs all your devotion. She has no foreign friend. Beyond the limits of green Erin there is none to aid her. She may gain by the feuds of the stranger; she cannot hope for his peaceful help, be he distant, be he near; her trust is in her sons. You are Irishmen. She relies on your devotion."

The generations which followed Davis must have understood that harsh truth—the Fenians, the Land Leaguers, the early Home Rulers, certainly the early Sinn Féiners, the nation after Easter Week, the Ireland of only yesterday understood it. It prepared them, by dissolving a mirage, for a lonely struggle and protected them from despair when none would help them. Be self-reliant Davis had said a thousand times. The days came when we were.

Davis's second great theme was unity among ourselves. He had lived in days wracked by faction. Faction fights had become so much accepted that they were simply a spectacle. They were a symbol of a deeply divided nation. The struggle for emancipation had exaggerated the differences between the creeds and the outsider was not slow to dig the divide deeper. Davis knew that all men of goodwill love liberty and he prepared the ground for Catholic and Protestant thinking better of one another:

> "Selfishness" he told the majority, "and not Protestantism was and is the origin of Irish treason."

He told the nation that this division between Catholic and Protestant had no roots in Irish character. It came from outside:

> "England is true to no party. Had the Protestants been in the majority she would have used the Catholics as the implements of persecution. They would have been favoured in that case, that they might have been made a scorpion whip in the hands of the oppressor."

He preached the gospel of salvation from this crippling disunity:

> "We love our country and strive for its freedom. To that end we seek union among all sects and parties at home—Protestant as well as Catholic, Presbyterian and Quaker, Conservative and Democrat—all are welcome to our ranks. Our creed, as politics, is like that of the Roman legionaries, sacred faith to the flag under which we serve—the green flag of fatherland—the flag which has waved over fields of victory and fields of defeat but never of dishonour."

He urged both Catholic and Protestant to examine this division between them and note how little cause there was for it:

> "Let both (Catholic and Protestant) look narrowly at the causes of those intestine feuds which have prostrated both in turn before the stranger and see whether much may not be said for both sides, and whether half of what each calls crime in the other is not his own distrust of his neighbour's ignorance."

This was glorious teaching for the young men at the threshold of the "Four Glorious Years" when after a long period of quiescence sectarianism had been revived and been made a factor in national politics and was just then dooming Ireland to a new frustration. Griffith and Pearse saved the Nation from this final humiliation. Using both the words and the thoughts of Davis they spoke to their generation a nobler doctrine, pointing out to them that the Fathers of the Separatist movement came mainly from that Protestant minority from which it was sought to divide the majority, and that two of that minority, Tone and Davis, had by their definitions shown the indissolubility of the components that made up the Irish Nation and the things of vital worth each section had brought and could bring to its greatness.

Davis had one more message to give his people. It too is as fitting now as it was then. All through the first half of the nineteenth century the occupying power sought to make its task easier by winning the people's acceptance to things as they were. Forget the past was as much a cry then as it became later—what is the value of a barbarous language when English is spoken all over the world; why live in the dead generations; forget yesterday and look to to-morrow. Davis fought that counsel with all his majestic might. He saw it as an effort to quench the flame that had escaped even the Penal Laws. He gave the opposite advice tirelessly:

> "If we live influenced by wind and sun and tree, and not by the passions and deeds of the past we are a thriftless and a hopeless people."
>
> "From a knowledge of local history comes that permanent and proud nationality which appears to sacrifice life and wealth to liberty, but really wins all together."
>
> "This country of ours is no sand-bank thrown up by some recent caprice of earth. It is an ancient land, honoured in the archives of civilisation, traceable into antiquity by its piety, its valour, and its sufferings."

He bade his people dwell upon these things; to learn their history; speak their ancient tongue; study the ruins of cromlech, and rath and castle; map out the olden battlefields; treasure the patriot names; depict the great moments of our Nation's story in art, in literature, in poetry. A thousand times he met the oppressor's whispering "forget the past" with a shout of "remember the past" and told the people to draw from it new strength, new pride, and everlasting hope.

When his colleagues in the offices of the *Nation* wept for their dead comrade they thought that the greatest among them was lost to Ireland and her freedom. They did not know that he had become immortal to be named by successive leaders as the philosopher of our national redemption and to be put with four others as the Father of National Liberty—"Thus Tone, thus Davis, thus Lalor, thus Mitchel, thus Parnell" wrote Pearse. "Methinks I have raised some ghosts that will take a little laying."

And it was Pearse who also wrote:

> "Character is the greatest thing in a man; and Davis's character was such as the Apollo Belvidere is said to be in the physical order—in his presence all men stood more erect. The Romans had a noble word which summed up moral beauty and all private and civic valour: the word was *virtus*. If English had as noble a word as that it would be the word to apply to the thing which made Thomas Davis so great a man."

DAVIS AND THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

By Daniel Corkery

I.

I REMEMBER how, fully forty years ago, in one of those dingy committee-meeting rooms with which workers in the Language Movement have had always to be content, I was quite alone writing minutes or addressing circulars, with much débris round about, when a giant of an aged man walked in, put his hat, a very large American black hat, on the table, and sat down opposite me. He was grey-headed, grey-bearded, alert, and, for all the girth of him and the height, spoke in the softest of voices and with the gentlest of manners—west Cork with one of its loveliest sea-mists upon it. I had never seen him before. What he wanted to know was why we had, in one of our posters, made use of a certain word, an Irish word. It was right enough a curious word. I have not seen it so used for many years. We had borrowed it, I think, from some publication or other issued by the Gaelic League of London, a body prolific in scholarship. My visitor was then in about his seventy-third year, and that was what was troubling him at the end of his life. And such a life! For my visitor was O'Donovan Rossa.

In his monograph on Thomas Davis, Mr. J. M. Hone gives hardly one page out of one hundred and nineteen, to Davis's views on the Irish language. The average reader passes it lightly over, forgetting it immediately for the more interesting matter ahead. As if for us now the most significant thing about Davis is not that he, because he saw that there was a connection between language and nationality, made it, or tried to make it, an important plank in the platform of a political party. Davis would have it so one hundred years since; and now it is a plank in the platform of every political party in that part of our country which has achieved so much more than Davis, the dreamer, ever dreamed of!

The others in Davis's movement had their own significance. It was Duffy who first struck upon the idea of Independent Opposition, a weapon valuable in its day, now outmoded. It was Fintan Lalor who proposed the withholding of rents from rack-renting landlords; on which teaching the Land League achieved its aims. And Mitchel's significance is that more deeply than the others he felt in the bones of him that only Republicanism was destined to end the seven hundred years of struggle.

Time itself has proved them a brilliant band: ideas were familiar in their mouths as household words. That was their way. And it was Davis who established that way among them. The dreams of his fellows have been fulfilled to such a measure as ensures their ultimate realisation. His dream, if, as Griffith said, it meant rebuilding the Nation upon the Gael, is still far from that stage where all the problems of construction have been solved. Perhaps it was integral in his gift of leadership that the nature of his own particular dream should be so fundamental that the others,

one and all, must be fulfilled and have become accessory before it, as if it were to crown all, could be seriously taken in hand.

II

We have never met the name of Philip Barron in Davis's writings nor in those of his companions—curious, for Davis was grown up, he was nineteen, when Barron was spending both himself and his money on propagating the language, and with much the same general idea as Davis himself would build upon. A Catholic, a landlord, a gentleman, a duellist, and something of a scholar, he had such gifts of headlong earnestness as were bound to raise about him more than enough of enemies. He did raise them, and O'Curry and John O'Donovan were among them. He was born for tragedy, and if it was due to his lavish expenditure of his private means on schemes to save the language that he died in poverty, perhaps in exile, then his personal tragedy was at one with that of his nation.[1]

The pressure of the time was dead against him. Emancipation was having diverse effects, some of them deadly. Because we over-simplify the pattern of the community we do not dwell upon these effects. We do not realise them, and in consequence we miss the full significance of men like Barron and Davis, one Catholic, the other Protestant. Here is a passage no one finds any difficulty in accepting: "The penal laws had worked a most disastrous separation of the people from the gentry. The dominant Protestant party—the jovial, fox-hunting, claret-drinking squirearchy—all looked down on the great mass of their Catholic countrymen as a totally inferior race of beings, intended by God Almighty for the inheritance of serfdom . . . There was, amongst some [of these Catholics] the reaction of deep and deadly hate. Others were awed into a social idolatry of Protestants. I knew one most respectable and very wealthy Catholic merchant, who declared that when a boy at school, about the year 1780, he felt overwhelmed and bewildered at the honour of being permitted to play at marbles with a Protestant schoolfellow."[2] The writer of those words was born in 1807 and died only in 1894; and it is not about the eighteenth century he is writing but about what he himself had seen. But here are other words about these years of Barron's activities and Davis's college life "The country had in fact since 1796 been under a terrorism which survived both the Rebellion, the Union, and Emancipation, a terrorism in which the normal ascendancy was reinforced by an Orange bigotry which meant to keep the power in Protestant hands in spite of emancipation and to make rebels and 'croppies' (as they called the discontented) 'lie down,' as their song ran."[3] What we have to keep in mind is that Emancipation created—or at any rate widened—that separation of the Catholic gentry from the Catholic peasantry—a separation that was more than social, since it exists still in the cultural and political spheres. Emancipation, as Davis, with disgust, expressed it, "put a silken badge on a few members of one profession . . . dignified a dozen Catholics with a senatorial name in a foreign and hostile Legislature." The sons of that Catholic who remembered his bewilderment at being allowed to play with a Protestant boy, could now look forward to fitting themselves out to fill many of the

[1] For an interesting account of Barron see *The Sword of Light* by Desmond Ryan.
[2] *Ireland and Her Agitators* by W. J. O'Neill Daunt, p. 2.
[3] *A History of Ireland* by E. Curtis, p. 364.

offices, public and municipal, civil and military, which up to that time had been closed to them. To come however at these positions they had to be Catholics of a certain stamp, for the giving of the positions was still and for long after in the hands of a caste, to use Curtis's word. There was nothing very native about that caste; yet even before emancipation its airs and graces had begun to be imitated only all too well in those Catholic schools and colleges set up to take the place of those that years of revolution and war had deprived us of on the continent. Emancipation seemed now to justify such an attitude in these schools. And so one begins to understand why Barron found enmity instead of help from the richer Catholics, and Davis nothing better, even though that enmity did not speak out. It was only the sons of the Catholic poor—the boy O'Donovan Rossa for instance—who took to Davis's Gaelicism.

Of this anti-Irish temper we also of course find open expression in the system of primary education just then set up. What we have to realise is the sort of mind that could preen itself, as it often did, on formulating so unnative and unnatural a scheme in such conditions as prevailed. That mind wrote Progress with a great capital. All this however has been written about before, as also indeed has O'Connell's attitude to the language, although about O'Connell it is well not to forget that the " respectables " to a man were never too taken by his ways or methods.

Protestant ascendancy, Catholic " respectability," Progress—in these terms—we are to gather together our ideas of the time in which Barron finished his course and Davis began.

III

Except in round numbers it is not easy to establish how the language stood when Davis came into public life. He writes that " about half the people west of a line drawn from Derry to Waterford speak Irish habitually, and in some of the mountain tracts east of the line it is still common". This we are inclined to discount as the opinion of one who is making a case. If however we consult later authorities who have gathered their facts from travellers' accounts and such official reports as exist, we rather agree with it. We find an English author saying in 1812 that " only a minority of the people speak our language ". Lappenberg, a German traveller, reckons that (in 1835) four out of seven millon spoke it as their mother-tongue. Others say three million. It was spoken up to the gates of Dublin. Kohl, another traveller, is surprised at the amount of it in Cork city. Dr. Murphy, bishop of Cork, begins to learn it when forty years old. He was a learned bishop however, loving books. Professor Curtis gives the number as one and a half million. This seems too low; for according to the 1861 Census Report the number then of Irish speakers was 1,105,536. If a million returned themselves as such, the actual number was of course far higher. It wasn't a thing to be proud of, nor one to be careful about having it recorded; and the very people who probably never saw a census-sheet at all were exactly those who spoke Irish only. If one accepts Curtis's figure one cannot understand how the number declined only by 400,000 between the 40's and 1861, with the Famine and the emigrations in between. O'Neill Daunt, who lived among the people, and knew his Ireland, says that ninety per cent. of the people of county Cork in the 'forties were native speakers. Torna, who judges by the amount of

manuscript remaining from these years thinks that he is right. It may then be reasonable to assume that there were still two and a half millions speaking the language when the *Nation* was established.

We have spoken of that over-riding mind which alone made itself heard at large—the official mind, political, " respectable ". There was also of course that other mind, which was not heard at all. It nevertheless enriched the pattern of the community, and with such treasure-trove as could not be had elsewhere, nor anything resembling it. This it certainly did, if unperceived, unnoticed; for men and women lived by its values and by them sought eternity. And those of us now who trouble ourselves to read what remains of what they were accustomed to comfort their spirit with, are also aware of this enrichment. While those others who depend on the Prouts, the Maginns, the Crokers, the Carletons, the Levers and the many others for whose wares England was the market—they certainly must see the whole pattern in a different way.

If there were still two and a half millions of Gaels left in the land, one may ask where was the need for Barrons and Davises. No need at all, it may be replied, if a century and a half of penal enactments could work its will on a nation and leave in its wake only such moral and spiritual ruin as a four years' war, or a five years' war, might leave, even such warfare as was then unthinkable. In such matters the duration of the sufferings tells, for since no generation begins with the same reserves of fortitude as the last, the malign effects of these enactments become more deeply interfused in the being of the nation than those of a passing scourge, no matter how terrible, could ever be. If the sophisticated mind taking it by and large had become so patently unreal, working with such a shallow sense of values, as we have been noting, history itself accounts for it; and equally so, history informs us why that two and a half million souls were left without leaders of their own, leaders integrally one with them, not become separated from them by an alien education, and also left with a way of life that could not furnish them with leaders. Gradually during that period of suffering, every institution that the Gael had advantaged himself with, each built with such care, had been destroyed. What else does this mean than that the high roads and the transport system of the national mind, for the Gaelic mind was the national mind, had been laid waste. When this had been " achieved ", what freshness or give and take or spirit of adventure could one expect to find in Gaeldom? There was left to it only the hearth and its simple pieties. If we are thinking in terms of mind is there much difference to be observed between the resilient force of one million and three millions when all that we associate with such images as forum, court, rostrum, bank, library, are forbidden them? All that remained to them were indeed only the sense of literature and the sense of their own history; and there must have been as much vexation as comfort in these if they kept them from utterly forgetting that they had once enjoyed a fully-integrated nationhood, " self-chartered and self-ruled ", in Meagher's ringing phrase. Not only then was this denudation of their national being ever present to their minds, but now to worsen it still more, further stripping of it was counselled to them by their own people, indeed by their own superiors! They were given to understand that their language was a badge of ignorance and a stay on their ever raising themselves from poverty. Naturally they took to flinging manuscripts in the fire and to withholding the language of their hearts from the tongues of their children.

IV

And to do overweeningly exactly the opposite of this was so large and deep a part of their nature! They loved the past; they loved their language. Not only what was in it, but its very self. They loved even the look of it, laid down in lovely and regular lines on paper or parchment. Pádraig Phiarais Cúndún who had despaired of getting the better of his landlord and his swampish fields near Ballymacoda, county Cork, dared all and took himself and his family across the Atlantic in 1826. He sends no word back to Ballymacoda until 1834 when he is quite certain he has made good. Letters and poems then begin to come from him, always in Irish. And his theme is always the riches of the new land, and why should they remain sunken in poverty and slavery at home. He is an excellent emigration agent, though unpaid. Yes, but they must write to him in Irish. "I love the track of your swift pen and to hear, and see, the speech of your sweet mouth" he says to one, and cries out to another: "Let you know that you are to write in the Irish language or not to write at all."[1] In that naive yet invaluable book *The Bible in Ireland* the writer, Mrs. Asenath Nicholson, American, who went into the strangest places in the land, not understanding the people any more than they understood her, left an Irish *Testament* with a poor man in the Bantry district. "The peasants in this part of the country are not so afraid of the scriptures if they speak Irish, because they attach a kind of sanctity to that language."

The latter part of her statement is certainly true, whatever about the first. All that they know of God and humankind was in that language; all that ever enlarged or refreshed their spirit. They themselves were in it, and that in a way no latter-day people, one and all, can find themselves in theirs. And while the new evaluation of all that was Gaelic being preached at them, sometimes convinced their mind, the spirit rose up recalcitrant. In the Gaeltacht thirty-seven years ago we remember a kitchenful, loud and scornful in argument on the value of this language, the native speakers of it reiterating: What has it done for us? What use is it? and the students of it from the city pouring out upon them strange philosophies in what to those speakers must have seemed even stranger Irish. At last the argument dies away; the best seanachaidhe of them all raises a song and finishes it; there is a silence; and then the most violent of the decriers plants his hands on his knees, straightens his back, focuses every eye on his eye, and with the deliberateness of challenge says: "Will any of you tell me there is a better song than that in English?" And not one had the courage to take him on.

So did the undoing of a nationality proceed century after century, year after year, what might seem the closing conflicts fought out by hearth sides and over simple cradles; all that was gracious and human and spiritual in the people resisting. Slowly it went on, even in those final days. We read that twenty editions, probably not large editions, of Tadhg Gaelach's poems were printed in Waterford in the half-century after his death in 1799. This in spite of the barrage against the language! It is not difficult to believe it. To the Ballymacoda countryside Pádraig Cúndún sent back no poem that was not copied and recopied from house to house and parish to

[1] Pádraig Piarais Cúndún: Risteárd Ó Foghludha.

parish. Those copies are still treasured there. One of his songs is in every anthology of modern Irish poetry, and well deserves to be.

One sometimes wonders if Thomas Davis, when for instance he writes "to impose another language on such a people . . . is to cut off the entail of feeling, and separate the people from their forefathers by a deep gulf" had, or could have had, any full sense of what this cutting off of the entail of feeling really meant for them? I can never feel that he really knew the Irish people. He certainly had taken great pains, and all praise to him for it, to hear of them. And his heart was deep and his mind warm with imagination. He thought out such conclusions; but what was involved in the hideous transaction he could make only small estimate of, as compared with one who is aware of what the new language gave them for what they had discarded of the old. What for example have the people of county Waterford taken to their comforting instead of Tadhg Gaelach's "Duan Chroide Iosa"?

He could not possibly fittingly evaluate what was being lost. His wise generalisation he could not test, though the problem, in all its aspects, was being worked out round about him. He depended too much on such books as were at hand, on translations, and on the well-meaning but fatuous—shall we call them Celts?—who came together and set up societies to publish ancient texts.

Of course those Celts went as little among the people as those others who were not enrolled as Celts at all; and when they met together it was not their way to speak the language, one to another, even when they knew it. One would think they wished it dead. They would publish or get published an odd text,—laudable work, only that it was not at all the time for such work. Manuscripts, as valuable for all we know as some of those they published, which were being flung in the fire, we still might have by us, if there were half-a-dozen Philip Barrons in the land, or Thomas Davis had around him companions as deep-seeing as himself. Well, in those days scholars were not accustomed to look at living Greeks when in Athens nor at living Italians when in Rome or Mantua. The moulds of scholarship were set, and even giants of scholarship like O'Curry and O'Donovan could not see this simple point we have been making, namely, that by their attending to the living language as well as the dead, or at any rate encouraging others, however crazy their knowledge, to do so, they could have helped to mitigate that barrage of scorn on, and disrespect for, the living speech which was even then causing the loss of more treasure than can ever be estimated now. The unselfish work of such men as O'Donovan and O'Curry remains, a solid thing beyond praise. Only the legend of half-scholars like Barron lingers. But such men as he were necessary too. Perhaps only for such in the background we never should have had the help of either of those two giants. It may be that John O'Donovan's father was only a half-scholar. He would not consent to Death until he had once again poured into the ears of the eleven years old boy, this John, the tables of his ancestry—back to 214, A.D.! It would surprise us to learn that O'Curry's father, Eoghan Mór, was anything more sane.

If then Thomas Davis, as perhaps we may yet have to point out, goes astray when he speaks of Irish literature (he could not possibly so mis-read its spirit, or the message of Irish history, as John O'Donovan does) or fails to illustrate a generalisation

even when illustrations abound, how could he possibly be expected to have done otherwise.

V

We now have I think some fair idea of the uneasy pattern of the community in which Davis grew up, and laboured when grown. An ancient nationality was being undone, almost as if in a hurry. Nationality is an aloof spirit, rich in personality rather than in character; and if personality without character is a dreamer who cannot intelligibly say what his dreams are, character without personality is a ravening brute, and clownish into the bargain. So that there is chaos in the mind of man, or nation, where no integration of the two can be established.[1] Davis had glimpses of such a reintegration of the national mind; glimpses only, it may be, that is, if all we know of his way of thinking in such realms, as set down by himself on paper, be not taken as indicative of much more lying unexpressed within him, awaiting the releasing touch of electric circumstance. Because we think that the man himself is often taken without reference to his time and place, we have delayed perhaps too long in feeling for the vital forces in his environment; so too those essays of his are far too often read without reference to how they were written or for what purpose. We have only to deal very generally with those of them in which either nationality or the language or both are dealt with.

He had intimations of the impossibility of a nationality continuing to survive when deprived of its language. Intimations may be the best word, for the questions that arise when this identifying of separate nationalities with separate languages is posited, ramify in all directions, and up and down. Only in our own time are these questions being discussed with anything like thoroughness. They are of such a nature that anyone can have a fling at them. And " state " and " nation " are so often confused one with the other, and " political " used as if it meant " national," and " national " as if it meant " patriotic " that any essay dealing with the matter should properly begin by fixing the terms. This cannot be done here, though a point or two may emerge as we go on, a point of direction.

" Young England "—that contemporaneous movement across the water, of which the name may have suggested the name Young Ireland (but not to the Young Irelanders themselves) " Young England," says Maurois in his book on Disraeli, " unfortunately was a sentiment and not a programme." Perhaps Young Ireland had a programme, but certainly Young Ireland's usefulness was to be measured by its success in inculcating in others such sentiments as were giving its originators their brightest dreams. That was useful work, if we see it against the background of time and place we have been feeling for. Sentiment is not to be sneered at; it can mother heroism. When however those who have in our own time been reared up by the Gaelic League and Sinn Féin seek in the essays of Davis for lines of growth in his apperceptions of what a language must mean to a nationality, they come on lines that are not continuous, that hang in the air, as if they had not sprung from a vital principle. Those of his party who opposed his views on the language—Gavan

[1] It must not be taken that I am equating character with the Saxon, and personality with the Gael! There can arise the need for such reintegration in uniracial, unilingual countries.

Duffy, Mac Nevin, Denny Lane of Cork, and others differed only little from O'Connell's view, or Grattan's. They took their stand on expediency, on Progress. Davis could only break out against such an idea of progress. " By the end and object of the Irish improvement people " he said, " we must judge them; their emigration, their works, their poor laws, are all meant to be so many precursors of Anglicism." Of course that is exactly how they did work out after his time, the language being ignored; and how they shall continue to work out even when Ireland from shore to shore is an independent republic if the language does not become the vernacular of the whole country. Such a republic cannot of course be anything else than a province of England, however independent it may be. In Davis's phrase it will have lost its " native qualities." That phrase is the keynote of all his thinking as a Young Irelander. " A people without a language of its own is only half a nation." " A nation should guard its language more than its territories." " To lose your native tongue, and learn that of an alien is the worst badge of conquest—it is the chain on the soul. To have lost entirely the national language is death; the fetter has worn through." These, and others of like import from his pen, all come to this: the language for the sake of those native qualities must be kept alive.

Yes, but to what degree? Would he agree with the Gaelic Leaguer that it must become so overwhelmingly the vernacular of the country, that no other vernacular will be necessary? Other languages, as many as are needed for either cultural or other purposes, but no other vernacular. Davis sometimes seems to envisage the future of the language as secondary to English. He speaks of secondary languages. He wants a newspaper established, wholly Irish or bilingual. He sets out a list of countries where such papers exist, and of their peoples he says: " while they everywhere tolerate and use one language as a medium of commerce, they cherish the other as a vehicle of history, the wings of song, the soil of their genius, and a mask and guard of their nationality."

Davis would seem to be satisfied that the *life* of the country should be carried on in English, and the *dreaming* in Irish! And yet in the same essay Davis has already been speaking about the want of scientific words in the language, and, very sensibly, advises the adoption of the existing names in other languages. Now, in Davis's time those scientific terms were not hung upon the wings of song (modern English—and other—poets think little of such " outrages "). In this essay then we come on those broken lines we have mentioned. What we finally understand, however, is that the " tolerated " language is to be the language of the business, and the " cherished " the language of the " dream." The Gaelic Leaguer remembers that this was very much the case in parts of Ireland in former centuries. He also remembers how the arrangement worked out in the nineteenth. The " tolerated " came to possess the high places everywhere, and the " cherished " was to become a figure of fun.

Yet Davis is consistent in his thinking if we grant that his views on nationality are sound. It is thought that it was a tutor in Trinity College inclined his mind towards nationalism, an interesting man named Wallis. We have Wallis writing thus in the Introduction to his edition of Davis's poems (1845). " And here, youth of Ireland, in this little book is a Psalter of Nationality in which every aspiration of your hearts will meet its due response—your every aim and effort, encouragement and sympathy, and wisest admonition . . ." They are exactly such words as Davis himself would

use in recommending the book to Irish youth if another had written it. "Aspirations" is the word. Later on Mitchel uses it, also in connection with Davis's poems. We would point out that Davis's prose in spirit is the same as that of his poetry, the main strength and beauty of which, says Mitchel, "lies in its simple *passion*." For Davis, taught by Thierry (a lyrical, picturesque, story-telling historian highly commended by Davis to others) and also indeed by the romantic temper of all western Europe, the main strength and beauty of nationality lies in its simple passion. Nationality is sentiment; and the language, since it holds such sentiment in solution in its literature, place-names, legends, folk lore, etc. must be cherished. Irish nationality with him is simply Irish sentiment. That is, patriotic sentiment. It must moreover be patently patriotic. He says that Barry Cornwall's poems are not "in any sense *national songs*." But of course they are, and in every sense, because they are part and parcel of a national literature, namely English literature, a literature with its own way, whether it is expressing patriotic sentiment or not.

Sometimes Davis seems to have felt this. In his essay on Irish songs he gives us what is really his idea of a poet—a romantic poet, naturally, when he delineates the sort of men who can write lyrics for every class in Ireland. "If they be men . . . who have grown up amid the common talk and pictures of nature—the bosomed lake amid rocks . . . the endless sea with its roaring or whispering fringes—the mantled, or glittering or thundering night—the bleak moor, the many-voiced trees . . . etc." Now, if those poets did give us their interpretations or "representations" of these phenomena, one wonders would Davis speak of their work as national if it were barren of patriotic sentiment?

This equation of nationality with patriotic sentiment is of course altogether too narrow and shallow. It is a thing far more substantial than that. It is rather an inborn sense of values; and the only way of "guarding" it is the daily use of this sense of values in all the trafficking of the nation, whether busy in making patriotic lyrics or not. Since we, practically speaking, do all our thinking in words, it is not necessary to point out the connection of language with this sense of values. *There* is the connection of language with nationality. And there of course is where Davis errs if he thinks a nation can function naturally as such while using two languages, each a vernacular. For each of these languages is "guarding" (more properly speaking, is exercising and developing) a different nationality.

In his book *Mise agus an Connradh* Dr. Douglas Hyde says that Davis stayed with the Dillons for some time in Mayo to learn Irish. He adds, however, that he thinks he did not learn it. He had, it would seem, to depend on translations. He writes patronisingly of the people's songs in Irish. But Thomas Mac Donagh says of those songs, and he knew them in the original, that he cannot find their equal in any other literature! He is referring to such songs as "Druimfhionn Donn Dilis," "Seán Ó Duibhir," and "Eamon O' Chnuic." Davis of course looked in them for the expression of Irish patriotism in the terms of romanticism; and came of course on something very different. One hundred years after his time the same mistake is being made, and almost every day in the year.

He thought in accordance with the spirit of a romantic period. His ringing phrases had their effect, not however where he wished, among the well-born Protestants. No. But let us turn to O'Donovan Rossa writing, in his homely way, of his boyhood:

"I remember on Sundays, how I'd sit for hours in the workshop of Mick Hurley, the carpenter, . . . listening to Patrick (Daniel) Keohane reading the *Nation* newspaper for the men who were members of the club . . . It is very possible it was through his reading I first heard of the death of Thomas Davis. It was in 1845 Thomas Davis died, and Patrick Keohane and I were in Ross then."

There anyway is one who lived long enough to see a sense of reality come into the evaluation of language as the very foundation of nationality. But in himself from the start there was a realistic attitude about it. When a young man he opened a shop in Bantry. He tells us the business was done in Irish. This was of course happening all over the country. But as well he issued his advertising matter in Irish; and if this was done any where else we have not heard of it. We find him teaching the language later on in Dublin; and at seventy-three he is still curious about even a single word.

We should like to be able to show that Barron inspired Davis, as Davis O'Donovan Rossa. Over O'Donovan Rossa dead it was fitting that Patrick Pearse should have given the word of final direction. When that direction is carried out, all four shall be remembered as nation builders. They will then be made free of a nation in which the dream and the business, personality and character, shall have been reintegrated.

THE POETRY OF THOMAS DAVIS

By Padraic Fallon

WHILE reputations, literary reputations, are usually made to be broken, that of Davis has suffered more unfairly than most in the last thirty years. It is forgotten that, primarily, he was an active revolutionary, a man whose activities have a directed, not an intuitional, purpose, and that his poetry served magnificently the only purpose which he allotted to it, that of Nationality. Those grand Ballads of his were headlines on the empty slate of a young country that was putting itself to school. They must be taken that way, as poems of Nationality, not personality, and judged accordingly.

Forty years ago, when W. B. Yeats was writing criticism and poetry was a brooding over those delicate inward movements of the psyche that enlarge the inner man beyond himself, relative criticism of this kind would have stood upon uneasy feet. Then, it was Michael Angelo or nothing, the Sistine roof or the Daily Mirror, absolute art or complete commercialism. There was nothing in-between, for this was a nice calm and pleasantly arranged English world where immemorial Dons enjoyed the world from behind their elm trees as though it were made specially for them like any other work of art. Fate and Death and Change were mere literary expressions without that reality that two world wars have now given to them. Sedentary art, and its absolute standards, could live in a world like that, with its assured securities. Keats could gild a mask there, and Shelley translate things into a musical speculation, and Wordsworth, most thoughtful of great men, walk round and round the soul as if it were a Northumbrian landscape. They were of the Master race. The struggle for racial existence and for racial pride of being was behind them, generations and generations behind them, for the Napoleonic wars were a threat at a distance and not a convulsion in their midst. They never touched on the raw and degraded world that makes the day-to-day life of semi-slavery so terrible. And those things have to be experienced to be felt, as most of Europe has experienced them in the last few years, and as Ireland has experienced them for centuries. And when they are understood in all their mental and sensual implications, standards of art must alter, and absolutes distort themselves and change to meet needs which are not those of art alone, but of human nature and of life as we take the brunt of it. This was the kind of world in which Davis found himself in 1840, a country of spade-slaves without press or Parliament, without school or schooling, without design or dignity, a people whose only fullness was dearth and destruction, and whose only freedom was the right to export themselves, a people without art or craft or adornment, and only that kind of hope that comes out of the imperishable will to survive. This was no world for an Ivory Tower, or a delicate, exact, poetry of personality. It was a world for

sword and pistol, pike and musket, a soldier's world where words must arrange themselves in the ranks and do their share of the fighting, or put themselves in pulpit or platform, and speech and preach and rant or rave until they put some purpose into the purposeless world around them; or, as Davis has put it himself, "to hallow or accurse the scenes of glory and honour, or of shame and sorrow; to give to the imagination the arms, and homes, and senates, and battles of other days; to rouse, and soften, and strengthen, and enlarge us with the passions of great periods; to lead us into love of self-denial, of justice, of beauty, of valour, of generous life and proud death; and to set up in our souls the memory of great men, who shall then be as models and judges of our actions—these are the highest duties of history, and these are best taught by a Ballad History."

This is not the way of great, or personal, art. It is art with a definite and immediate purpose; the art, not of the Sistine Chapel, but of the Poster. It will miss the finer rhythms, the small, delicate whisper of inner things, or the strange astonishment a man feels on being brought face to face with the design of his own soul. It concerns itself with the attitude, with the outline, and puts everything into the gesture, and because it seeks to touch the minds of others, rather than to express its own, the attitude and the gesture must have something of cliché about them. A teacher, after all, only teaches what is already known; only the pure artist has terms for the unknown. But this Poster-art is an art for all that; and I insist that there are times, as in Davis's time when it is the only art possible. For in 1840, when there was nothing, artist and revolutionary had to carry the whole burden of the future of a nation, and to do this had to simplify things to their lowest terms, and lay all the emphasis on the teaching qualities of art rather than on that personal private idiom in which soul talks to soul.

Davis is quite frank about all this—when he touches on it. He was first and foremost a Revolutionary with an immediate job to do, and the poet in him was always subordinated to this. It is doubtful, indeed, if he would ever have written a line of verse if the needs of THE NATION had not required it of him. What he did write came within a period of three years, three busy years in which he speeched and preached, wrote and rallied, and versified only in those odd moments in which he was free of coach or committee room. It was only one job among many, and, perhaps, in his eyes, the least of them all.

It is not surprising, then, that he did not find, or even seek for, originality. He took the nearest forms to hand, and whacked away. He, as he informs us somewhere, had 829,000 females and 580,000 males as possible readers, the only people in the country who were able to read—and those could read, but not write—and on them he had to work a national magic, carry on where O'Connell left off. To be subtle and fine and metaphysical, in such circumstances, is to be muddle-headed, to fiddle while Rome burned. Davis simplified what is heroic in the common mind, and put such a shape on it, that it has lasted even into our day. "Give me the ballads," some one said, "and let who will make the laws!" It was never so true as in this case.

And what a rousing battalion they are! You have only to think of a cottage kitchen in the Eighteen-forties, the tallow dip, and the turf fire, and men in all the

shadows hungry for self-respect. And some one intoning the SURPRISE OF CREMONA, a ballad of the Wild Geese. Listen to a couple of stanzas:

Here and there, through the city, some readier band
For honour and safety, undauntedly stand.
At the head of the regiments of Dillon and Burke
Is Major O'Mahony, fierce as a turk.
His sabre is flashing—the major is dress'd,
But muskets and shirts are the clothes of the rest!
Yet they rush to the ramparts—the clocks have tolled ten—
And Count Merci retreats with the half of his men.

" In on them ! " said Friedberg,—and Dillon is broke,
Like forest-flowers crushed by the fall of an oak;
Through the naked battalions the cuirassiers go;—
But the man, not the dress, makes the soldier, I trow.
Upon them with grapple, with bay'net, and ball,
Like wolves upon gaze-hounds, the Irishmen fall—
Black Friedberg is slain by O'Mahoney's steel,
And back from the bullets the cuirassiers reel . . .

News, news, in Vienna!—King Leopold's sad.
News, news, in St. James's!—King William is mad.
News, news, in Versailles—" let the Irish Brigade
Be loyally honoured and royally paid ! "
News, news, in old Ireland—high rises her pride,
And high sounds her wail for her children who died,
And deep is her prayer,—God send I may see
MacDonnell and Mahony fighting for me ! "

And there is FONTENOY, that was counted " seditious " in the bad times around the Nineteen-twenties, and put many a boy into an English jail. Few of us have escaped the whirl of glory that comes out of that ballad. It is nearly the perfect form. There are thin lines, and there are lines of cliché, but there are lines, too, that are rich mouthfuls of vowels and meaning. And the cumulative effect is astonishing. I may be remembering it through a boy's ears, and feeling it through the stirring complex of 1916–21, still I plump for it as a magnificent ballad, and perhaps Davis's best. It has a new use for the refrain, for one thing, and is particularly happy in its choice of what one might call " action flashes."

This was the kind of thing Davis did best. It has been called " sun-burstry " and the like by people who think verse should be overheard by putting your ear close to the page like an eavesdropper. But there is a rhetoric of action, just as there is a permissible rhetoric of speech for public occasions—or national occasions—and ballads that concern themselves with military and national glory demand the convention. Davis certainly learned from Macaulay's " Lays of Ancient Rome " how they should be handled. He learned the craft of it quickly, and though he never had time to practice it thoroughly or fastidiously, one must always remember the 829,000 females and the 580,000 males who were just able to read. That was the

only audience he had in mind, the only audience he wanted, and the man cannot be separated from the milieu.

This must never be forgotten when we consider the songs he made to old airs. The vast majority of them are not good, but they are capable in the manner of the time, the English manner of the time which had been formed by Moore. Moore had a lightness of touch that only a professional poet ever reaches, even his mawkishness of sentiment—mawkish by our standards—is pointed by a delicate fancy and an elfin sense of music. But in the tunes to which they were fitted—and the music must always be at the back of one's mind when we read them—those songs of Davis have their own appeal. One regrets that the mode of the Irish folk-song has not been followed more closely, but this regret, I think, boils down to the fact that Davis had not sufficient sensuousness of texture to render in English the rich vowel music of Irish. Davis, like Moore, replaced the tense folkmoods of passion and love and death with middle-class sentiment and opinions. But when he did hit on something that is obviously folk in feeling, he could render the gist, never the entire gesture.

" I know she never spoke her love, she never breathed a single vow
And yet I'm sure she loved me then, and still doats on me now,
For, when we met, her eyes grew glad, and heavy when I left her side,
And oft she said she'd be most happy as a poor man's bride.
I toiled to win a pleasant home, and make it ready by the spring;
The spring is past—what season now my girl unto our home will bring?
I'm sick and weary, very weary—watching, morning, night, and noon;
How long you're coming—I am dying—will you not come soon? "

There is no verbal music here; and yet a song like this lives or dies by sound. All poetry, in the final analysis, is really a drama of vowels and consonants. Theme and subject are immaterial as they are immaterial—or irrelevant—in good painting. They are the mid-wives, but the brawling, lusty youngster is his own person from the moment of his birth. In common with other poets who felt the drama of Irish folk-poetry, Davis did not realise that the drama, for the most part, was inherent, not in the phrase, but in the texture and powerful word-patterns.

" Is fan an file go deimin
Nuair tuitinn an peann as a laim "

In a thin, unpatterned word-texture, this quotation from Owen Ruadh would lose three parts of its poetic power. And to support the part that did come through into English, a translator, like Davis, say, who was not naturally rich in speech-sounds and had not divined that it was the speech-sounds that put over the effect, would concentrate on a dramatic construction, and substitute for the original mode something entirely different. This, I consider, is why pathos in Davis should, more rightly be spelled with a " B." He had point, economy, even ceremony, he had a sense of form, a magnificent sense of form, he had a genius for generalisation and a gift for the ballad sequence, he had all those attributes which go with fine prose-writing, but for him, poetry was always the poster, poetry with an immediate aim which was not the aim of poetry. He pushed it as far as it would go in that direction. That was all he asked of it. And that was all it gave.

DAVIS'S SOCIAL DOCTRINES

By Edward Sheehy

DAVIS'S importance to the Young Ireland movement lay in qualities which we do not easily associate with the revolutionary: moderation and a deep moral earnestness. Though the time of his labours was short, Duffy could say of him: "Davis was our true leader. Not only had nature endowed him more liberally, but he loved labour better, and his mind had traversed regions of thought and wrestled with problems still unfamiliar to his confederates." In trying to consider a man from a particular standpoint there is always the danger of over-emphasis. Nevertheless when we ask ourselves how it was that Davis became the father of an explicit and uncompromising Irish nationalism, more complete by far than that of the Catholic, Irish-speaking O'Connell, we must look elsewhere than to his religious and cultural antecedents. He was, says Gavan Duffy, "a Church of England man of the older and more liberal school . . . a reader of Jeremy Taylor and the Seventeenth Century Divines." And certainly we find in him those qualities that go to make the historical English liberal: honesty and fixity of purpose, an aversion to the abstract and the doctrinaire, and a kind of stoicism equally removed from mysticism on the one hand and scientific utopianism on the other. Though accepted, in the words of Pearse as "the first of modern Irishmen to make explicit the truth that nationality is a spirituality," his nationalism is not mystical; it is an intellectual faith; a political and a social necessity. As a poet too he is more propagandist than artist, the deliberate creator of symbols to supply the want of the non-existent national institutions. But his nationalism is not due merely to a conviction of Ireland's wrongs at the hands of England; but because he sees in it the only antidote to the contemporary trends in philosophy and political economy.

Davis was a violent opponent of Utilitarianism and *laissez faire*. He was a dissident from that universal optimism, originating in Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, which believed that unrestricted individualism would finally produce the highest economic good. *Laissez faire* was adopted as a fundamental principle in economics and was used to justify the accumulating horrors of the Industrial Revolution: sweat-shops, child-labour, prolonged working hours, the pauperisation of the working class. Its fruit in Ireland was famine during years in which the country produced enough to feed her population twice over. Davis opposed Utilitarianism on moral as well as economic grounds, while rightly identifying that philosophy with its birthplace. "Modern Anglicism, *i.e.* Utilitarianism," he writes, "the creed of Russell and Peel as well as of the Radicals . . . measures prosperity by exchangeable value, measures duty by gain, and limits desire to clothes, food and respectability. It is believed in the political assemblies in our cities, preached from our puplits . . . It is the very Apostles Creed of the professions, and threatens to corrupt the lower classes who are still faithful and romantic." To Peel and Russell he might have added O'Connell whose Utilitarianism was at the root of his violent hatred of working class movements

and his consistent opposition to legislation for the relief of labour conditions. Davis adds: "to use every literary and political engine against this seems to me the first duty of an Irish patriot who can foresee consequences." He considers even war, with the chance of victory or death; and "if we failed it would be in our own power before dying to throw up huge barriers against English vices, and dying, to leave an example and a religion to the next age."

Davis shows strongly the influence of the French economist Sismondi whose *Nouveaux Principes d'Economie Politique* appeared in 1819 and was practically ignored for a generation. Sismondi attacked Utilitarianism on both moral and scientific grounds. He pointed out that economics is not an isolated department of human activity, whose principles are absolute; and insisted that it be treated as "a moral science." The Utilitarians considered wealth and production synonomous: Sismondi pointed out that "wealth only deserves the name when it is proportionally distributed." He predicted that *laissez faire* as a principle of government would result in the division of Society into two classes: a small number of inordinately large capitalists and a multitude of dispossessed proletarians—a theory which Marx elaborated as the "law of the concentration of capital." He believed that governments should interfere to prevent such sudden industrial developments as would result in social upheaval. Though the father of a number of socialist ideas, Sismondi was by no means a socialist. He believed in the rights of property and capital to remuneration, and in the healthy social function of a nobility. On the positive side, his ideal was a patriarchal society in which the small proprietor should predominate; and asserted, in opposition to the survival-of-the-fittest philosophy of the Utilitarians, that neither the landlord's claim to rent, nor the industrialist's to profit, accrued until the workers had been supplied with bread.

Davis was a close student of Sismondi, and his essay "Udalism and Feudalism" is virtually an application of Sismondi's ideas to Irish conditions. He opposes large-scale industrialism on human and social grounds: "The equal distribution of comfort, education and happiness is the only true wealth of nations." He favours the small estate as against the large because of the "wholesome influence of the possession of a small estate on the family affections, on hardihood, on morals, on patriotism." The idea of Udalism Davis derives from Laing's *Norway* where the word is used to describe "ancient laws and social arrangements totally different in principle from those which regulate society and property in feudally constituted countries." Davis variously equates Udalism with gavelkind, which he took to be communal ownership of land, and a state-controlled peasant proprietorship. Here for once he departs from the hierarchic state of Sismondi. "If the condition of the Irish must be changed," he says, "there seem but two states at all desirable. One of them is Udalism, which at once meets and conquers our ills." The other is a sort of pious feudalism." Feudalism he rejects for Ireland on the grounds that, without a common religion and common sympathies, "the tie of vassal and lord is fragile and uneasy." In this conclusion we find the influence of another writer, Gustave de Beaumont whose *L'Irlande, Sociale, Politique et Religieuse*, much admired by Davis, came to the conclusion that "A bad aristocracy is the cause of all the woes of Ireland; and the evil of that aristocracy is in its being English and Protestant." He rejects it also because it is based on the unequal distribution of property and because he considers

that it would inevitably involve industrialisation. "The wages system," he says, "has broken the yeoman heart of England, though worked by her own gentry. What then would it be in Ireland, under an artistocracy so bad as to have reduced a tenantry to the last stage of misery?"

As a political thinker Davis attaches primary importance to the land-question. "Ireland exists, and her millions toil for an alien aristocracy; her soil sends forth its abundance to give palaces, equipages, wines, women dainties to a few thousands; while the people rot upon their native land." One wonders, thinking of later days when Fenian nationalism divorced itself from the "materialism" of the Land League, on which side Davis would have been. "Those whom the people trust must cease to trifle with romantic schemes, and apply themselves, body, soul and spirit to the emancipation of the peasants."

Davis had a clear conception of his ideal state; but he never faced realistically the problem of how it might be brought to being. In his verse he may sing of arms; but then, as Fintan Lalor observes, a "glorious agitation" affords no poetry, whereas insurrection does; whence his rebellion becomes "the mere craving of genius for a magnificent subject instead of a mean one." In fact he favoured the methods of Grattan rather than those of Tone; and according to Gavan Duffy, he had "no faith in the Gallic bravado . . . of baptising the cause in blood." But it was not the fear of physical force as such that gave Davis pause. It was rather a horror of unorganised mob-violence. "The Irish people deserve to rot in slavish poverty if they will not keep the discipline under which they are enrolled." The people must respect the law; "Coarse and criminal and crude as it is, men must not take vengeance into their own hands." And elsewhere: "The people of Munster are starving. Will murder feed them?" Politically, and in spite of the ideas expressed in "Udalism and Feudalism", he believed that an alliance with the gentry would produce the best results. "We want their aid now, for the country, for themselves, for all." "Aristocracy of Ireland," he cries, "will ye do nothing? The body that best know Ireland, the body that keep Ireland within the law—the Repeal Committee—declare that unless some great change take place an agrarian war may ensue . . . Will ye do nothing for pity, nothing for love"? Perhaps there was also in his attitude a little of that fear of a Catholic ascendancy which infected almost all Protestant opinion after the rise of O'Connell. All the leaders of the movement desired the collaboration of the gentry, in spite of the clear sighted attacks of Fintan Lalor; in spite of MacNevin's realistic reply to Davis, prior to the foundation of the '82 Club, when he said: "If you expect them in a fit of enthusiasm to make such a surrender of privileges and monopolies as their class made in France, you must first bring them, like the French Seigneurs, face to face with revolution."

If we find contradictions in the ideas of Davis and his confederates of the *Nation* we must remember that they were men trying desperately to achieve their ends by one set of means; while circumstances were continually forcing them to adopt another. Not one of the forces on whom they relied was prepared to turn their ideals into political realities. With the exception of Fintan Lalor, and later of Mitchel in desperation, they desired a national rather than a social revolution, an Irish replica of the American Revolution, in which, as Duffy said, "merchants, militia officers, landowners and public officials led the movement which made her a sovereign republic." They forgot that all these elements except the merchants, were bound to England by ties of self-interest, and, as Tone had said, that "merchants made bad revolutionaries."

It would be futile to conjecture how the ideas of Davis would have developed had he lived through those terrible years of famine which drove the leaders into a final reliance on the peasantry to make an unprepared and token rebellion, without arms, supplies, treasury or organisation, led by a man "nervously anxious about the safety of his class," and so concerned for the rights of property that he starved the insurrection. Even while they were convinced of the necessity of such a gesture, they feared success almost as much as failure. Duffy fears that "the rebellion will be a mere democratic one which the English Government will extinguish in blood." He writes to Smith O'Brien, on the eve of revolt: "You and I will meet on a Jacobin scaffold, ordered for execution as enemies of some new Marat or Robespierre, Mr. James Lalor, or Mr. Somebody Else. It is the fixed and inevitable course of revolutions where the strength of the middle classes is permitted to waste in inaction." I think Davis would have seen the social justice of preventing those cartloads of corn, wrung from a starving peasantry, from reaching the sea, even if it did mean felling trees without the permission of their owners.

Davis's economic ideas had a considerable influence on his contemporaries; they determined, to a great extent, the policy of the *Nation*. After half a century, they reappear again in the social and economic programme of Arthur Griffith. Nevertheless it was his nationalism which left the most profound mark on modern Ireland. Its force can be gathered from the words of John O'Leary, who says: "For all that is Irish in me, and above all, for the inspiration that made me Irish, the fountain and the origin must always be found in Davis."

"THE NATION" IN MOURNING

(September 20, 1845)

By Lorna Kellett

BEFORE me as I write lies a copy of *The Nation* dated Saturday, Sepember 20, 1845.

It consists of sixteen large closely-printed pages—not bad value for sixpence, as newspapers went in those days ; even though sixpence, in the year 1845, represented half the day-wage of an agricultural labourer. There were not many agricultural labourers, to be sure, who bought *The Nation*, but there were very few who did not read it. There was always a copy in the local Repeal Room or the local smithy ; or one might be passed from hand to hand on the chapel wall after Sunday Mass.

THE NATION.

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The front page of the issue of September 20 is entirely occupied with advertisements, many of which are publishers' lists. A new work by the popular novelist, Mr. William Carleton, is announced. It is entitled *Rody the Rover*, or *The Ribbonman* and it is the latest addition to Messrs. James Duffy's shilling series, the "Library of Ireland." Another Dublin publisher, Bryan Geraghty of Anglesea Street, announces the appearance of the fourteenth monthly number of Mr.Owen Connellan's Translation of the Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters ; a laudable enterprise, no doubt, but one that was a little beyond Mr. Connellan's powers. There was a Fifth Master already engaged upon the same work, and his name was John O'Donovan.

Turning over the yellowed pages, one can see that *The Nation*, though primarily educative in its purpose, did not fail as a newspaper. It reported the speeches delivered at a meeting of the Loyal National Repeal Association held in Conciliation Hall at considerable length ; its foreign news included reports of an attempted Rising in Madrid, a great battle in Circassia between Russian and Turkish forces, in which the Russians were said to have lost 9,000 men, and the outbreak of a war between the United States

No. 67 BAGGOT STREET
Thomas Davis's Dublin residence

and Mexico; its "Railway Intelligence" (railways were very much in the news in 1845) ran to a column and a half; another column was devoted to Church affairs; and there was a section dealing with trade and market reports. Amongst the purely literary features of this issue was a full-page article on an Italian poet, signed "D. F. MacC." (Denis Florence MacCarthy) and a poem, after Béranger, by "M. MacD." (Martin MacDermott). There was also an article entitled "National Literature", in which the following passage occurs:—

> "No country posseses more abundant resources for a National Literature than Ireland: but, unfortunately, they have long been locked up in a language with which, to our shame be it spoken, the intellectual minds of the nation are nearly all unfamiliar."

The writer of that article, which is unsigned, never saw it in print, for he died four days before the issue in which it appeared came out. His name was Thomas Davis.

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How much Davis meant to the Ireland of his time becomes evident as one turns to the tributes paid to him, both by colleagues and outsiders, in this black-bordered number of the newspaper of which he was the brighest star. The shock of his untimely death is reflected in an editorial—doubtless from the pen of Charles Gavan Duffy—so filled with emotion that one senses the difficulty the writer must have felt in speaking to the readers of *The Nation* about the passing of its best-loved and greatest contributor:

> "A great man, in the greatest sense, hath passed from amongst us. Death's indiscriminate might struck him down in his green spring. It would be a sordid mockery of sorrow to trick up a false spirit against such a blow. Oh, no, no! His death is a crushing calamity against which the heart of the land sinks.
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> "For us, we have most to bear. Few and feeble are the rays of hope in the most dismal gloom with which our very destiny is overcast. Yet will we not despair. Yet, beloved friend, will we walk steadily in that path which thy spirit hath pointed out. Thy earnest warning, hallowed by thy own lofty example, shall be obeyed.
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> "Irishmen, this death is a stern lesson. It has left each of you more to do. Your undertaking is to extend into broad noon the circling glory of Thomas Davis. Work as he worked, to live beloved and die honoured.
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> "That head, so unresting—that heart, so full of love,—beckon to you from the tomb, and point onward. Holiest star, thy light is undimmed in the dwelling of death, and many eyes are bent towards thee from every spot on earth reached by the energy and enterprise of Irishmen.
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> "The readers of *The Nation* will forgive us if our pages bear too much of the mournful impress of our feelings. Who will blame the friends of Thomas Davis, if this day their spirit be greatly crushed?
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> "But why obtrude these feelings on a people standing in the face of a stupendous undertaking? Let us look onward and think calmly on what is to be done. Our country, too, is in the place of death, awaiting the energy of her sons to spring to a life full of strength and glory. One heart hath broken

in her cause: but, after all, could there be a brighter destiny? Are not his purest wishes fulfilled. Who would not be proud to die as he had died?

"Well, then—but this pained memory will break in upon us—his was so large a love, and that spirit which was sure as time's progress, was so kindly and full of gentlest nature. We can write no more."

Seldom has a newspaperman written of a lost colleague with such burning sincerity; seldom has a writer been so moved that he trails off into incoherence and finishes abruptly.

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There follows immediately another unsigned editorial tribute to Davis, more calm and measured than the first, and still more indicative of the tragic calamity that Ireland had suffered. As an appreciation it has not been bettered in the hundred years that have elapsed since Davis's death.

"The blow," said the writer, "with which it has pleased an All-Wise God to strike us is too fresh, and has been too stunning, to allow of anything like a free and worthy utterance of our feeling for him whom we have lost. He is laid in the earth and yet we can scarcely bring ourselves to believe that he is gone—that all his deep affections, his mounting hopes, his manly labours, his earnest life, are ended in this world for evermore! The change still seems unreal, like a dark dream which we struggle to put away . . .

"Thomas Davis has died in his youth, before his matured understanding and his ripened knowledge have poured their wealth upon the world. But whilst he lived he was a faithful worker, and the few years which were given to him were rich enough in wise and generous action to win him lasting honour from the land which he loved with a love that had no bounds and served with a devotion that never knew the taint of selfishness.

"Of his powers—as an intellectual man, a thinker, and a writer—it were idle, in this place, to speak. Widely and well have the people recognised the vigour of his conceptions and the magic of his style, and they need no one to tell them of the mental strength of him who so impressed himself upon their understandings and so commanded the passage to their hearts.

"Within a short period he wrote much in politics and literature, as a poet and a critic, and wherever his genius was exercised his mastery was felt. Men differ as to the political opinions which he held, but they can have no difference as to the large resources, the capacity of reasoning, the affluence of illustration, the untiring energy, and the heart-sprung eloquence with which he enforced them.

"Of his acquirements it were almost as vain to speak as of his genius. They ranged through all the walks of human thought and speculation, and they were as profound as they were various. But of his own people—of their annals, their statistics, their topography, their literature—his knowledge was especially remarkable. No man of his years—we believe, no man of his generation—had achieved so full an insight into these things. He toiled to gain it with the most strenuous industry and the most unflinching resolution.

The writer went on to speak of Davis's contributions to *The Nation*, of his enthusiasm for and his deep knowledge of Irish antiquities and history, and then put his finger unerringly on what was undoubtedly Davis's greatest achievement:

"His spirit lent its fire to the spirits of other men . . . In such a community as ours, miserably broken into sections by political and religious feuds, it is difficult to draw together the true men who exist in every party and combine them for the good of all. Rare qualities are needed in him who would attempt to harmonise the struggling elements of such a community, and bring those who have held themselves apart, in mutual distrust because in mutual ignorance, to look each other kindly in the face; to know that they have common thoughts and wishes and aspirations; to recognise their common interests and common duties; and to recollect that they are not only members of the brotherhood of humanity, but men who have a common country to love, to serve, to be proud of. Rare qualities must be his who, without compromise of his own opinions—nay, whilst he asserts them with peculiar strength and boldness—can fulfil a mission such as this, and whilst he softens bitter asperities and conquers ancient prejudices, can command the love and confidence of his political foes. And such were the qualities of Thomas Davis. Taking his stand in front of his party, and proclaiming its doctrines fearlessly and defyingly, he went amongst the men whose intellects and attainments adorn our metropolis and won from those of them, to whom his political sentiments were most distasteful, cordial attachment and generous admiration. In every effort to exalt Irish art and create an Irish literature, he was found working side by side with them and they are foremost now in speaking his praises and lamenting his early loss.

"He had established, to a large extent, a fair and friendly understanding between the best amongst us of all creeds and parties, and he was peculiarly fitted to carry on the good work of union and create sentiments of trust and charity where jealousy and division had dwelt before. For he was a man of large sympathies. He had a forbearing and tolerant nature. The transparent sincerity of his soul no one could question and his simplicity of heart made him trusted as soon as he was known. Thus it was that he had amongst all parties warm and devoted friends who looked to his genius with pride and to his life with hope: and thus it was that he was enabled to promote, more than any other, the junction for national objects of those who cherish national feelings and national spirit."

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Other tributes from friends and colleagues are scattered through these pages. Daniel O'Connell, writing from Derrynane, said: "I do not know what to write—my mind is bewildered and my heart affected. The loss of my beloved friend—my noble-minded friend—is a source of the deepest sorrow to my mind. He was a creature of transcendent qualities. His learning was universal—his knowledge was as minute as it was general. I cannot expect, in the few years that may still be left to me, to look upon his like again; and I solemnly declare that I never knew any man who could be so useful to Ireland in the present stage of her struggles. His loss is irreparable."

Smith O'Brien, who was also absent from Dublin wrote from Cahirmoyle:

"Ireland weeps, not without cause, for one of her truest patriots—for one of her most gifted children. Love of country was with him more than a sentiment, more than a principle of duty. It was the absorbing passion of his life, the motive of every action, the foundation of every feeling. To make Ireland great and prosperous, happy in its social condition, renowned in science and literature, in arts and in arms, but above all, to raise it to the highest elevation of moral dignity—these were the ends for which he lived.

Placing under the domination of a powerful intellect and of a resolute will a store of the most varied information he wrote as the advocate of a nation's liberty should write . . . It was his aim to unite his countrymen by an indissoluble bond of fraternal concord and to teach them that, so united they would be irresistible.

The emotion which prompted him to write these lines:

Be my epitaph writ on my country's mind
'He served his country and loved his kind"

indicate the character of his ambition. The man, who assisted by no influences save the energy of his character and the purity of his motives, made himself, at the early age of thirty-one, the object of a nation's love, gratitude and hope, and who is bewailed in his premature grave by a nation's tears, has won the highest description of success and fame."

A passage from one further tribute printed in these pages is worth recording. It is from a speech delivered by Thomas Francis Meagher at a specially-summoned meeting of the Repeal Association:—

"There is not one hand—not even the hand that was clenched against him in his lifetime—not one that refuses to throw a fond memorial flower upon the grave of the young, the gallant, the generous, the enlightened patriot. But those who fought in the same ranks as he did; those who stood beside him and saw the earnest service he did his country's cause; those in whose young hearts the appeals of his daring soul found their quick and truthful echoes; those who had never ceased to esteem and love him—they were grieved to the heart's inmost depth when, like some storm-gust, the news of his death swept swiftly by and crushed the hopes they had nourished . . . But there are thoughts of his, generous sentiments, liberal views, enlightened principles, which death cannot strike down. In the day of victory, to which he had often looked with a panting heart and a glowing soul, they will beckon us to the grave, bid us pluck a laurel from the nation's brow, and place it on his tomb."

The description of Davis's funeral which appears in the Memorial Number of *The Nation* is still another proof of the veneration in which the dead patriot was held by all classes of his countrymen. The Lord Mayor of Dublin and the members of the City Council wearing their civic robes; members of the Royal Irish Academy, the Irish Celtic Society and the Irish Library Association; representatives from Trinity College; members of Parliament; friends and colleagues in the Eighty-two Club—all these had gathered to pay the last tribute.

"In the eyes of many who thronged Baggot Street upon Thursday morning last, the sun shone not as he is wont to shine; the summer air seemed laden with death. And as those who compose the circle of which *he* was the ornament and pride met and exchanged a few whispered words, their looks told each other more powerfully than spoken language could what a crushing blow had fallen amongst them, and struck down the highest head of all their band . . .

The cortege approached in magnitude some of the great triumphal processions that the streets of Dublin have sometimes seen. At half-past nine, the crowds that thronged the pathway were parted and the coffin was borne to the hearse; a plain black coffin bearing upon its breastplate the inscription: 'Thomas Osborne Davis, Esq.; died September 16, 1845, aged 30 years' . . .

No man of this generation has received so high a tribute of respect and affection as that paid by his countrymen to the worth and genius of Thomas Davis. The Repealer and the Protestant commingled their tears in mutual sympathy for their common bereavement. That he was Irish, and gifted, was only remembered."

The Nation writer went on to describe the scenes as the procession passed through streets where every window was shuttered and every sidewalk filled to overflowing with silent, reverent sympathisers—through Merrion Square, through College Green, through Sackville (not yet O'Connell) Street, through Grafton Street—and so on to Harold's Cross and the Cemetery of Mount Jerome. There, at the graveside, were gathered men whose names are part of Ireland's history or who live in the annals of Irish learning and letters: men like Charles Gavan Duffy, John Mitchel, Dr. Drennan, Thomas Devin Reilly, P. J. Smyth, Michael Doheny, Denis Florence MacCarthy, Samuel Ferguson, George Petrie, John O'Donovan, William Carleton, Whitley Stokes, Sir William Wilde, John O'Hagan and many others. No more distinguished company has ever gathered around a graveside in Ireland.

As one lays down the faded pages of this issue of *The Nation*, one begins to realise, however imperfectly, what Davis meant, not only to the men with whom he was intimately associated in a great revivifying movement, but to every man of culture and every man of liberal sympathies who lived in his day, and one subscribes unhesitatingly to the sentiment with which the *Nation* writer closes his account of the obsequies: "Irish soil holds no more precious dust than his."

CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY

By Brinsley MacNamara

WHILE it is the figure of Davis that makes the noble monument for the period and gives the days of the Young Irelanders a life that goes on forever in the life of the nation, it is Gavan Duffy who was the real founder of their movement and the one who gave us Davis greatly to remember. Yet to read his own account of the time in " Young Ireland," in " Four Years of Irish History " and in " My Life in Two Hemispheres " is scarcely to realise the very large part he played in the events which he recalls so vividly. Gavan Duffy had many grand qualities, but perhaps the grandest was his genuine modesty. He made himself the historian of the period he had shaped, and yet there is not a moment in any of these three books in which we find him putting himself to the front or asking praise for anything he had done. Always, before everything else, there was his devotion to Davis, living or dead. It is in every line he ever wrote about his friend and the events through which they went together :

> " . . . Though he was foremost among the young poets of his day, his greatest poem was his life. It has never been my fortune to meet so noble a creature, so variously gifted, so unaffectedly just, generous and upright, so utterly without selfishness, without vanity ; and I never expect to meet such another."

" So utterly without selfishness, without vanity." In these exceptions from his own character too, Gavan Duffy was truly the perfect disciple of the master for whom he had so much reverence from the very moment of their first meeting. Davis knew the man he had found in Duffy, and Duffy the man that Ireland had found in Davis. As a sudden light in the darkness, " The Nation " was the brilliant expression of the combination that they made. " To create and foster public opinion in Ireland and make it racy of the soil." That was their modest proposal for the paper at the beginning, but very soon it was a very much larger thing. It was something that was bringing a new pulse-beat into the country, and it was speaking bravely for the cause of liberty and nationality in every land. Seldom before its day, and not often since, has any journal shown a more splendid combination of eloquence, of poetry and of reasoning. Duffy was the inspired editor, for even better than Davis knew what he wanted to give did Duffy know what he wanted from him.

One evening in 1842, Davis, Duffy and Dillon sat down at a table in the small office of " The Nation " in Trinity Street, Dublin. They had an idea to discuss and it was Duffy's idea. He was the only one of the three, who, at that moment, attached serious importance to national poetry as a means of furthering the great project they had in view. He had convinced himself of the power which strong, heartfelt poetry " true to the Gaelic ear " could wield over the impressionable nature of his countrymen, and he had resolved to make it a new force in Irish journalism. Only where was

Charles Gavan Duffy

he to find it ? There was their friend, Mangan, but he was difficult and erratic, and his work, for all its fine quality, not just what was required. Could Davis do it ? The notion was a stroke of genius on Duffy's part, for, in putting it forward, he had nothing at all to support him. Up to this time, Davis had not written a single line of verse and, indeed, so far, seemed wholly unconscious of the gift which was so soon to win him fame and to make "The Nation" a power in the land. He was already immersed in other work for the paper, and, besides, he was not sure that Duffy's idea had anything in it. Yet, Duffy, far-seeing editor that he was, still knew what he wanted, and knew that he was going to get it, so certain was he of all that was in Davis. So he did not show surprise when his friend brought, to their very next meeting, his "Lament for Owen Roe O'Neill," which he was to equal afterwards but never to excel. Yeats has said of this poem that "it has all the intensity of an old ballad, and to read it is to remember Parnell and Wolfe Tone, to mourn for every leader who has died among the ruins of the cause he has all but established and to hear the lamentation of his people."

But Davis was soon to learn the dominant mood of the verse that Duffy wanted for "The Nation." It was not to be so much a lament for dead hopes and vanished glories as something that should vibrate with the passionate hopes which the paper wanted to put into the new generation, which should excite to activity, which should stir the blood and quicken the pulse. Davis was still the man to do it. Had he not already given promise of it at Trinity in his words of reproof to the nation that would forget its departed great, saying of the need to remember them that:

> "The national mind should be filled to overflowing with such thoughts. They are more enriching than mines of gold, or ten thousand fields of corn, or the cattle on a thousand hills, more ennobling than palaced cities stored with the triumps of war and art, more supporting in danger's hour than colonies or fleets or armies."

Thus, because Duffy had found for him the true well-spring of his inspiration, valour and constancy became his themes. There was something so valiant and generous in his own temperament that soon he was revealing himself in the pieces by which he is best remembered. He had fully embraced Duffy's aim, which was to teach Irish history through verse as well as prose in the pages of "The Nation." The scenes of glory and honour, as well as those of shame and sorrow, could be seen more fully, more strikingly through the poet's eyes. He could best give to the imagination of the reader the armies and battles of other days. He could rouse and strengthen and enlarge the people with the passions of great periods. And reasoning thus, to his own great enlargement too, Davis began to lead the way, to blaze the trail for the ballad writers of "The Nation."

Soon to the self-effacing but forceful editor began to flow in the contributions of the gifted band whose work was to be enshrined for future generations in "The Spirit of the Nation," the little book that, better than any other, in the darker days which were to come, was to keep the flame from quenching. In finding the right men, and directing their abilities in what he believed were the channels likely to be most fruitful for his country's cause, lay Gavan Duffy's great quality as an editor. That, with a great respect and regard for all the writers of his time, was what helped

him to make "The Nation" what it became in the days when he was the shepherd of the fold. Not one of them was left outside his sympathy and understanding. The battered Mangan could come to him and be sure of a salute for his genius, even though it was already disappearing in the wretchedness of self-destruction. Carleton, black sheep though he had been for a time, could come and be sure of a welcome and publication for his work. Always he saw, with Davis, a New Ireland in which the writer would be one of the most honoured men.

The name of Gavan Duffy will be linked forever with that of Davis and the great newspaper that they founded together. They are inseparable in any serious consideration of the form and pressure of the time which they tried between them to shape. They stood as a shining example of the loyalty of one man to another and gathered loyalty around them from "a group of young men, the most disinterested in our annals." The New Ireland that they saw, and towards which they had so earnestly worked, did not come even in Duffy's long day, but long after the events in which he had played so big a part, and when he had won to high honours for his work as an administrator in that part of the new world to which fortune had turned his footsteps, it was those who had been his contributors and colleagues on "The Nation" that he wanted to honour in warm remembrance. In 1892, regretting how the Famine of 1846–47 had paralysed so many forces in Ireland, and none more disastrously than literature, he spoke as if hoping greatly that the like of them might come again. He did not realise that what he and they had sowed together was soon to spring up once more and come to a new blossoming, and that even as he spoke another literary revival was almost upon him. The patriotic literature of "The Nation" had made way for a literature rooted in Gaelic tradition and it had already awakened the national consciousness. The awakening was to culminate in the Rising of 1916, and Ireland was to find herself drawing inspiration once more from the era of Davis and Duffy. John Eglinton, in his plea for the de-Davisisation of Irish literature, had not taken into account all the forces which lay behind the writing men of his day, for even Yeats himself recollected proudly that he had once asked to be accounted "with Davis, Mangan, Ferguson" and to be remembered as "true brother of that company which sang to sweeten Ireland's wrong."

It fell to Gavan Duffy, in his histories and recollections, to tell of the drama of Young Ireland in which he had been one of the principal actors. And the impression that comes to us out of his very full account of all that happened is of his own immense patience in the scene, his restraining hand in moments of sore provocation, and his large sympathy, as well, with the one character who would not fit in. This was O'Connell, who still wanted the centre of the stage for himself. He was still a power in the land; his great voice could still move and sway, but his lines were wayward and uncertain, for he was getting old and weary and coming fast to final softening of the brain. But the men of Young Ireland had joined him in his call for Repeal of the Union, and, although all that they wanted to do under the leadership of Davis was being turned from directions that were free and young and brave, the expiring giant was there, with the ear of the people to the last, and still a bigger man than Davis or any of them. Of all this and of the happenings which flowed from it to bring Young Ireland to defeat in its own day, Duffy could write with forbearance and charity, even for the toadies and bullies who came up out of the

dark places of politics to stifle the spirit that Davis and his comrades had worked so earnestly to raise up in the people. For, as he so clearly gives as the purpose of his history:

> "Writing for the most part of the dead, I desired to be fair and generous; but I have never, for this or any other purpose, sacrificed the substantial truth of history. The book does not contain one single sentence of unfriendly criticism of any human being that was not indispensably necessary to explain the transactions of the time, and to point out the lessons which they teach to another generation, or one statement of fact that is not the most rigid truth as I understand and believe it."

And that is why in another day, after long years of sorrow and defeat, and other unhappy emergings from the dark places of politics, the spirit of Young Ireland could come back to re-animate the nation for which, in their day, Davis and Duffy had wrought so well. It was to the writings of Duffy that his countrymen could go for the lesson that had again to be learned. Once more the lines of Ferguson could come back and be even more truly spoken of the new day that had dawned:

I walked through Ballinderry in the spring-time,
When the bud was on the tree;
And I said, in every fresh-ploughed field beholding
The sowers striding free,
Scattering broadcast forth the corn in golden plenty
On the quick seed-clasping soil,
'Even such, this day, among the fresh-stirred hearts of Erin,
Thomas Davis, is thy toil.'

Because that also had been the whole of Gavan Duffy's toil.

For, in the years between the one day and the other, he had been busy telling the story of Young Ireland and telling it so well that, for long, the period had been more real to many than the actual time in which they were living. For it was history being told as the story of a man's life, because those years had been Duffy's very own. Yet it was never of himself he seemed to be telling, but of all the others, now calmly seen in retrospect, and what he had to say was with the most scrupulous fairness even to those who had been opposed to him, and to those, like Mitchel, with whom he was sorry to have differed. The aim of all his writing was that what had been grand in Young Ireland should not know death. At first, the gallant adventure of "The Nation" with all its fervent, well-informed and high-minded patriotism; and then the combination with O'Connell with all its unfortunate complications. And so the story went on, one difficult out of which to build hope—Repeal, Repeal to Federation, the calamity of Davis's death, the breach with O'Connell, the breach with Mitchel, the years that drifted into such failures as the Irish Tenant League, and the general heart-break of things before 1855, when he sailed for Australia.

Yet, even when he had made a second brilliant career for himself there, his special charge was still Young Ireland. For twenty-five years he played a big part in the political life of Australia, yet his deeper life all the time was in the pages he was writing of the day that had been broken but which could come again. For it was

in that faith and hope he was writing. He had proven that one whose public life in Ireland had led to an indictment for treason could rise to the highest position in the state of a self-governing colony of England. He had done the state much service and the Colony of Victoria knew his quality. He could have even ironic triumphs in the passing of such measures as Duffy's Land Act, with the memory it must have brought him of that other Land Bill of his origination which, in its failure to pass the House of Lords in 1854, had left the cause of the Irish tenant farmer more hopeless than ever.

And there were other moments in the Parliament of Victoria when the past could come close to the present. Of one such moment he has told with pardonable pride in the narrative of his Australian life:

> "When I filled the highest office of state in a community which was English and Scotch by an overwhelming majority, a popular Englishman, the leader of the local bar, directed a vote of censure against the administration, among other grounds, because I had been an Irish rebel; and I made answer in terms with which I will close the narrative:
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> 'I will soon have to account for my whole life, and I feel that it has been defaced by many sins and shortcomings; but there is one portion of it I must except from the censure. I can say without fear, and without impiety, that when I am called before the Judge of all men, I shall not fear to answer for my Irish career. I did what I believed best for Ireland, without any relation to its effect upon myself. I am challenged to justify myself for having been an Irish rebel, under penalty of your fatal censure; and I am content to reply that the recollection that when my native country was in mortal peril I was among those who staked life for her deliverance, is a memory I would not exchange for anything that Parliaments or Sovereigns can give or take away.'"

That still was the Gavan Duffy who had once been the right hand of Davis, and so, in honouring the memory of the larger figure, we must always see the two men standing together.

John Mitchel

JOHN MITCHEL

By Manus O'Neill

AFTER his release in 1866 from almost five months of arduous imprisonment in America, which he had suffered for his advocacy of the Confederate South in the Civil War, John Mitchel wrote in a letter to his wife two sentences that, with the irony of which he was master, describe the nature of his own mind : " I have been a martyr now for eighteen years," he wrote, " and it is quite a bad trade. I had rather be a farmer." Mitchel was then fifty-one, with his health broken and years of suffering in his bones. The rebel who had taken up the trade of martyrdom was then, as indeed he always had been, in inner conflict with the social man who, using farming as a symbol of conservatism and order, was essentially a man of peace. In the centre of that St. Catherine Wheel of fiery ideas and spluttering passions and hates which he appeared to be, there was a stillness for which he always yearned as the full condition of his life, and all his days, especially when he was living in exile, he thought and wrote of the quietness of his father's house at Dromolane, or of his own home in which romantic love had been fulfilled in classic harmony, or of some little river wherein he longed to wade and play and so restore the lost happiness of boyhood. Mitchel was a conservative forced to be a rebel. Because he could never be content with regarding things coolly and with the moral calmness of a Davis, or even with Davis's passionate but impersonal patriotism, because his mind embraced things with the total realisation of a poet, he could never do things by halves. He was as fiery as a conservative of the old civilisation of America's southern states, even to the retention and defence of slavery, as ever he was as a rebel against British order and nineteenth century civilisation. When he saw, he saw with blazing eyes, and little could qualify his vision. " We deny," he said, " it is a crime to hold slaves, to buy slaves, to keep slaves to their work by flogging or other needful correction." Yet, he had written as strongly against the enslavement of the Irish. He who had forced the passage of the Treason Felony Act by his outspokenness against British rule, also said : " I am no republican doctrinaire, and would accept an Irish monarchy or Irish anything." In a word, Mitchel cannot be measured as a writer, and even as a political thinker, merely by a political yardstick.

His intense love of two women, and his intense horror of the Famine which drew volcanic hate from the depths of his soul, are clear evidence of his nature. One love was frustrate ; the other was fulfilled. While he was a bank-clerk in Derry City, he fell in love with a girl six years his senior, he being nineteen, became secretly engaged to her, and eventually told his parents who temporarily forbade the engagement and any correspondence. The girl's parents agreed. The measure of how he could love may be judged by the effect of the separation. The talkative young man became silent, a wanderer till morning in the hills about his Newry house ; he even trudged the forty miles to Belfast to find the girl, and failed ; and when he returned home, he became ill with an illness that brought him almost to the grave. He had been like

a man who gaily climbs a sheer cliff face to be pushed from topmost edge where he struggles, makes one last desperate effort, and then, despairing, falls. The second love affair, as romantic a story as was ever concocted by a nineteenth century romancer, passed through the adventure of an elopement and pursuit to the fulfilment that blessed all Mitchel's days. He could love fiercely; and as fiercely could he hate.

He was invited to Dublin by Gavan Duffy to take the place of Davis on *The Nation*, and so he forsook the law for journalism and made for himself a place in Irish letters that William Dillon considered the highest since the death of Swift. One wonders if Duffy, or any of the other writers of *The Nation*, ever took time to see the contrast between John Mitchel and Thomas Davis. Davis was cool and solid, a rationalizer and a liberal moralist, while Mitchel was hot and volatile, a prose-writer feeling things like a poet to the tingling end of the nerves; Davis was abstracted, slow to make up his mind, and a rebel by reason rather than by feeling: Mitchel was a dealer in things, who judged as quickly as he saw, a rebel by feeling rather than by reason. Compared with Mitchel, Davis was not a writer at all, for he had not that wide range of gifts which could be turned to description, narrative, evocation and exposition and which could produce pages as tender, sarcastic, calm, gay and witty as have ever been written by an Irishman; but Davis would have been among the first, had he lived, to salute the *Jail Journal* as a masterpiece; and with all his charity, he would have understood the deep and shocking explosion that the Great Famine caused in the depths of the gifted personality.

Mitchel possessed hates of British things before the Great Famine; but as the hunger progressed and men and women and children died as loose gangling bags of bones, he became possessed by hate. It burst upward like a volcano and poured out whitehot lava of hate that solidified for ever. "A kind of sacred wrath," he testified, "took possession of a few Irishmen at this period. They could endure the horrible scene no longer, and resolved to cross the path of the British car of conquest, though it should crush them to atoms." He crossed the path, and it meant the breakup of his home and its happiness, the prison ships, Van Dieman's Land, escape, and life in America as a journalist, as a backwoods farmer, as a lecturer, and as an advocate of the agricultural South hating the industrialist North; but through all that adventurous and penurious life he carried the hate. The calmness, the steady control of the material, the crafty arrangement of images and ideas and words that the good writer must maintain so as to accomplish the effect he desires, these did not diminish the horror or the hate; rather did they intensify them. It is a macabre but true test of Mitchel the writer that not even the horrors of the Famine could get him to loosen his artistic control and to splutter and fume and rage. In the midst of it, in the 'Forty-seven, he wrote in the course of an article about travel in Ireland:

"But why do we not see the smoke curling from these lowly chimneys? And surely we ought by this time to scent the well-known aroma of the turf fires? But what reeking breath of hell is this oppressing the air, heavier and more loathsome than the smell of death rising from the fresh carnage of the battlefield. Oh, misery! had we forgotten that this was the Famine year? And we are here in the midst of these Golgothas that border our island with a ring of death from Cork Harbour all round to Lough Foyle.

"There is no need of inquiries here—no need of words; the history of this little society is plain before us. Yet we go forward, though with sick hearts and swimming eyes, to examine the Place of Skulls nearer. There is a horrible silence; grass grows before the doors; we fear to look into any door, though they are all open or off the hinges; for we fear to see yellow chapless skeletons grinning there; but our footfalls rouse two lean dogs, that run from us with doleful howling, and we know by the felon-gleam in the wolfish eyes how they have lived after their masters died.

"We walk amidst the houses of the dead, and out at the other side of the cluster, and there is not one where we dare to enter. We stop before the threshold of our host of two years ago, put our head, with our eyes shut, inside the door jamb, and say with shaking voice, 'God save all here'. No answer—ghastly silence, and a mouldy stench, as from the mouth of burial vaults.

"Ah! they are dead! they are dead! the strong man and the fair dark-eyed woman and the little ones, with their liquid Gaelic accents that melted into music for us two years ago; they shrunk and withered together until their voices dwindled to a rueful gibbering, and they hardly knew one another's faces; but their horrid eyes scowled on each other with a cannibal glare."

He wrote much more about the Famine, a turning point in his life as in the history of the nation, always in the wonder, one surmises, that the impact of the enormity, impossible for the normal mind to appreciate as the effect of a bombing raid on a city, had not made him maudlin with futile wrath. In the introduction to the *Jail Journal*, he said: "At the end of six years, I can set down these things calmly; but to see them might have driven a wise man mad." What the Famine did for Mitchel was to blast into his memory a set of images with their attendant horrors, such as took the place, with hate as their incinerative product, of an image of love or of a familiar landscape or of an attractive argument which would otherwise have supplied him with his inspiration. He wrote and wrote—the *Last Conquest* is part of the attempt—as if he were trying to purge his mind and his blood. He who longed for an even tenour of life and for the quietness of home and who had the power of loving with great passion, was changed into a hating worker in acid. They did not hang the immortal part of him, as Carlyle foretold, but they troubled it with a nightmare to the grave.

JOHN BLAKE DILLON

By Philip Rooney

FROM where he stood on the rising ground, Dillon could see the single street of Ballingarry and the huddle of thatched roofs, dun-coloured in the July sunshine. The street was empty. All life and movement had been drained out of it and was now centred about the small cottage here on the commons of Boulagh.

Inspector Trant and his company of policemen had safely gained the shelter of the cottage and were barricading the doors and windows. The single glazed window in the gable shivered and tinkled into fragments under the thrust of a rifle-butt from within, and a gun muzzle poked threateningly over the sill.

Screaming lamentations, her ragged hair tumbling about her shoulders, the Widow MacCormack came stumbling back from the barricaded door of her cottage to where Smith O'Brien had assembled his pitifully small band of ill-armed men. The woman's voice lifted in a high, shrill scream, calling out piteously that the police were holding her five small children as hostages within the barricaded cottage.

John Blake Dillon heard her, his dark eyes sombre with thought. He moved away a little, a tall, bearded man, carrying his six feet and more of slender height with that air of easy dignity that was never wholly to leave him.

From the windows of the barricaded cottage the policemen were firing now. Somewhere close at hand a man fell, moaning. As he went quickly to the aid of the injured man, Dillon's mind, touched by a moment's grim irony, pondered the odd stresses and impacts that had shaped and moulded his life from its early days of placid promise to this wild morning of violent action.

Yet the truth went deeper far than that, for the forces that had driven him here to Ballingarry, to the barricades of a revolution, were much less the forces of outer circumstances than the compelling impetus of his own character and the inexorable honesty that was in him.

All his life's history had been illuminated by that shining honesty of purpose. The quiet boy who had come from Achonry to study for the priesthood at Maynooth and who had resolved the difficult problem of a mistaken vocation in the light of his own integrity, was the spiritual father of the young barrister who had become the friend of Davis and who, scorning a crude Castle bribe of preferment, had joined with Davis and Duffy in the high adventure that was to give a nation back its soul.

More than ever during this year past, this Year of Revolution, when the echoes of tumbling thrones and tyrannies in Europe had thundered so hearteningly in the ears of the Irish Confederates, his honesty of purpose had been put to the test. From the beginning he had set his face against the war faction within the Confederation. Even in the dark days of the Spring and early Summer, when the tragedy of Mitchel's trial and transportation had blown fiery tempers to white heat, his had been the loudest voice to insist that the time for a rising had not yet come. Yet, now that

the Government plan to imprison all the chief men of the Confederation and leave the country leaderless had forced the issue and made immediate action inevitable, he had most loyally supported his leader, Smith O'Brien, in this effort to rouse the southern counties, and had come with honesty of purpose, if not with any real confidence, to the barricades.

From the windows of the cottage the policemen were firing steadily. A company of the attackers, throwing aside their pikes and pitchforks and rusted fowling-pieces, had piled hay and straw against the gable and set the mound afire. Already the flames were licking high; in a moment the roof would be ablaze over the heads of the police; but Smith O'Brien's voice was calling out loudly to have the fire quenched and to abandon this method of smoking out the defenders.

A growl of protest crackled like fire in stubble along the thinned lines of the attackers. For a long moment John Blake Dillon listened with understanding sympathy to that angry murmur. He, too, could see that O'Brien's order was robbing the attackers of their sole chance of success; but the honesty that was in him forced him to be true to the code of conduct he had laid down for himself in this adventure: this was a method of fighting with which he would not link his name. He lifted his voice, calling for volunteers to draw away the smouldering masses of hay.

In the reek of that smoking pile and under a merciless fire from the windows of the cottage the affair at Ballingarry came to an end.

For John Blake Dillon it was but a beginning. The road of escape that he took from Ballingarry that day was a long and dangerous road. All through the stormy days of Autumn, with a reward of £300 on his head, he lay in hiding in the Aran Islands. At length, disguised in priest's clothing and with the aid of friends from his early days in Maynooth, he made his escape from Ireland and reached America where he remained until the Amnesty of 1855 made it possible for him to return to Ireland and the practice of his profession.

It is characteristic of the man that he made no effort to exploit to his own political advantage his connection with the men of '48 and that when he did return to politics, as a Member of Parliament for Tipperary, it was under insistent pressure from his friends and the compulsion of his own high sense of duty.

On a September day in 1866 that compelling sense of duty brought him from his sick bed to a meeting in a Dublin suburb at a time when the city reeked with cholera. A few hours later he was stricken down, and four days later died at his home in Killiney.

Smaointe fá "Éire Óg"

Le Míċeál Breatnaċ

NUAIR a ġnítear tagairt d' "Éire Óg" cad a ċím agus cad a ċloisim istiġ im' aigne agus cad iad na smaointe a musgailtear 'mo ċuiṁne? Ní hannsa, mar adeireaḋ na sean-sgéalaiḋte.

(i)

Ċím "Doṁnall binn Ó Conaill caoin" agus é ag druidiúint le deireaḋ a réime. Tá ag dul dá neart 's dá bríġ. An misneaċ agus an fuinneaṁ a bí ann nuair a bí sé i mbarr a ṁaiteasa táid ag tráġaḋ. Tá sé ag éirġe éadmar, mí-foiġdeaċ, cantalaċ. Tá dosán beag óigfear taob leis i gCumann na hAċġairme a bfuil griongal agus dul ċun cinn ionnta. Tá tuairmí agus aiḋmeanna dá gcuid féin aca agus gan sgáṫ ná eagla orṫa iad do noċtaḋ ós árd. Tá siadsan ag éirġe mí-foiġdeaċ freisin—mí-foiġdeaċ le guagaċt Uí Ċonaill agus leis an neiṁ-ċinnteaċt agus an easbaiḋ misniġ a baineas leis an dúnġaois atá aige. Is léir naċ fada go dtárlóċaiḋ deiġilt eatorra. Tá rún ag Ó Conaill na hóigfir ṡotalaċa seo naċ ngéillfiḋ dá ċeannas do ruaigeaḋ bonn bárr amaċ as an gCumann. Ċuige sin iarrann sé ar baill an Ċumainn a ḋeiṁniú naċ raċaiḋ siad go deo i muingin an ċlaiḋiṁ ċun a ceart a baint amaċ don tír. Cloisim dá ráḋ aige go mbuḋ daor an t-earraḋ an tsaoirse dá mb' éigean oireaḋ 's braon aṁáin fola do ḋortaḋ le n-a ceannaċ. Agus cloisim an freagra ag teaċt ó Ṫomás Proinsias Ó Meaċair san óráid ṁóir sin ar a dtugtar "Óráid an Ċlaiḋiṁ." "Pé aca ċun tír do ċosaint nó ċun a saoirse do ḋeiṁniú, is naoṁṫa liomsa mar úirlis an claiḋeaṁ," ar sé, agus siublann sé féin agus a ċáirde amaċ as an gCumann. Tá an deiġilt tagṫa.

(ii)

Ċím triur de na hóigfir sin ag teaċt i gceann a ċéile tamall roiṁe sin i bPáirc an Ḟionn-uisge. Tá rud mór dá beartú aca. Tá fúṫa páipéar seaċtaineaṁail a bunú ċun a dtuairmí agus a gcuspóirí a ċur ar eolas do pobal Éireann. Is beag é a maoin aċ is mór é a misneaċ. Cinnid ar an bpáipéar a bunú agus baistid é. Tá "An Náisiún" tagṫa ar an saoġal. Ċím "An Náisiún" dá sgaipeaḋ soir, siar, ó ḋeas 's ó ṫuaiḋ. Ċím na Gaeḋil sa mbaile agus i gcéin ag fáiltiú roiṁe aṁail 's dá mbuḋ biaḋ ó neaṁ é. Cloisim an teagasg a tugtar ann tré altanna abaiḋe próis agus tré aistí aḋbannaċa filiḋeaċta. Braiṫim dóċas agus misneaċ agus meas orṫa féin dá músgailt ins na daoine. Braiṫim bród ag teaċt aca as a sinnsear, agus as stair agus as litriḋeaċt agus as sean-teangaiḋ a gciniḋ, agus as an troid fada anróitiġ i n-agaiḋ an náṁad. Aiṫniġim ar an bpoinnte go bfuil d'fírinne 's d' árd-aiḋm 's d'uaisleaċt i dteagasg "An Náisiún" go seasfaiḋ sé go deireaḋ aimsire ina ṫreoir do ċinnirí na tíre agus go n-éistfear 's go nglacfar leis ó ġlúin go glúin an faid 's mairfeas Gaeḋil. Éistimís le Séarlas Gabánaċ Ó Dubṫaiġ ag cur síos ar an bfionntar: "Ormsa cuireaḋ cúram na heagartóireaċta aċ b'é Tomás Dáibis an fear cinn agus an treoruiḋe ó ṫosaċ. Ní hé aṁáin gur bronn Dia buaḋa agus tréiṫe air ṫar mar

bronn orainne, aċ ba ṁó, freisin, a ḋúil san gcruaḋ-obair, agus bí a inntleaċt tar éis gabáil tré réimsí eolais agus tar éis dul i ngleic le ceisteanna doiṁne diaṁra naċ raib ar eolas fós ag a ċáirde".

(iii)

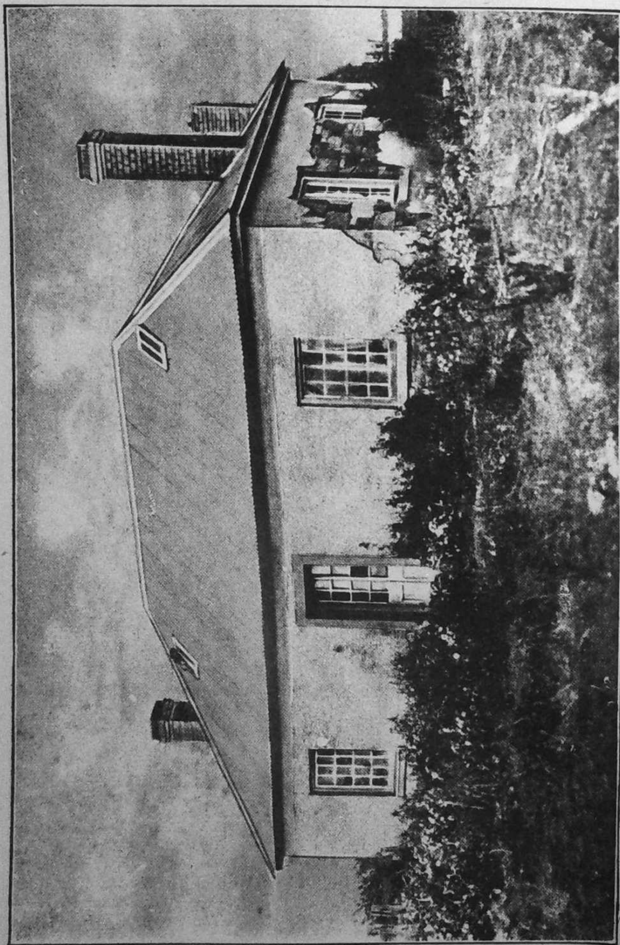
Ċím Teaċ Cúirte i Sráid na Faiċce i mBaile Áṫa Cliaṫ lá saṁraiḋ san mbliain, 1848. Tá Doṁnall Ó Conaill agus Tomás Dáibis ar ṡliġe na marḃ. Tá an smál tar éis teaċt ar na fataí agus tá an Gorta Mór agus a ṁarsmaí ina néall duḃ dorċa anuas ar an tír go fóill. Na hóigfir dána sin naċ bfoiġdeoċaḋ le meaṫtaċt Uí Ċonaill, tá díċeall déanta aca ag iarraiḋ faoilte agus réiḋ an aċair a baint amaċ do na daoine. Tá a ṡlioċt orṫa, tá an náṁa ag tabú díoġaltais dóib. Tá duine aca os coṁair na Cúirte an lá seo. Níor b'féidir é do ċiontú faoi 'n ngnáṫ-dliġe, gurḃ éigean coir nua a ċeapaḋ agus tá sé d'onóir aige beiṫ ar an gcéad duine ar cuireaḋ an tréas-feiliúnaċt ina leiṫ. Tá rún daingean déanta ag an náṁaid naċ dteipfiḋ air an babta seo. Aċ níl náire ná ceann-fé ar an bpríosúnaċ. An óráid fuaimneaċ fearaṁail a rinne Seán Mistéal an lá úd agus é i ngéibeann i measg a náṁadta súil agam naċ dtioċfaiḋ an lá go deo naċ mbeiḋ Gaeḋil ina míltí agus ina gcéadta míle réiḋ ċun freagairt don aisge a rinne sé innte. "An Rómánaċ," ar sé, "a bí ag breaṫnú ar a láiṁ féin dá loisgeaḋ i láṫair an tíoránaiġ, geall sé go raib trí ċéad eile a leanfaḋ é san bfionntar. An dtiġ liomsa geallaṁaint a ṫabairt ṫar ceann duine nó beirte nó triúir?" Agus cloisim an freagra ag teaċt go meisneaṁail béiceaċ dána ó gaċ duine de na hÉireannaiġ Óga a bí i láṫair—"Geall ṫar mo ċeann-sa, a Ṁistéalaiġ, geall ṫar mo ċeann-sa." Agus ċím an Mistéalaċ annsin ag breaṫnú ṫart go bródaṁail agus é buiḋeaċ beannaċtaċ naċ bfágtar uaigneaċ é i n-am na bruiḋe, "Seaḋ," adeir sé, "tiġ liom geallaḋ ṫar ceann duine agus beirte agus triuir, agus ṫar ceann na gcéadta."

(iv)

Tá Seán Mistéal díbirṫe an loċ amaċ anois. Na cinnirí atá fágṫa táid dá dtiomáint do réir a ċéile ċun an bóṫair a raib an Mistéalaċ ag iarraiḋ orṫa a gabáil le dá bliain anall. Tá sé ag dul ina luiġe orṫa naċ bfuil aċ réiḋteaċ aṁáin ar an sgéal feasta—an claiḋeaṁ sin gur ṁol Doṁnall Ó Conaill dóib a ṡéanaḋ. Aċ rinneadar foiġid ró-fada. Tá an ċéad buille ag an náṁaid, cuireann sé an tAċt Habeas Corpus ar ċeal. Níl na hÉireannaiġ Óga ullaṁ ċun troda, níl lón bíḋ ná lón cogaiḋ tiomsuiġṫe aca, aċ caiṫfiḋ siad dul i ndeabaiḋ lainne anois nó leiġint don náṁaid greim a fagáil orṫa agus iad do ropaḋ i gcarcair mar déanfaí le paca cuirpteaċ. Tá fios aca naċ n-éireoċaiḋ leo. "San am sin," adeir Ó Meaċair, "ní raib dóċas ar biṫ agam go n-éireoċaḋ linn. Bí fios agam naċ raib na daoine ullaṁ ċun troda, aċ san am ċéadna bí mé suiḋte de go raib sé de ḋualgas ar na cinnirí a ḋul amaċ agus an claiḋeaṁ a beartú agus an brat a tógáil le gaoiṫ, ba ċuma cén ċríoċ a beaḋ leis an iarraiḋ óna dtaob féin de." Beartuiġtear an claiḋeaṁ agus tógtar an brat i mBaile an Garraiḋe agus farior is mar ṫaiḋbsiġ Ó Meaċair a ṫárluiġeas. Agus ċím annsin na feiliúin agus iad briste bruiġte sgaipte. Tá cuid aca ar a dteiċeaḋ agus luaċ saoṫair le fagáil ag an té a déanfaiḋ scéala orṫa, aċ tá na daoine dílis dóib agus ní feallṫar orṫa. Tá cuid eile aca gabṫa ag an náṁaid agus ní fada go dtuitfiḋ an crann céadna anuas orṫa 's tuit ar an Mistéalaċ—cuirfear an loċ amaċ iad ina ndeoraiḋṫe fán ṫar lear.

(v)

Agus cad iad na neiṫe eile a ċím agus a ċloisim nuair a luaiḋtear “Éire Óg”? Ċím Seán Misteál ag sgríobaḋ an Irisleabair Ṗriosiún, agus é dá ċéasaḋ ag an múċaḋ. Cloisim na dánta croiḋeaṁla spreagaṁla a ċúm “Éaḃa” agus í ag fanaċt le gráḋ a cléiḃ a ḃí “faoi ġlas ag Gallaiḃ.” Cloisim Éamonn Breatnaċ agus é a' ráḋ le Seán Misteál, “is tú an fear d'ḟearaiḃ Éireann uile is mó a mbuḋ ċeart ḃeiṫ i n-éad leis an lá seo.” Ċím Séamus Ó Mongáin ag faġáil báis san tsoiléar i Sráid na Miḋe agus motuiġim an cuṁa agus an dílseaċt agus an paisiún diaṁair a ċuir sé san tsár-ḋán sin “Róisín Duḃ.” Ċím corp Ṁic Ṁagnusa dá tabairt abaile na mílte míle sliġe go leagtar san úir é i nGlasnaoiḋean. Ċím agus cloisim agus motuiġim oiread sin go n-abraim liom féin san deireaḋ—An raiḃ dream beo i dtír ar biṫ riaṁ d'ḟág oiḋreaċt inntleaċta agus anma ċoṁ doiṁin agus ċoṁ leatan agus ċoṁ saiḋbir sin ag na daoine a táinig ina ndiaiḋ?



NANT COTTAGE, BOTHWELL,
where Mitchel and Martin lived

THE 'FORTY-EIGHT MEN IN EXILE

By M. J. MacManus

ABEL JANZOON TASMAN, the Dutch navigator, discovered the island on December 1st, 1642, but believed it to be part of the mainland of Australia and it was not until more than a hundred and fifty years later that Dr. Bass discovered the dividing strait which bears his name.

A very large island it is, with an area of 26,000 square miles, and with coasts that are mostly bold, rocky and inhospitable. But there are several accessible harbours, fine rivers like the Derwent, and numerous lakes, including the Great Lake in the central plain. The soil is fertile and the climate one of the most salubrious in the world.

A man could be happy there in the middle of the last century—if he had gone as a colonist. Agriculture or stock-raising would give him unlimited opportunities. If he were a prospector, there was an abundance of minerals, and if he were lucky he might even strike gold.

But to the group of Irishmen who went there as "felons" after the 'Forty-Eight Rising neither the beauties of the scenery, the prospect of settling down and making a comfortable living, nor the goodwill of many of the inhabitants could render it anything but a place of enforced exile. Van Diemen's Land for them was a gigantic prison, and they were never allowed to forget it. John Mitchel, looking at the swift-flowing Derwent, the mighty forests, and the blue mountains, did not doubt their magnificence, but his thoughts were forever turning back to Ireland and "the moonlight shining through the trees at Dromalane."

* * *

Yet there were lights as well as shadows in the lives of the exiles. It must be remembered that, with the exception of Smith O'Brien, who was forty-six when he reached the penal settlement, all of them were comparatively young men. Mitchel was thirty-four; John Martin, thirty-seven; Thomas Francis Meagher, twenty-four; Terence Bellew MacManus, twenty-six; Kevin Izod O'Doherty, twenty-five; and Patrick O'Donohue somewhere in his early thirties. Besides, they were all men of courage, resource and imagination, and not at all of the type who would lie down in sullen repining under the weight of misfortune. Van Diemen's Land might be a prison, but they would make the best of it.

The British authorities, of course, took good care that they would not all reside in the same place. Mitchel, the first to be sentenced, was the last to arrive, for his voyage was by way of Spike Island, Bermuda and the Cape of Good Hope; nearly two years—one of which was spent in the convict hulks at Bermuda—elapsed, in fact, before he reached Van Diemen's Land. There to his great joy, he was allowed to share a cottage at Bothwell with his friend and brother-in-law to be, John Martin.

In an entry in his *Jail Journal*, dated April 12, 1850, Mitchel records the meeting of the two comrades:

> "Sitting on the green grass by the banks of a clear, brawling stream of fresh water. Trees waving overhead, the sunshine streaming through their branches, making a tremulous network of light and shade on the ground. It is Bothwell, forty-six miles from Hobart Town from the *Neptune* and the sea, and high among the central mountains of Van Diemen's Land. Opposite sits John Martin, sometime of Loughorne, smoking placidly, and gazing curiously at me with his mild eyes."

Martin had arrived in company with Kevin Izod O'Doherty, who had christened his Presbyterian friend "John Knox"—a name that stuck. O'Doherty himself, as readers of the *Jail Journal* will remember, became "Saint Kevin". Nicknames were popular in Van Diemen's Land. To "St. Kevin" the authorities assigned the district of Oatlands and there he was permitted to continue his medical studies under a Dr. Hall. He was, to borrow Mitchel's description of him, "a fine, erect, noble-looking young man". If, occasionally, he grew moody, there was a reason for it. At home there was a girl, Mary Eva Kelly—"Eva" of the *Nation*—to whom he was betrothed, and who, after he had been sentenced to ten years' transportation had said: "Never mind, Kevin: I'll wait." But waiting can be a wearisome business when lovers are separated by thousands of miles.

"St. Kevin", Mitchel wrote in his *Journal*, "is sometimes gloomy and desponding, and the mood is on him now for a few minutes. There dwells in Ireland—I should have known it well, though he had never told me—a dark-eyed lady, a fair and gentle lady, with hair like the blackest midnight; and in the tangle of those silken tresses she has bound my poor friend's soul; round the solid hemisphere it has held him and he drags a lengthening chain."

* * *

Smith O'Brien, Meagher, MacManus and Patrick O'Donohue arrived together in November, '49, after a four months' voyage in the incongruously-named steamship, the *Swift*. In spite of the fact that they were guarded carefully they had no reason to complain of their treatment during the long journey, for, as one of the four wrote afterwards, the ship's officers were "fine, generous, gallant fellows," who did all they could for their prisoners. MacManus had a backgammon box which was frequently pressed into service and there was a small library on board which helped to while away the tedious hours at sea. O'Donohue kept a diary in which he recorded occasions when the men read to one another passages from Scripture or from their favourite classics and other occasions when, in a care-free mood, they danced "Irish jigs and Scotch reels".

Once in the penal settlement the friends were separated and O'Brien, who refused to accept a "ticket-of-leave," was removed to Maria Island, off the Tasmanian coast. The Governor of Van Diemen's Land at the time was a Sir William Denison, an overbearing and tyrannical official, who went out of his way to make things harder for the Irish exiles and whose arbitrary actions were more than once declared illegal by the Supreme Court. He appeared to cherish a particular animus against the aristocratic and sensitive-minded O'Brien.

"Instant deportation," wrote O'Brien, "was to be the penalty awarded to anyone who should address a word to me. An amiable Catholic clergyman inhabits the adjoining cottage, and though his garden is only separated by a small fence, he is not allowed to interchange a syllable with me. I was strictly limited to an assigned ration and prohibited from purchasing any articles necessary to my comfort." So great were the hardships he had to endure that in spite of an illness which had wrecked his physique he made a desperate but unsuccessful attempt to escape in a small boat. In the end he was persuaded by his friends to accept ticket-of-leave conditions and he was transferred, sadly impaired in health, to the district of New Norfolk.

Two others of the exiles who became victims of Denison's ill-will were O'Donoghue and O'Doherty. O'Donohue, a man whose courage and honesty were never in question, was determined to take no favours from anybody, either friends or officials. His place of residence was Hobart town, where he tried to eke out a meagre living by his pen and where he very imprudently, founded a weekly paper called *The Irish Exile*. The local Bishop offered him the hospitality of his house, but O'Donohue, whilst thanking him, declared that "he could not accept charity." For a minor breach of the police regulations he was sentenced to labour in a road-gang with the lowest type of criminals.

O'Doherty, for the offence of having made a call on O'Brien at New Norfolk, was sentenced to three months' hard labour on the bleak and barren Tasman's Peninsula. "You will," he said in a smuggled letter to Meagher, "have heard that I am in the 'royal greys' and wear the 'commissary helmet.' But all this is a trifle; I am treated as a common convict, obliged to sleep with every species of scoundrel, and forced to work in a gang from six in the morning till six in the evening—being all the while next to starved, as I find it wholly impossible to touch their abominable 'skilly', which is the breakfast and supper offered me . . . I bear it all with what patience there is in my nature, thanks to my good friend Thomas à Kempis."

* * *

Meagher, probably the most buoyant spirit of them all, was also the luckiest. To him was assigned the district of Campbelltown, and there he took up his abode "in a little apology of a town" as he called it, named Ross. He has left a description of his landlady and her husband in a passage shot through with characteristic humour:

> "My landlady is a devout Wesleyan, an amiable female of stupendous proportions and proportionate loquacity. Her husband is a Wesleyan, too, a shoemaker by trade and a spectre in appearance; so much so, indeed, that the wife may be styled, with the strictest geometrical propriety, his 'better half and three-quarters.' Upon coming to terms with them an agreeable dialogue took place:
>
> 'Sir,' said Mrs. Anderson, sticking a pin into the sleeve of her gown and spreading her apron before her.
>
> 'Well, ma'am,' said I.
>
> 'Why, sir,' says she. 'You see how it is, me and my husband be Wesleyans and we don't like a-cooking on Sundays, and so if it don't matter to you, sir, we'd a soon not dress you any meat on that day, for we're commanded to rest and do no work upon the Sabbath.'

'As to that,' I replied, 'I don't much mind having a cold dinner upon Sundays; but then, there are the potatoes! Potatoes, you know, Mrs. Anderson, are very insipid when cold.'

This was a difficulty of great magnitude. Mrs. Anderson paused and swelled up immensely. She cast an inquiring glance upon her husband as if to implore him for a text, a note or a comment to help her out of a difficulty, in which, like a sudden deluge, the conflicting ideas of a boiled potato and the Day of Rest had involved her.

Mr. Anderson took off his spectacles, held them with crossed hands reverently before him, threw back his head, threw up his eyes, and fixing them upon a remarkable constellation of flies close to a bacon hook above him, seemed to inquire from it, in the absence of the stars, a solution of the difficulty.

A moment's consultation sufficed. A new light descended upon Mr. Anderson and, yielding to the inspiration of the moment, he pronounced it to be his opinion that a boiled potato would not break the Sabbath, and 'in that, or any other way, he'd be happy to serve the gentleman.' "

Meagher, it is evident, could make himself at home even in a convict settlement. He rode, hunted, boated, fished and swam; and in one of his rambles, when he met Catharine Bennett, daughter of a settler who was to become a hospitable host to the exiles, romance came his way. Catharine was beautiful; Meagher was gay, dashing and handsome. A whirlwind courtship followed and in February 1851, the young couple were wedded by Dr. Willson, first Catholic Bishop of Hobart.

* * *

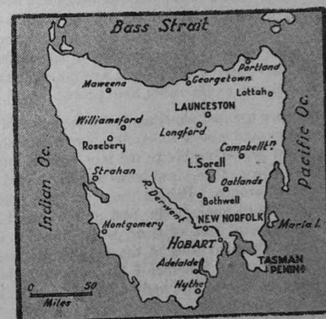
In spite of surveillance and police regulations the 'Forty-eight men managed to meet regularly, usually on Mondays. From their scattered residences they would ride distances varying from twenty to twenty-five miles through the bush, converging on a creek connecting Lake Crescent and Lake Sorell. On St. Patrick's Day, 1851, Mitchel writes:

"You have heard, I am sure, of our way of life here . . . Yet here's one tableau for you. Imagine Martin and me, after a glorious ride of twenty miles through noble old woods, lying on the bank of a fine lake, deep in the central mountains. It is noon-day, and so calm, the water is hardly rippling on the pebbles; and the wooded banks and promontories, and the endless wilderness of bush stretching away through the smoky district to the blue peaks of the north-west, are all sleeping in the sun, bathed and beaming in an atmosphere of gold and purple.

A boat nears us slowly, by help of both sail and oars; a sunburnt man in a sailor's jacket stands in the stern-sheets, holding the tiller; by his side, on crimson cushions, sits a fair and graceful girl. The sunburnt fellow is O'Meagher, and that lady, so fair and graceful, is, who do you think? Why, Mrs. O'Meagher! Martin and I spring into the boat, put the boat's head about, set the sail—for a breeze has sprung up—and skim along under a tricolour flag (O'Meagher is great on flags), till we open upon a quiet bay, at the head of which, nestling under the shelter of untamable forest, stands a pretty cottage, with a verandah, and a gum-tree jetty stretching into the water. We step ashore, and are welcomed into our friend's house by his newly-wedded wife. Why, it is almost like *living*."

O'Doherty—"that lazy Tribune," as Meagher called him—sometimes shirked the long ride, and Meagher threatened dire penalties. "If St. Kevin does not report himself to us after a couple more meetings, Martin and I have determined," he wrote to his friend Father Dunne, "to issue a proclamation for his apprehension and offer a considerable reward to any sheep dog that will hunt him down."

Rumours of the meetings spread and not only Irish well-wishers, but descendants of English settlers, were glad to be invited to take part in the jollifications, which always included the singing of songs like *The Shan Van Vocht* or *The Wearing of the Green*. Officialdom must have known what was happening but for the most part it was content to turn a blind eye on gatherings which could hardly be called "seditious." Yet, occasionally, there was trouble and MacManus, when he "broke bounds" by riding from Launceston to visit O'Brien at New Norfolk, was informed



TASMANIA (Van Diemen's Land).

against, arrested, and sent to Tasman's Peninsula for three months by the Governor. Whilst he was in his cell awaiting the prison boat a local band played Irish airs outside his cell.

* * *

On the whole, life in Van Diemen's land, save for those who incurred Sir William Denison's wrath, was bearable enough and the exiles were, as Mitchel put it, "as nearly content as it was possible for banished men to be." Priests like Fathers Dunne and Hogan, hospitable Irish families like the Connells, the Mannings, the Murphys and the Cassidys, and colonists of English blood, glad to have in their midst men of culture and distinction, made their lot far less painful than it might have been. Still, for all the kindness and hospitality they received, and for all the scenic and climatic delights with which they were surrounded, they pined for liberty and home. Meagher might laugh and joke and sing *The Bells of Shandon*, to the delight of the

company, in his rich baritone; MacManus might declare, as he sat around the fireside in Bryan Bennett's home with Meagher and his bride, that in altered circumstances, he might find life there happy enough; Martin might write, in a farewell note to his friend, Mrs. Connell, of his joy in finding in a forest in the Antipodes, " the warm Irish feelings and the grace and intelligence natural to the Irish character "; but to one and all, Van Diemen's Land still remained a convict settlement.

In the end, none of them remained there for the full term of their sentences. Meagher, daring and enterprising as always, having surrendered his parole, gave the armed police a chance to seize him, plunged into the bush and found a vessel that bore him to America and freedom. O'Donohue, who had suffered more than any of the others, made an equally daring escape in 1852 and stowed away on the *Yarra Yarra*, bound for San Francisco; MacManus, after an ordeal, which writing to Gavan Duffy, he described as " little short of what you can imagine in hell's flames," outwitted the vigilance of the authorities and landed on American soil; O'Brien, Martin and O'Doherty received a " pardon " in 1854. Of Mitchel's rescue by P. J. Smyth—that romantic and Byronic figure—it is unnecessary to speak, for it has been told in imperishable prose in the *Jail Journal*. The light was fading over the seas on July 20, 1854, when Mitchel went down to his cabin and wrote:

> " This evening we are fast shutting down the coast of Van Diemen's Land below the red horizon and about to stretch across the stormy Bass's Straits. The last of my island prison visible to me is a broken line of blue peaks over the Bay of Fires. Adieu, then, beauteous island, island of fragrant forests, bright rivers, and fair women. Behind those far blue peaks, in many a green valley known to me, dwell some of the best and warmest-hearted of all God's creatures; and the cheerful talk of their genial firesides will blend forever in my memory with the eloquent song of the dashing Derwent and deep-eddying Shannon." And he added: " Whether I was ever truly in Australia at all, or whether in the body or out of the body—I cannot tell: but I have had bad dreams."

William Smith O'Brien.

Michael Doheny.

T. B. MacManus.

Patrick O'Donohoe.

T. Devin Reilly.

Richard O'Gorman, Junior.

John Savage.

BALLINGARRY

By Donagh MacDonagh

HAD the children of Widow MacCormack of Boulagh Commons, Ballingarry, not been locked into a house full of police on July 29th, 1848, all Ireland might have risen in rebellion.

It was a year of revolution. Early in January, 1848, there was a revolution at Leghorn; on January 12th one at Palermo against King Ferdinand; on January 13th Austria was in revolt and on the 29th Naples; the 30th saw the Duke of Medina in flight from his capital, while in February the King of Sardinia was forced to grant a form of constitution on the 8th, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany was forced to do the same on the 12th. Martial Law was proclaimed in Lombardy on 22nd and on the same day Messina was bombarded by Neopolitan troops. Louis Philippe fled from Paris on the 23rd and soon every country in Europe was in ferment.

In Ireland Europe's new spirit did not go unobserved, and in the *United Irishman* John Mitchel urged the people, desperate with famine and misery, towards revolt. He and the other leaders of Young Ireland were gambling on a Rising in the Autumn when there would be some food in the country, and the Government, terrified by events in Europe, was determined to anticipate them. Mitchel was tried and convicted under the new Treason Felony Act, and country supporters of the Young Ireland movement were shocked to see his fellow advocates of physical force let him go to transportation without a struggle, but hoped they were merely biding their time. Smith O'Brien, Meagher and the others thought they had ample time to complete their preparations, since in the then state of the law they did not see how Government could bring them to trial in less than two months, but they were stampeded into premature action when on July 25th Government incontinently suspended Habeas Corpus, issued proclamations for their arrest and offered rewards for their apprehension.

They immediately appointed a War Council: John Blake Dillon and Thomas Francis Meagher joined William Smith O'Brien at Ballinkeale, in Wexford, and there the three decided to organise a Rising. Kilkenny, they agreed, would be their headquarters, there they would set up their Provisional Government and issue their first manifesto. They then made a tour of the countryside urging the people to be ready to rise, passed through Kilkenny where they were told that reinforcements would be necessary, and then into Tipperary where they held enthusiastic meetings, which became rather less enthusiastic as time passed and the people, hungry and thirsty, found nothing to eat or drink. At Mullinahone O'Brien bought them some bread himself, but told them that in future they would have to provide for themselves and that he would requisition nothing from any man. They returned home faint with hunger.

Gradually, the crowds which had been so great and which had cheered so loudly began to fade away, and when the Catholic clergy came among them begging them

to return home, pointing out their utter unpreparedness, their lack of weapons, the ignorance of military tactics of their leaders, the utter lack of food, most of them forgot their warlike spirit.

To the majority Smith O'Brien's name was completely unknown, but his danger of immediate arrest without cause shown, the old tradition of revolt, and the appeal to them to risk an honourable death in action rather than one by starvation in a corner of their cabins, appealed strongly to them, and those who remained were willing to risk everything under the leadership of the Young Irelanders. At Boulagh Commons, where he gathered the miners from the local coal mines about him, Smith O'Brien found many eager volunteers, some of them already armed, others prepared to fight with their mining tools, or to use their technical skill in trenching the roads against the police and military.

While the meeting was still going forward the police and military were approaching Ballingarry. The Government had been frightened into sending out of the country every Irish regiment, and replacing them with English and Scottish units; they had expected a general rising throughout the country in answer to the propaganda which the *Nation* and the *United Irishman* had been so long disseminating, and as news came to them from Kilkenny and Wexford and Tipperary of the passage of the men on whose heads they had put a price they uneasily expected another '98. Now they ordered the R.I.C. of Thurles, Kilkenny, Cashel and Callan to advance on Boulagh Commons.

The police from Callan were first to arrive, long before their time, and when the miners saw them riding forward in the distance they hastily threw up a barricade expecting a sudden assault. The police, on the other hand, when they saw a hundred or so miners gathered on the spoil-banks being harangued by a number of strange gentlemen, were not at all anxious to provoke an engagement, and made for a substantial farmhouse which they saw some distance away. This was the Widow MacCormack's farm.

In they went, tumbling over one another in their haste, for the miners, when they saw their change of direction had made a rush to reach the farmhouse before them. However, the police just managed to get inside in time, but so hurriedly had they entered that the grey charger of their sub-Inspector, complete with two pistols in a saddle-holster, was left outside for the rebels. Immediately they began to put the house in a state of defence.

The miners, seeing the police safely cornered, came to O'Brien and pointed out how simple an operation it would be for them to undermine the house, place a charge of explosive under it and blow it over the countryside, and O'Brien was about to assent to their masterly grasp of siege-tactics when Mrs. MacCormack, who had been out watching the crowds, rushed up to him and began to abuse him for his thoughtlessness in frightening the police into taking refuge in her house where her five children were at this moment being frightened into hysterics.

"Glory be to God, Sir," she said, going down on her knees, "You can't risk the lives of those little innocent children for the sake of a couple of constabulary men!" The miners in the meantime were standing anxiously by, waiting impatiently to go ahead with the blowing-up of the house. They watched O'Brien's face as he nodded to Mrs. MacCormack and then gave them the signal to wait, sending

Mrs. MacCormack to the house to arrange a guarantee of his safety from the police. Then he went to the parlour window to discuss the evacuation of the children.

The police, seeing what a sure shield against aggression had been provided by chance, refused to give the children up, and the parley was still going forward when some impatient miner threw a rock through a kitchen window, to be greeted immediately by a burst of firing from every window in the house. The police killed several with this burst while they themselves suffered no casualties then or later.

O'Brien, his negotiations suddenly broken down, found himself trapped between two fires, and with some difficulty made his way through a small gateway into a cabbage garden behind the house, and from there he crept on all fours behind a low wall until he was able to rejoin his companions.

Meanwhile, Terence Bellew MacManus had gathered a number of miners to organise a new form of siege-work. He had noticed a load of hay some distance away, and this he now got them to push close to the kitchen door, being themselves safe from the police fire behind its shelter. Once in position he hoped to set it on fire and so burn or smoke the police out of their fortress, but, though he fired several shots from his pistol into it, the incessant rain of the previous days had so soaked it as to make it impossible to set it alight. In addition, O'Brien returned at this moment and insisted that nothing should be done towards wrecking the house while the children were still inside.

Smith O'Brien's opportunity was rapidly running through his fingers; his few followers were ill-armed, ill-fed, scarcely drilled at all and led by men who had no experience of warfare. Opposed to them were the armed, disciplined and well-fed police and military, ably led by experienced officers and backed by the British Empire. Yet, had he been able to grasp the opportunity there might have been a Rising in Ireland fit to stand with any in that revolutionary year. The people were desperate; they were brave and had been filled for years by the able propaganda of the Young Irelanders; they were hungry, but a militant spirit might have taught them less respect for the stores of food which abounded in the dying country. One savage assault on the farmhouse of Mrs. MacCormack, one decisive defeat for the Government and the news, spread through the country, might have shaken the British occupation. Had Mrs. MacCormack taken her little children with her to see the strange men from Dublin the history of Ireland might have been changed.

But as the killing of Lord Kilwarden had scattered Robert Emmet's Rising forty-five years before, the presence in that farmhouse of five children made the Rising of 1848 abortive.

Soon troops and police were poured into the neighbourhood, the police were relieved, the children restored to their mother, and O'Brien and the others were fugitives in the hills.

"The Cabbage-Garden Revolution" the affair was sneeringly christened by MacDonald of the *Times*, and both the English and Irish papers hailed it as a great victory of a few members of the R.I.C. over thousands of armed men, though the *Illustrated London News* added this explanatory note on the reason for the failure of the Rising: "They failed, because with such arms as theirs they must fail, and because no arms can make an undisciplined rabble, let their enthusiasm be what it

may, formidable against soldiers or the armed constabulary who are at once trained and bound to rigid obedience.

"Nor is it correct to say that the insurgents were crushed by the *police*. The Irish Constabulary are not a police; they are the most formidable troops in arms and equipment, drill, physique, ability, experience and self-reliance in Her Majesty's service."

Smith O'Brien soon became tired of being on-the-run and he decided to see his family and then give himself up for trial. A reward of £500 had been offered for him, but no Irishman thought of risking the ignominy of being an informer, and it remained for an Englishman named Hulme to earn it. He recognised O'Brien at Thurles station on August 5th, and, being a railway guard, detained him until he was able to send for the police. The reward was duly paid and Hulme rapidly drank himself to death.

A paper called *The Warder* gave this account of the arrest, on August 12th, 1848:

"Hulme stole quietly across the line to where Mr. O'Brien was, and placing his hand on his collar said, 'You are the Queen's prisoner!' Instantly the two detectives called on the three policemen, and all ran towards Mr. O'Brien, each catching him by the collar as he approached him. At this moment a young gentleman who was standing by ran towards Mr. O'Brien and stretched out his hands to him. No sooner did one of the detectives, who was clad in a white overcoat, perceive the movement, than he drew from either pocket of his coat a double-barrelled pistol, and pointing each at the gentleman, exclaimed: 'Stand back! for by H—v—n if you move another foot in advance I'll shoot you—policemen draw your bayonets!' Mr. O'Brien seemed most dejected, and was scarcely able to walk, having to lean back on the policemen who were behind him, and who, in the roughest manner possible, shoved him under the neck with their open fists, whilst two others dragged him by the collar, as if he were a pickpocket or petty thief."

O'Brien was tried, convicted and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered, the sentence being commuted to transportation for life, but even at this stage he was determined to embarrass the Government, insisting that the sentence be carried out, since there was no authority in law for substituting transportation. Eventually, the law was amended and he was sent on his way to join the other leaders in exile.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN

By Roibeárd Ó Faracháin

It is not the least of the tributes we must pay to the Young Irelanders that, among all the tasks they had to perform in a short run of years, they had time and perception and quality of spirit enough to rate Mangan highly and to serve his needs. He was a less than middling politician, and when he wrote strictly propagandist verse he scarcely bettered their other scribblers; indeed, Davis, who in general was very much his inferior as a poet, managed to give more quality to his propaganda in rhyme. Moreover, for the first three years of the *Nation's* existence, Mangan sent to it only his hastier writings, reserving the real stuff for *The Dublin University Magazine*. Yet they all—Davis, Mitchel, Duffy and the rest—honoured him in public and helped him in private.

They were proud to publish his work even when it was uncertain whether he shared their political beliefs, and they took care in the beginning to say that they did not know if he did share them. This disinterested appreciation of Irish poetry as poetry, displayed at the very moment when they were beginning to reveal their political vision, is a noble trait in the Young Irelanders, and suggests that they understood, as few politicians in any country before or after them have understood, that the poet must not have prescribed to him the modes in which he is to serve his country. Davis and Duffy made efforts to find Mangan a London publisher, Duffy guaranteeing half Mangan's fee if the publication should fail. The efforts were unsuccessful; but the *Anthologica Germanica*, published in Dublin, was backed by Duffy, and would not have appeared without that backing. That their admiration, and acceptance on *his* terms, of the poet was not uncritical is shown by the *Nation's* notice of his death. It includes this sentence:

> "He has faults, which he who runs may read, mannerism, grotesque, and an indomitable love of jingling; he often sins against simplicity, but the inexpiable sin of commonplace no man can lay to his charge."

Mangan justified their goodness of heart and mind by publishing in the *Nation*, after its first three years, many of his finest poems, including *Dark Rosaleen* and *A Vision of Connacht in the thirteenth century*. He has justified it in a larger way by continuing ever since to draw interest, admiration and love from those who since his time love Irish poetry. His fame in England is not great; but then it sometimes seems as if the English reader can cope with only one Irish poet per century: they know of Yeats to-day, but scarcely another, and their nineteenth century choice was Moore. There is, too, despite what I have said, some little danger that we Irish should under-rate him, as quite possibly we under-rate some other Irish writers of the last century.

In letters, as in other fields, we value less what we are taught is good than what

we ourselves find to be good. At least in this instance I have found it so. Mangan was in my school-books; one of my teachers relished *Dark Rosaleen* and the *Vision of Connacht*, and I relished them with him. But when I was sixteen I found Ernest Boyd's *Irish Literary Renaissance* in a library, and for many years afterwards all that was not *Renaissance* in our letters was dimmed for me—Gaelic writing apart. Now in Boyd's book Mangan is one of the " precursors " of the Renaissance—streaked with light, but not all light,—and as I swung from modern star to modern star—Yeats, Stephens, Synge, Colum, A. E., O'Sullivan, Clarke, Higgins, Campbell,—I forgot Mangan. The doctrine of the Renaissance on the nineteenth century (which was, and is, also the doctrine of the language revival) had become an orthodoxy to which one cleaved. I have the feeling, from the movement of my own reading of late, and from several critical articles which have during the last three years appeared in our papers and magazines, that Irish writers are beginning to sense the necessity of revaluing our nineteenth century. Mangan will not be the least gainer if such a revaluation is made.

He had, no doubt at all, a remarkable poetic equipment, which may be summed-up as acrobatic agility of mind. The outward sign of this agility is his flexible and adventurous technique; more inward signs, his range of subjects, his unflagging zest, his gaiety, his curiosity about foreign literatures and his high estimate of Gaelic verse. Allowing for all the blotches on his work, and contrasting its frequent slapdashness with the consistent artistry and conscientiousness of a Yeats, one must say that only a poet with many major qualities could in his time and conditions of life have achieved what he did. Had he lived when the pollen of poetry flew denser in Irish air he would without qualification have been a major poet.

Mangan's technique was remarkable. He seldom repeated a metre or a stanzaic form; he made new metres and stanzas, or at least played them with his own " fingering," to use Saintsbury's word; he was a master of euphony, and especially of sonorous eloquence, involving vowel and consonant with fine effect; he had that prime mark of a fine lyrist—the power of weaving different line-lengths in the one stanza; his handling of refrain was consummate; he used proper names grandly; and he could make in his poems the climates of the countries of their themes; finally, another sure sign of many-sideness, he varied the *speeds* of his poems considerably.

One need not, to show his metrical finesse and diversity, draw upon many besides the well-known poems. The translations from Irish are enough: *Dark Rosaleen; O Hussey's Ode to the Maguire; The Woman of Three Cows; Kathaleen-ny-Houlahan; O Woman of the Piercing Wail; St. Patrick's Hymn before Tara; The Lamentation of Mac Liag; Lift up the Drooping Head.* Add these original poems: *A Vision of Connacht; The Time of the Barmecides; The Nameless One; The Karamanian Exile,* and *Solomon where is thy throne?*

There are thirteen of his choicest poems: no two of them have the same basic metrical line; no two of them the same grouping of lines; no two the same rhyming-schemes; hardly any two the same kind of subject or mood, and scarcely any a particular debt to any other poet writing English. And, we might add, there is hardly a poem amongst these of which it could be shown that the originality failed to have its intended effect. The reader may wish to defer his reference to these poems, so I quote lines from some of them. *Dark*

Rosaleen may be passed by; we all have it on our ears and most of us on our tongues. But *O Hussey* shall give us a quatrain:

> *Though he were even a wolf ranging the round green woods,*
> *Though he were even a pleasant salmon in the unchainable sea,*
> *Though he were a wild mountain eagle, he could scarce bear, he,*
> *This sharp, sore sleet, these howling floods.*

Where did he get that freedom from the current English sing-song, that large handling, that sureness in newness? It reminds one of Moore's breakaway: *At the mid hour of night.* But the source of Moore's momentary Gaelic quality we know to have been the tune to which he was writing—and then Moore broke away only once or twice; Mangan was not writing to a tune, and his metre is not that of the Gaelic poem; moreover he broke away quite often.

And *Woman of three cows*—of course we all have *it* on our ears also, but don't we recollect it generally for its fun? Would we think of turning to it if someone who believes in these questions were to ask us suddenly to quote a great single line from an Irish poet? Here is a stanza:

> *O think of Donnell of the ships, the Chief whom nothing daunted—*
> *See how he fell in distant Spain, unchronicled, unchaunted!*
> *He sleeps, the great O Sullivan, where thunder cannot rouse—*
> *Then ask yourself, should* you *be proud, good Woman of Three Cows!*

I find that third line speaking itself time after time in remembrance. But I was discussing *metrical* virtue, and the virtue of this line is more strictly euphonic than metric—though I could make it serve to illustrate metrical skill, by contrasting the fall and fling of its syllables with the fall and fling of the syllables in the third lines of other stanzas.

There *is* a purely metrical matter in the poem which *may* only be detected on the twentieth scrutiny viz., that the first two lines of each quatrain end on a weak, and the second two on a strong, syllable. The effect, when observed, is piquant, though not easily defined. I think I may say this much: the ending on an unstressed syllable is more characteristic of Gaelic than of English poetry, so the use of it in a translation helps to give a genuinely Irish flavour; but Mangan's sharp ear warned him against using it in every line: had he done so the stanza would seem to pitch headlong; the pitch-forward is good in the first half, provided it is " ramped " by the two strong final stresses.

Kathaleen-ny-Houlahan will show further cause for admiration of this metrist. The metre is a form of the venerable " fourteener," which supplewristed versemen use for splendour, and botchers for *plod-plod*; it is as full of risk as of fine chances. It is something to Mangan's credit that he keeps his first strong beat on his first syllable in every line without forcing; but a more notable thing is his placing of the pauses, with great variety of phrase-lengths, so that sometimes two great lines march without halt, sometimes there is a check at each step, and sometimes a half-line or a full line walks at a time. I should need

to quote the entire poem to show all this, but I must be satisfied with one quatrain :

Sweet and mild would look her face, O none so sweet and mild,
Could she crush the foes by whom her beauty is reviled ;
Woollen plaids would grace herself and robes of silk her child,
If the king's son were living here with Kathaleen ny Houlahan !

What a swing and a swirl, for triumph, there is in that third line ! And what a finely-stepping line is the fourth, Irish in every move.

I have spoken only of relatively obvious effects, because I have to illustrate rapidly, but one with an ear for these things can find more complex examples. Mangan's grand employment of refrain must have struck anyone who ever read him. We can all stick identical refrains on the ends of stanzas, but not all make good refrains, or interweave them through a stanza, knowing just where, and how often, and with what touches of change to make them recur. Mangan did these things. *Dark Rosaleen* is a capital example. The first line is *O my Dark Rosaleen ;* the eighth, *My Dark Rosaleen ;* the ninth, *My Own Rosaleen,* and the twelfth *My Dark Rosaleen.* This echoing goes through every stanza, and in addition there is a parallelism between the tenth and eleventh lines of each, new each time, yet every one recalling the rest.

Perhaps the finest example, among many, of Mangan's *eloquence* is *Gone in the Wind :*

Solomon ! where is thy throne ? It is gone in the wind.
Babylon ! where is thy might ? It is gone in the wind.
Like the swift shadows of Noon, like the dreams of the Blind,
Vanish the glories and pomps of the earth in the wind.

Solomon ! where is thy throne ? It is gone in the wind.
Babylon ! where is thy might ? It is gone in the wind.
All that the genius of Man hath achieved or designed
Waits but its hour to be dealt with as dust by the wind.

It brings into my head the scriptural story of how the tribes of Israel divided upon two hills and spoke the Law from pinnacle to pinnacle across a glen. I dream of the rich effect one could reach in an echoing hall, with two choirs speaking these questions and answers antiphonally, and joining to fill out with resonance each third and fourth line. This full speech was often at Mangan's call :

Then I saw thrones
And circling fires,
And a Dome rose near me, as by a spell,
Whence flowed the tones
Of silver lyres,
And many voices in wreathèd swell ;
And their thrilling chime
Fell on mine ears
As the heavenly hymn of an angel-band—
" It is now the time,
These be the years,
Of Cahal Mór of the Wine-red Hand."

MANGAN

From the drawing done after death by Sir Frederic Burton.

One notes in him that ease which was perhaps Moore's best quality. Later Irish poets have avoided the facilities of English verse; they have refined their rhythms and their diction, enlarged the resources of their imagery, and made their palettes more fitted for the nuances of Irish light and Irish feeling; they have shared too in one of the chief efforts of contemporary poetry—the development of speech rhythms as distinguished from song rhythms. But in the last few years some of them have, to my mind, inclined to overwork speech rhythms and to forget that lack of song may be much more than a technical want: it often means that the experience they are expressing has been allowed to lie in the topsoil of their minds; or, to put it differently, that their words do not dance or sing because the theme in their hearts and minds lacks dance and song; to put it differently again, they are *commenting on* the experience, *indicating* or *referring-to* it, not delivering it alive in organised movement, tone and figure, sensuously. Mangan always dances and sings, and, in his best work anyway, avoids the vulgarity of commonplace melody and dance-step, and the further vulgarity of diluted meaning. *The Time of the Barmecides* is a reasonable test. There is nothing very new in the metre, and the full-blown romanticism of the subject and "properties" may be distasteful to many modern readers; but, in its own fashion, it is very well done. A handful of Eastern names, another of Eastern words, a detail or two for symbol, and something is made which even temperamental or theoretical hostility will scarcely prevent us from liking. For fear we in Ireland now should press his Romanticism too hard against him, we should recall Yeats's Byzantine poems and debate whether there is so great a difference between the two romantics in the matter of exotic subjects, words and symbols.

I see rich Bagdad once again,
With its turrets of Moorish mould,
And the Khalif's twice five hundred men,
Whose binishes flamed with gold;
I call up many a gorgeous show—
Which the Pall of Oblivion hides—
All passed like snow, long, long ago,
With the time of the Barmecides;
All passed like snow, long, long ago,
With the time of the Barmecides.

If this were all of Mangan—if he had found only this story-book Orient interesting, we might talk of exoticism, escapism and sickly nostalgia; but it was only one element, and showed his many-sidedness.

The emotional, resounding, richly coloured side of Mangan's work is undeniably the better side, and this fact, in combination with the typically romantic character of his tragic life—poverty, drink, opium, the habits of the recluse, the religious fervour—have led us to think almost exclusively of his melancholy and fervent traits; but he *had* not only gusto but gaiety. Considered in themselves however his humorous poems are of small worth. They show once more his unending pleasure in the athletics of rhythm, and were of great value, probably, in keeping his muscles flexed for such

ceremonial dances as *The ride round the parapet.* Most readers will have a memory of this mazy metre :

> *She doffed her silks and pearls, and donned instead her hunting-gear,*
> *The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.*
> *She doffed her silks and pearls, and donned instead her hunting-gear,*
> *And, till Summer-time was over, as a huntress and a rover,*
> *Did she couch upon the mountain and the plain,*
> *She, the Lady Eleanora,*
> *Noble Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.*

Poems like this were prepared-for in his patter-songs and the luscious romanticism of many of the " Versions and perversions " from the German and the Oriental Languages has an analogue in the extravagance of *To the Ingleeze Khafir,* and *The King of the Franks.* The Irishness of Mangan may be seen also in his humorous poems—in this very extravagance. It is not the smile of Gay or Prior he prefers, but the comic squawk of MacConglinne.

> *I hate thee, Djaun Bool,*
> *Worse than Marid or Afrit.*
> *Or corpse-eating Ghoul!*
> *I hate thee like sin,*
> *From thy mop-head of hair,*
> *Thy snub nose and bald chin,*
> *And thy turkey-cock air ;*
> *Thou vile Ferindjee!*
> *That thou thus shouldst disturb an*
> *Old Moslem like me*
> *With my Khizzilbash turban,*
> *Old fogy like me*
> *With my Khizzilbash turban.*

I cannot recall if, in his search for anticipations of the " Irish Mode " in the pre-Renaissance writers, Ernest Boyd noted this extravagance ; it is, however, proper for us to note that this trait is as Irish as the indefinite, wavering rhythm of *At the mid hour of Night* or the *fey* voice of *Up the Airy Mountain.* It is doubtful if the point was taken by any of the " Renaissance " poets before James Stephens ; but it is one more count for Mangan that he showed this connaturality with MacConglinns, O Bruadair and the rest.

I spoke at the outset of Mangan's high estimate of Gaelic verse. In this, too, he showed his prehensile mind, his independence, fashion, his genuiness, and of course his Irishness. Undoubtedly, others had preceded him as translators—Wilson, Brooke, Ferguson, Hardiman's team, Callanan, Walsh, etc. Undoubtedly too he had great good fortune in encountering the massive scholarship of the staff of the Ordnance Survey Office : John O Donovan, O Curry, Petrie and others ; and as well in coming under the wing of the fine patriot John O Daly. But he had, like them and others, most of the current atmosphere against him, and he lacked

their distinguished knowledge of Irish. So it is still to be reckoned to his credit on all the counts I have made that he spent the best of his gifts on remaking Gaelic poems in English. I have not here a tithe of the space required to place him as a translator. I have, however, attempted this task in a chapter of a forthcoming book and I may quote the concluding paragraph of that chapter :

> " Mangan was the best *poet* who had so far translated, a born poet, and one who had particular, high, gifts for translation, among them a varied, dexterous technique which he could apply to the task in hand ; and, whether he used his own knowledge of Irish, or, at an earlier time consulted those who knew it well, always demonstrated a fairly exact knowledge of his original, even when he veered from it. Two things especially contributed to make his work memorable, his delight in rhythm and in verbal music generally, and his depth of passion. Perhaps only Ferguson and Callanan before him had made translations which were real poetry, and, all things said, he was Ferguson's superior. He came, perhaps, a little nearer than anyone before him to reproduction of the formal elements of his originals, though he never attempted completeness of this kind. We are his very thankful legatees, if he had never written an original line."

It is to be added that, by throwing the weight of his fine achievement behind the translation movement, he enormously strengthened it and deepened the Gaelic influence upon Anglo-Irish letters, as well as sharpening curiosity about Gaelic literature itself. This was as great a piece of patriotic endeavour as the political ones of the Young Irelanders, and it admirably seconded the propaganda of Davis for the Irish language and the arts. What other one of the Young Irelanders aided this part of Davis's teaching so effectively ?

Then of course, he did write many original lines. He wrote too much, and at times too windily, at other times too carelessly. But there are certainly thirty or forty of his poems which taken together form probably the best block of Anglo-Irish verse produced before Yeats began. His only rivals would be Moore and Ferguson ; and one would have to make several qualifications before allowing either poet to have done better. " Here," as Lionel Johnson said of one of his poems, and we apply it to all his good poems, " here is the chivalry of a nation's faith struck of a sudden into the immortality of music."

JAMES FINTAN LALOR

By Cathal O'Shannon

"FROM the brooding brain of the Tipperary recluse," said Standish O'Grady of James Fintan Lalor, "from some fiery seed dropped there by the genius of the age, sprang forth suddenly an idea, full-formed, clear, mature, clad as if in shining armour, and equipped for war." O'Grady's appreciation was no more than Lalor's due for by almost any criterion Lalor must rank among the greatest of the Young Irelanders and, unlike any of them, among contributors to a stock of social and political thought of wider than Irish significance.

He was born on March 10, 1807, at Tinakill, Abbeyleix, the first son to "Honest Pat Lalor," a sturdy fighter in the tithe war of 1831, and thereafter Member of Parliament for Queen's County until he lost confidence in O'Connell and turned in disgust from the place-hunters over-running Conciliation Hall. From boyhood he suffered from a disease of the spine and this may have been the reason why he was privately educated before spending some terms in the lay College at Carlow. On leaving Carlow he was apprenticed to Dr. Jacob, a chemist in Maryborough but left Maryborough abruptly after a year and a half. Of the books and other influences that helped to stir his thought in those years little is known and it is an interesting speculation whether he had any acquaintance with the contemporary work of men like William Thompson or Robert Owen and whether it was abroad or at home his mind first felt the impact of social forces only dimly perceived before him in Ireland except by James Hope, the United Irishman.

After Maryborough he departed for France as abruptly as he had bidden farewell to chemistry and remained there until the close of the election at which his father headed the poll in 1832. For the next dozen years or so there are no records of his movements but it may be assumed that the conditions under which his landlord-ridden neighbours toiled and lived, the writings of Davis and his colleagues of the *Nation*, and the agitations conducted by O'Connell, had a profound effect on him and that through this period he was coming to those revolutionary conclusions which startled the Young Ireland leaders when Lalor began to unloose them in 1847.

It was on January 11, 1847, he wrote the first letter which Charles Gavan Duffy handed round among his friends in Dublin. It broke upon them like a revelation. "I am one of those who never joined the Repeal Association or the Repeal Movement," ran his opening sentence, "— one of Mr. O'Connell's 'creeping, crawling, cowardly creatures'—though I was a Repealer in private feeling at one time . . . I saw—not from reflection but from natural instinct, the same instinct that makes one shrink from eating carrion—that the leaders and their measures, means and proceedings, were, intrinsically and essentially, vile and base; and such as never either could or ought to succeed." He came straight to the point in the oft quoted passage: "I will never act with, nor aid any organisation limiting itself strictly to the *sole* object of dissolving the present connection with Britain and rigidly excluding every other. I

will not be fettered and handcuffed. A mightier question is in the land—one beside which Repeal dwarfs down into a petty parish question; one on which Ireland may not alone try her own right, but try the right of the world; on which she would be, not only an asserter of old principles often asserted, and better asserted before her, an humble and feeble imitator and follower of other countries—but an original inventor, propounder, and propagandist, in the van of the earth, and heading the nations; on which her success or her failure alike would never be forgotten by man, but would make her, for ever, the lodestar of history."

There followed to the *Nation* the series of letters which Duffy has very aptly described as "marvels of passionate, persuasive rhetoric." But they were more than rhetoric, they were a social programme and a plan of campaign for a country whose predominant economy was agriculture.

For a moment, on April 19, he turned aside in an exhortation "To the Landowners of Ireland." But he was under no illusions about them and on June 21 he wrote to Mitchel: "I never recognised the landowners as an element, or as part and portion of the people. I recognised them as 'aliens and enemies' whom I solicited to join with and *become* a part of us, and of a new Irish nation—as a 'foreign garrison' whom I required to become a 'national guard' before it should become too late. *It is now too late.* In two months, *at least*, we might appeal in vain. Let us appeal to them, if you will, during those next two months; but let us appeal to the only argument they can understand—the argument of *acts*,—the argument of PREPARATION."

These letters turned Mitchel's splendid thought to a new direction and influenced Michael Doheny of "The Felon's Track," and others of the Young Irelanders who meant business and they have inspired good men in the generations since.

Doheny and Lalor organised a big meeting of Tipperary farmers at Holycross and Lalor reduced his land principles to a series of propositions which the farmers adopted as resolutions but failed to apply until another generation of them had gone through hell.

It was, however, after the arrest of Mitchel in May, 1848, and the suppression of his *United Irishman* that Lalor's doctrine and its application to the situation confronting the Young Irelanders found complete expression. On June 10th the *Irish Tribune* was founded and on June 24th the *Irish Felon*.

As Doheny said, "the *Felon* soon acquired additional interest from the daring principles and extraordinary ability of Mr. James F. Lalor." Lalor's letters were a clarion call to action and even to-day read like the inspired utterances of a social prophet. That is the vision which makes Lalor stand out apart from his contemporaries.

The *Tribune* was founded by the Students' Club of which John Savage, author of "Shane's Head" and for a time chief of the Fenians in America, was one of the leaders. Savage's description of Lalor at this time gives us a picture of the man exactly as he was: "One of the most remarkable men of the movement, taking either his personal appearance or mental acquirements into view . . . Of a deformed person, ungainly action, comparatively blind and deaf, soured in temper, splenetic, bitter and self-opinionated, he was one of the most powerful political writers that ever took pen in hand. His arguments were as logical as his conclusions were fierce; his denunciations as bitter as they were eloquent, and his style as pure as his indignation

was savage. The more ferocious his intentions, the better was his English; and never being in an amiable mood, his manner, consequently, was never faulty. He was as fearless to act as to plan. He knew no such thing as temporization; a half-measure would drive him wholly mad. Truth was the only expedient he believed in . . . his letters [to Mitchel] show that he was ever a revolutionist, and like Kenyon disbelieved in the O'Connellite policy. A true patriot, a passionate hater of tyranny under any form or sky, he died a relentless republican."

Lalor was a man of action as well as a thinker and a writer and only death itself put an end to his insurrectionary efforts. In the abortive rising in Tipperary he was arrested near Nenagh, was subpoenaed as a witness for John Martin's trial—three of his articles were counts against Martin—and lodged in the old Newgate gaol in Dublin. Late in 1848 or early in 1849 ill-health secured his release on a petition which he did not approve. Immediately from his lodgings in Capel St. he renewed preparations for insurrection. There John O'Leary came to him from Tipperary and found that " long before he was able to leave his bed, he had gathered round him many ardent spirits, notably among the more intelligent of the artizan class." To O'Leary he " seemed as if he might give up the ghost at any moment, and could only gasp out his words, which, however, came freely when they could come at all, during the intervals between his constantly recurring fits of asthmatic coughing." With O'Leary, Luby, Brenan, Savage and others Lalor engaged in a further insurrectionary effort around Cashel, Tipperary, Clonmel and Cappoquin in September 1849 but got little numerical support except from Clonoulty. On his return to Dublin he projected what John Devoy calls an unrecorded attack on Dublin Castle. This group of Lalor's survived his death and in 1858 was merged by James Stephens in the Irish Republican Brotherhood, making a direct link between the militant elements of Young Ireland and our own Republic of Easter Week, 1916.

O'Leary was called to Dublin to assist in a new paper, the *Newgate Calendar*, which Lalor was planning, but on arrival found he was dead. That was on December 27 and D. J. O'Donoghue says it was in 39 Great Britain St. (now Parnell St.). At his funeral on Sunday, December 30, mourners four deep filled the whole of O'Connell St.

Of Lalor, Devoy asserted that he " might be said to be the real Father of Fenianism as well as of the Land League." With Michael Davitt and the Land League his land principles got a practical application and Davitt acknowledged his indebtedness to him. Anti-Irish pamphleteers like P. H. Bagenal and H. Brougham Leach confirmed Davitt's debt. Through Davitt and the Irish-American press Henry George drew on him for his policy on the land question. Arthur Griffith granted his vigour but unfairly classed him as a Land Reformer but not a Nationalist. Patrick Pearse paid him tribute. Standish O'Grady recognised in him " a man who united a most logical understanding with a force and depth of imaginative revolutionary passion without parallel in his time, a man who, first in modern Europe, preached the startling doctrine that land titles, not originating in the people's will, are invalid; that the nations own the land, a doctrine of which Europe will hear much in the coming (twentieth) century, for, whether it be true or false, the world must assuredly face it, as the old wayfarers had to face the sphinx." And to the revolutionary James Connolly, Fintan Lalor was one of the clearest guiding lights.

MITCHEL ON MEAGHER

This short biography of Thomas Francis Meagher, which appeared in serial form in the SHAMROCK, *and which has never been reprinted, was written by John Mitchel when he heard of the tragic death of his old comrade in July,* 1867. *In addition to its portraits of Meagher and other Young Irelanders like Smith O'Brien, Devin Reilly and Father Kenyon, it contains a vivid description of exciting incidents in Ireland during the years* 1847 *and* 1848.

FOR many an age Ireland has sent forth crowds of exiles into all lands. The names of some of these will sound for generations to come in the songs and traditions of their wide-scattered race: but not one of them all will hold a warmer place in the fond memories of his countrymen than this gay and gallant son of Waterford, whose light has just been quenched in the midnight waters. No man knew him better, none loved him better than I. Alas! for seven years before his death we had not met, nor held any communication. Wide oceans flowed between us—sometimes a sea of water, sometimes a sea of blood. Yet now that he is dead and gone, the blank he has left in the existence of every one who intimately knew him and shared his wonderful life, is deep and wide, and his friends and his enemies (and both were ardent) miss him alike. As this present writer was one of the former, and has so often stood side by side with him in certain stirring and trying scenes, I know that some readers will follow with interest my personal reminiscences of that rare creature.

The first time I ever saw him—let me try to recall it—a superb colonnaded saloon—the " Pillar Room " of the Rotunda in Dublin; flooded with light and music, thronged with rich uniforms of dark green, blazing with gold, ringing with merry laughter—it is an assemblage of the " 82 Club," waiting for the announcement of supper in the banquet hall. No wonder there was laughter in that crowd, for men were there who would utter jokes on their death-beds; how much more in the half hour before dinner! Centre of one jovial group stands O'Connell, with his fatherly smile for all around, his cordial greeting and kind word to every one who comes up, especially to the young. The mighty frame of the old man looks yet more burly in his semi-military costume, which, indeed, he never much loved; but this night he seems perfectly at home amongst the young men, and his eye even seems to kindle as it glances around this bold and brilliant throng. So it well may: there are high hearts here, as well as stately forms. O'Brien stalks through the hall, a figure at that time lithe and active as that of a youth of twenty summers; at his side is a little gentleman with red hair and keen intellectual face, who is eagerly addressing his discourse to O'Brien and gesticulating and shrugging like a Frenchman—it is Thomas MacNevin, lawyer, orator, wit, scholar, Connaught-man. The two walk by, talking and laughing, both full of hope and patriotic devotion—and they are both dead. As the memory fastens itself upon that scene now, it almost seems a procession of ghosts, like Freiligrath's Phantom Caravan. There walks Dillon, with a form and a head like

the Belvedere Apollo, the noblest-looking figure, as he was perhaps the noblest nature, of that glittering throng; and beside him is a gentleman with broad, honest Milesian face, contrasting the ideal Greek lines of Dillon's—it is Michael Doheny, of Cashel, great on the hustings, potent at a monster meeting, but eagerly wishing that all *that* sort of thing were over, and the fighting begun, if fighting there was to be. These two are also in their graves now: and Ireland is the poorer by the loss of two men.

Next flit by the ghosts of old Lord French, and of young Richard O'Gorman (for O'Gorman is also dead, but I learn that his grandfather is now counsel to the Corporation of New York)—and the phantoms of Tom Steele and Lord Wallscourt, and old Sir Simon Bradstreet, a relic of the Ireland of the Volunteers, whose stout old heart stirs within him at the sight of Irish uniforms. And there go Edmund Burke Roche and John Martin—Burke Roche, now Lord Fermoy, who has been asking the British minister to arm the Irish people, that they may *kill all Fenians*—and John Martin, who is now warmly seconding the proposal to arm the people anyhow—as for killing off the Fenians, he thinks that may not, perhaps, be the purpose to which the arms will be turned. Those two men walked together in the array of the "82 Club," but they walk far enough apart now. MacNevin takes me by the arm, brings me up, and introduces me to a young member then appearing amongst us for the first time: he names him—Thomas Francis Meagher! No need to describe his appearance, which is as well known over two hemispheres as that of any man living or dead. To me, at first, he seemed merely a rather foppish young gentleman, with an accent decidedly English—which, however, was not his fault, but the fault of those who sent him to be educated at Stonyhurst, in Lancashire. It is singular that two of the most thoroughly and intensely Irish of all the Irish—Meagher and O'Brien, should have spoken in the accentuation of Cockaigne—as that is spoken, it is true, by educated English gentlemen, but still Cockaigne. We walked into the banquet-room together; this youngster and myself seated ourselves at the table. The scene was exciting and exhilirating: the two sides and one end of the vast room were occupied by tiers of cushioned benches, closely thronged by ladies; and Dublin, in those days (whatever may be the case now), had dazzling women: it was a living *parterre*, a breathing bouquet, of beauty—to which my new young friend seemed by no means insensible. I cannot say that in our first casual intercourse our impressions of one another were very favourable. I was from the extreme north, he from the far south; and no chord was struck in the one which truly responded to any chord in the other, until we spoke of Thomas Davis, then lately laid in his grave.

It is difficult now, for those who did not know Davis, to understand and appreciate the influence which that most puissant and imperial character exerted upon the young Irishmen of his day. Meagher had never known him personally, but had been inspired, possessed by him. In speaking of Davis, his Lancashire accent seemed to subside; and I could perceive, under the factitious intonations of Cockaigne, the genuine roll of the melodious Munster tongue. We became friends that evening.

Next day he came to me at the *Nation* office in D'Olier Street; we walked out together towards my house in Upper Leeson Street; through College Green, Grafton Street, Harcourt Street, and out almost into the country, near Donnybrook. What talk! What eloquence of talk was his! how fresh, and clear, and strong! What wealth of imagination, and princely generosity of feeling! To me it was the revelation of a new and great nature, and I revelled in it, plunged into it, as into a crystal lake. He talked no "politics," no patriotism; indeed he seldom interlarded his discourse with those topics; but had much to say concerning women and all that eternal trouble, also about Stonyhurst and his college days. We arrived at my home, and he stayed to dinner. Before he left he was a favourite with all our household, and so remained until the last.

Soon after, bound by his allegiance to the memory of Davis, he fairly committed himself to the party nicknamed "Young Ireland," and that cost him, what we all know. But, young Ireland, or old Ireland, he was always Irish, to the very marrow.

Ever from that day our intercourse was close and constant. He became a member of the committee of the Repeal Association, and attended pretty regularly at the committee-room on Burgh Quay. There it was curious to see, amongst the rather mean crowd of O'Connell's dependants and servants that proud young head, with its laughing eyes and careless attitudes. But it is needless to detail the scenes in which he acted at that time before the eyes of all his countrymen. I prefer to follow him into the byeways of domestic life, and to dwell upon the scenes in which I learned to know him best.

On the southern bank of the broad, bright Suir river, looking across to the hills of Kilkenny county, stands the old city of Waterford, with its long line of quay and "Reginald's Tower" reflecting themselves in the glassy waters. In a quiet street of the town, and in a large and somewhat gloomy mansion (one of the best in the place), dwells in strict domestic privacy a retired merchant, the father of Meagher; one good lady, his aunt, sister of his deceased mother, presides in that silent house. Mr. Meagher the elder, is small and meagre, of aspect and manner somewhat dry and cold, but not austere. The furniture of the dwelling suits its proportions and character, being dark and massive, with but little carving and gilding, *buhl* or *ormolu*. In those same sombre rooms, surrounded by the same solemn environment, there grows up at this moment another young shoot of that old Tipperary stock, a youth now of fifteen years, and with many subjects for thoughtful musing, if he has a head for thought, as is likely. Perhaps he occupies at this day his father's little study, surrounded by his father's books, and haunted by his father's fame. What reflections must have passed through that youthful head, as the news used to arrive from day to day of some desperate battle on the Rappahannock or Chickahominy—and of the Green Flag of the Irish Brigade fronting the red Confederate battle-flag (no unworthy match). Did the boy see in thought his father's dark plume careering through the battle, amidst the smoke and thunder, and the tempest of crashing musketry and fierce shouts of the onset? Did the young heart swell with pride, and hope, and a longing and craving to be riding that moment by his father's side?

Twenty years have gone by since I sat in that small study with its then master. I had visited him on my way to Cork; had been received with kind hospitality by the elders of the house; but it was at night, when we retired together to the study, that we felt truly at home. In the arrangements of his room he had followed his own taste, and therefore there was a predominance of red colour; for although he sought to lift up the green above that colour, yet he always in his heart loved the scarlet. His eye sought and craved it, for "the colour of red is like the sound of a trumpet." I was to leave Waterford next morning by the mail coach, for there was

no railroad then, and Meagher agreed to accompany me to the gay and jolly city of Cork. I think my journey was an excuse for him to break away a little from the still monotony of the old house. At any rate, he was like a boy let loose from school in the morning when we took our places in the Cork coach, and rattled away through the dark streets of Waterford, about six o'clock on a winter's morning. I had never before been in that part of the South, and he took especial pleasure in pointing out to me the wild glens of the Comeragh mountains and the royal Munster Blackwater sweeping by Lismore and Cappoquin. In the evening we arrived at Cork, and for four days we were in a whirl of merriment and excitement. I found him a great favourite with the Cork people, as he has generally been with all people during his whole life—a circumstance which spoiled him a little, and would have injured him still more but for the great fund of genuine manhood in his character, which resisted the enervating influence.

And the Cork journey was not our only excursion together in those days. When the Irish Confederation despatched half-a-dozen of its members to Galway, in order to keep Monahan out of the representation, and to insure the election of Anthony O'Flaherty, Meagher and I were again fellow-travellers, having delayed a day later than the rest. It was in the very agony of the famine, the winter of 1847–8: the country was covered with snow, and as we travelled along through the fertile land of Leinster, the farm-yards were all stripped bare; for the landlord had been already down on them (for behoof of himself and the parson together), and the sheriff's bailiff, and the tax-collector, and the poor-rate collector. Cattle and harvests all were gone. It was not a cheerful journey, for we saw sights calculated to sadden and to enrage the most joyous spirit. My gay companion could not but see the desolation that was wasting that noble country. And at times, with all his careless good-humour, his clear grey eye would lighten with wrath, and his lips were tightly compressed to keep in the curses that naturally rose to them.

Scenes like these it was that at last maddened my poor friend and many other men to the pitch of desperation, and made them fling themselves blindly, with naked hands, upon the armed giants of English tyranny.

Exciting work was waiting us at Galway.

II.

Meagher and myself were on our way to Galway to aid in defeating Monahan, the Famine Attorney-General of the English. Monahan is a Catholic; one of that sort of Catholics who sell themselves to the enemy for place and profit: and on this account we were peculiarly desirous of defeating him, and bringing in Mr. Anthony O'Flaherty, of Moycullen, a gentleman of very ancient stock, and a good Irishman. We desired at that moment to have a distinct pronouncement by a large constituency against the Whig ministry, which was wasting and starving Ireland, while it pretended at the same time to be giving Ireland *alms*. The Famine was sweeping the homes of the poor, especially in the West, and more than one coroner's jury, sitting upon hunger-slain corpses, had on their solemn oath brought in the verdict " Wilful murder against John Russell, commonly called Lord John Russell "—than which no truer verdict was ever delivered by any jury.

It was the depth of winter; we travelled all night through the flat snowy wastes of Roscommon, stopping for an hour to sup at Ballinasloe. Meagher was radiant with good humour, sparkling with wit, and abounding in anecdote. But our chaise was now waiting outside, the night was black as Erebus; it was not snowing, but a cold waning moon cast a pale light on the frozen hills, and the stars seemed not only to wink but to grin. Muffled to the ears we flung ourselves into the chaise, crossed the Suck river, and rolled along over the plains of Galway county. The crisp snow crackled under our wheels; it was too cold to sleep, even if my jovial companion had ceased to talk and laugh—never was a pleasanter journey. The temperament of this gay fellow-traveller of mine was a strange one. At heart he was profoundly excited and agitated by the thought of the mission he was upon, and by the dreadful scenes of famine-horror he had witnessed on his way through the most fertile regions of that wealthy island—bringing home to him at every step the deep need of his unhappy country to be delivered from the savage rule which was driving it to desolation and to madness. He knew, too, that serious and perhaps perilous work awaited him at Galway; and he was ready for it, resolute to see it *through*. Yet during this night he seemed wild with pure merriment, sometimes in a perfect agony of genuine laughter; not laughter from the teeth out, but from the very soul. And he knew all the while that he was engaged in a course which might bring him to an ignominious death, or to a life worse than death, in chains—or to a death (which he would have welcomed) on some battle-field. Let it lead whither it might, he was prepared to go on: but in the meantime the southern sunny gaiety of the man would have its way.

Meagher was at that time in the very prime and pride of youthful manhood, intellectually and physically. His scholastic culture was fresh, and in full bearing; his frame Herculean, his aspirations altogether without bounds, his passions like wild horses; and when in the society of those he liked there was the most perfect *abandon* in his manner and talk, which made him the most charming companion in the world. Before dawn we arrived in the little old town of Loughrea, where our chaise was to be discharged, and where we counted upon procuring a conveyance of some sort to Galway city; and we were in a hurry, for the nominations were to be made on that very forenoon. The streets of Loughrea were dark, illuminated only by the snow; nobody was afoot, and no house was open. We came to the doors of several little inns and thundered at them; answers came from windows that there was no admittance at that hour; also that a conveyance of any sort was out of the question, because every hostler, coachman, stable-boy, was in bed and could not be disturbed by any means. We stood under a gateway until the dawn was well advanced; but laughed so much at some anecdote of Meagher's, that a man opened a window in a court-yard, and asked what was that infernal disturbance. He received an answer which made him laugh himself.

At last it was day: doors were opened in the streets of Loughrea, and sleepy-looking heads appeared at the doors. Presently we stirred them up to procure us an outside jaunting-car, with a good horse; and after swallowing an egg and a cup of coffee, we started at a rapid pace for Galway. The lake was frozen over and covered with snow, and the whole appearance of that bare and treeless region was excessively desolate, with its fences of dry stone, stiff *raspers* for your western horses—impassible barriers to all other horses. As we sped along swiftly through Oranmore, and

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approached the ancient "City of the Tribes," the country people were going to market, the women wearing almost universally a petticoat of red woollen material, the product of their own looms. I have no doubt that red drugget has since been driven out of the market by a bad Manchester or Leeds imitation of it, and that the Galway women now have the privilege of wearing petticoats "carried in ships across the green sea," as the Book of Rights would say.

We arrived in Galway early in the day; it was the first time either of us had ever visited that ancient Irish-Iberian town; but we had no leisure, just then, to examine its curious old blackened Spanish houses, nor its rapid crystalline river, which seduces salmon out of the sea up into Lough Corrib. We drove straight to the court-house, where the business of nominating candidates was at that moment going forward. Great crowds outside and inside; but after a struggle we succeeded in gaining the entrance, and were going up the stairs leading to the gallery, when we met Dillon coming down by two steps at a time, and looking somewhat savage. Richard O'Gorman was with him, looking dangerous also, and we knew that some personal trouble was pending. The case was this: O'Gorman had been speaking in favour of O'Flaherty, and a young Galway man, named Morris (now one of the justices of the Queen's Bench or Common Pleas, I know not which), standing opposite to O'Gorman, made some offensive gesture with an evident intention to insult him. The speaker noticed it, pointed at the young gentleman with his finger, wound up his speech hurriedly and went out accompanied by Dillon. It was at that moment we met them on the stair. There was a challenge dispatched, of course, and the affair stood for next morning; but in the meantime some relative of the aggressor discovered (I know not how) that such a business was to be done, and gave information which caused both parties to be arrested. When Meagher was informed of the affair that was in progress, his broad shoulders shook with that kind of suppressed merriment which sometimes convulsed his whole frame. *A la bonne heure!* He said: "It would be no Galway election without this; we shall all have to go through with it; very well, Hurrah for O'Flaherty!"

The details of that Galway election, are they not written in the book of the "Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)?" It was a critical and turning point in the *Parliamentary* politics of our island. Galway is a "county of a city;" its population in 1831, counting the rural district included within it, was 33,120, of whom 32,117 were Catholics. It was therefore an extremely Catholic constituency. Further, the government candidate, Monahan, was seeking the suffrages of the people in the midst of that very famine which his master and owners (to whom he had sold himself) had invented and created. The poorer classes all over the West were perishing in that carefully organised and factitious hunger, while their bounteous harvests were going away to England every day out of Galway Bay, as well as *all* the other harbours. The chief landed proprietors, too, in the city and neighbourhood were Catholics, Blakes, Burkes, Bodkins, and might naturally be expected to sympathize with the perishing people of their own kindred, and to share in our resentment against the alien government which was destroying them. Yet we found the landlords of Galway firmly ranked in the array of Monahan. Official patronage and favour are always in Ireland able to reach persons in that rank and position. Some were to have cadetships in India for younger sons; others were promised the disposal of patronage under the Poor Law; others still were promised nothing, but merely hoped and expected,

intending to make their claims valid by their exertions in this election. The result of it (for we were beaten by four votes), completed, to my mind, the demonstration of this irrefragable *thesis*—that Irish representation in a London Parliament is worse than useless, and that that Parliament is absolutely *nothing* to Ireland save "an engine of corruption, a workshop of coercion, and a storehouse of starvation."

Excited crowds assembled every night in the old theatre of Galway to hear O'Flaherty's friends speak. Doheny was there, with his vehement manner and broad Tipperary accent, which was music to most Irish ears: Michael Joseph Barry spoke every night; O'Gorman rolled out his thundering sentences; and with his fine person and dashing air was a high favourite with the electors of Galway. As for Meagher, he would saunter forward to address the crowd from the foot-lights, shaking perhaps at first with his peculiar convulsive laughter at the oddity of the scene and its accompaniments—he had probably been rummaging the old dressing-rooms and property-rooms, and had raked out some rusty sword or helmet, or a superb crown-jewel made of tin, or other grotesque Thespian equipment—but when he found himself in presence of an enthusiastic crowd—thousands of pairs of eyes blazing up into his—when he heard his own voice, and felt that the electricity of his own passion was shooting through the palpitating mass of humanity before him—then he forgot his rhetoric, and became a true orator. The thought of his country's ancient name and fame, of the pride and power of Ireland's clans and chieftains, and of her then abject and perishing condition under the meanest of all tyrannies—and the inspiring idea that by the popular verdict then to be given in that town the descent of old Ireland towards utter chaos might be stayed—all this lifted the young orator above himself, outside of himself, and put him in perfect possession of every soul in that shouting theatre.

Most of the people who shouted, however, had unfortunately no votes. In short, we were beaten at the Galway election, the last election of a member of the British Parliament in which I have been able to feel the slightest interest. I may give the results in the language of the book already quoted—*Last Conquest, etc.*—

"The tenantry of the rural district of the borough (which happened to be unusually large), were well watched by the agents and bailiffs; who, in fact, had possession of all their certificates of registry; and when the poor creatures came up to give their reluctant vote for the Famine candidate, it was in gangs guarded by bailiffs. A bailiff produced the certificates of the gangs which were under his care, in a sheaf, and stood ready to put forward each in his turn. If the voter dared to say, *O'Flaherty*, the agent scowled on him, and in that scowl he read his fate—but he was sure to be greeted with a roaring cheer that shook the court-house, and was repeated by the multitudes outside. Magistrates and police-inspectors, pale with ferocious excitement, stood ready, eagerly watching for some excuse to precipitate the troops upon the people; and when the multitudes swayed and surged, as they bore upon their shoulders some poor farmer who had given the right vote, the ranks of infantry clashed the butts of their muskets on the pavement with a menacing clang, and the dragoons gathered up their chain bridles, and made hoofs clatter, and spurs and scabbards jingle, as if preparing for a charge.

"The Attorney-General won his election by four votes out of a very large constituency; but his escape was narrow. If he had lost, he would have been thrown

aside like any broken tool; but, as it chanced, he is now Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. More than this—he had the satisfaction, not many months after, of hunting into exile, or prosecuting (with packed juries) to conviction, every Irish confederate who went down to hold out Galway against him—with a single exception. Ministers gave him *carte blanche* in the matter of those prosecutions, and he used it with much energy and legal learning.

It is needless to say that Meagher was the choicest of the Attorney-General's victims; a young, educated, fiery, intrepid, and generous Irishman, who *would not be English*, was a *bonne bouche* for the British Lion, as the brute calls himself—and was swallowed accordingly, with relish.

III.

In November, 1847, Meagher made his first and last acquaintance with the "Black North," one of the strangest experiences of his chequered life. The political organization to which he belonged—the Irish Confederation—named him as one of a deputation to call together and address a meeting in Belfast. We knew that it was a hazardous experiment; for the town of Belfast was the headquarters of Orangeism, and its large Catholic population (about 25,000 at that time out of 80,000 inhabitants) were known to be attached to what was called the "Old Ireland" party, and prejudiced against the Confederation on account of their sincere and natural regard to the memory of O'Connell, then but lately buried. O'Brien, Meagher, John Martin, D'Arcy M'Gee, and the present writer, formed the deputation from Dublin; and we travelled northward, in fine bright winter weather, through Drogheda, hard by the fatal field of the Boyne Water; near also, but not within sight of Mellifont Abbey—the Appomattox of Hugh O'Neill, where he delivered up his sword to Mountjoy—past Dundalk and the field where Edward Bruce of Scotland was overthrown—through Newry, the stronghold of Marshal Bagnal, in Queen Elizabeth's time—then near the fine mountain-chain of Mourne, overtopped by the cone of Slieve Donard, and through the rich county of Down, until at last the golden valley of Lagan river, with Belfast in the distance, with its ranks of tall factory chimneys and over-hanging canopy of coal-smoke lay before us. Just beyond, and stretching along the northern side of Carrickfergus Bay, towered the heathy hills of Antrim, with the cliffs of Cave Hill and Mac Art's Fort, where, on a certain day, Wolfe Tone and his friends registered a vow—a vow which they are still keeping, though in their graves, for their spirit is not yet buried.

Few towns in Ireland are so imposing on the first approach as Belfast. It has not indeed a great river like Limerick, Cork, or Waterford, yet the rich vale of the Lagan, highly cultivated and adorned with handsome country-houses, bounded by mountains with lofty basaltic cliffs, and holding in its lap a busy and wealthy city, all this makes a splendid *coup d'œil*. O'Brien and Meagher were both much impressed by the scene; but we all became grave as we approached, for there was a presentiment that some trouble awaited us. Belfast may be called the Boston of Ireland—I do not say this to flatter it. A large majority of its people are Protestant; a majority of these are Presbyterian; and amongst the most cultivated people there is a large element of Unitarianism. The town has considerable literary pretension, and its newspapers call it, not the Boston, but no less than the Athens of Ireland. The

educated class also affects a certain liberal, or liberalist, or, at least, liberaloid character, and from them, although altogether pro-British, we were likely to receive no active opposition; in fact one of this class, the estimable Dr. ——, consented to take the chair at our meeting.

On the evening of the day of our arrival, we repaired to the Music Hall; found it crowded to its utmost capacity, with a large and noisy mob outside. On the platform were seated a large number of ladies. We entered by a side door and ascended the platform; but our appearance was the signal for one of the most horrible scenes of uproar I have ever beheld in Ireland; shrieking, whistling, stamping, imprecations in the uncouth accentuations of Antrim county—groans, cheers for John O'Connell (who was then administering the dilapidated remains of the Liberator's Conciliation-hall agitation), but no "Kentish Fire," from which circumstance it was plain that the mob was not an Orange mob, and that the demonstration was entirely an "Old Ireland" affair. The worthy chairman stood up to introduce us, but it was in dumb-show, for not a word could be heard. O'Brien stepped forward to the front of the platform, and said, "Fellow-countrymen!" but the tumult grew wilder every moment. Now and then, amidst the roaring storm of shouting, might be heard, "Go home, O'Brien!" "You can't speak here;"—"Hurrah for John O'Connell!" and the like. Meagher went forward with a smiling countenance, waved his arm, and tried to get a hearing: but in vain. "Go home Meagher!" "You're the man that murdered O'Connell;" "Go back to Waterford"—such were the cries that greeted him. The turmoil became rapidly more and more menacing: until at last a volley of stones from the mob outside came crashing through all the windows of the building. The ladies now hurriedly made their escape, conducted by their escorts down the back stairs, and leaving the platform to us and the chairman. Soon we observed that the masses of the people on the floor were preparing for more decisive operations: many of them were armed with sticks—they formed into a sort of column, advanced to the platform and scaled it, while, at the same time, the bombardment from without was continued actively, and there was not an entire pane of glass in one of the windows. The luckless deputation was now surrounded and closely pressed by an apparently furious mob of rioters; and several gentlemen of Belfast endeavoured to persuade us to quit the building by the back entrance, which was still open. O'Brien politely expressed his thanks, but declined to move. Meagher had heard a great deal of the ferocity of a Belfast mob; and when a gang of ruffians came around him with threatening gestures and language, he evidently expected a murderous assault. He set his back to the wall, his face pale with excitement and rage—"You may be able to kill me," he said, "but I do not leave this place except as a corpse." I admired him at that moment, and felt that at any rate the Irish cause would never be disgraced by any lack of manhood in that man. His youth, his intrepid bearing, and his evident determination to sell his life dear, if attacked, seemed to impose on the roaring brutes before him. Some of them entreated him for God's sake to go away—"Never!" Some of them at last offered to escort him safely out of the Hall. *Never!*

O'Brien was the centre of another group equally atrocious in appearance; but he showed no excitement of any kind. He had thrown on his cloak, and stood with his arms folded in it, leaning upon a rail. I remember one scene—a very brutal-looking butcher came up to him in the midst of the tossing and swaying multitude—

"O'Brien," said he, "I'm a better man nor you any day!" O'Brien smiled benignantly "I have no doubt, my friend," said he, "that in general you are a much more estimable person than myself; but on the present occasion you have been drinking, while I, on the other hand, am perfectly sober—this gives me, perhaps, a temporary advantage."

All this while the magistrates of the town, though fully aware that riotous proceedings were in contemplation, had made no provision whatever for repressing them. They were all in the British interest, some of them Orangemen of the deepest dye; and their policy seemed to be—as we had voluntarily braved a Belfast riot—to let us take the consequences. But now, when the Music Hall had been for a considerable time in the possession of a tumultuary assemblage, its windows all riddled by stones, and the peaceable people within it quite at the mercy of rioters, a force of police at last appeared in the hall, armed with their carbines; they formed line, fixed bayonets, charged the platform, where the chairman had sat steadily all the time with a placid countenance, and in two minutes the place was all clear. Tranquillity reigned in the Music Hall; the chairman called everybody to order, and the speeches of the delegates were made in due form, though to a sadly diminished auditory.

We were not content; did not like the idea of being actually prevented by rioters from addressing any persons in Belfast who might be willing to listen to us; so when we went back to our hotel we resolved to hire the theatre, and announce a meeting for the forenoon of another day. There was immense excitement in the town upon this announcement; and on the morning of the day appointed several magistrates came to wait upon us at our hotel (the Donegal Arms) and to inform us that they had affidavits sworn before them to the effect that if we persisted in holding our meeting a serious riot would be the result, and that it would accordingly be their duty to prevent any such meeting, and to prevent us from entering the theatre. We replied that we were not rioters; that we had come to address the people of Belfast upon subjects of public interest; that if there were any riotous people in Belfast who threatened a breach of the peace, it was the duty of the magistrates to look after *them*; that we had taken the theatre for that day, had invited thither all who might wish to come and listen to us, and that we would certainly hold that meeting unless repelled from the doors by an armed force.

There is a street in Belfast, inhabited by butchers, and named Hercules Street, or, in the idiom of that town, *Arcles Street*. They are very patriotic butchers, always ready to fight the Orangemen of Sandy Row and Ballymacarrett; and their great principle is that when an Orange or Tory member is returned to parliament from Belfast, and his friends "chair" him through the town in triumph, he may be chaired through other streets, but through Hercules Street never. Many furious fights have taken place upon that issue, and the cleavers and butcher-knives of Hercules Street have let some Orange blood out. It happened that this redoubtable Hercules Street at the time of our visit was for "Old Ireland"—it was for "Young Ireland" a few weeks after—but just then it had been decided in the councils of the butchers that the "murderers of O'Connell," as we were termed, should not be tolerated in Belfast. Accordingly, Hercules Street turned out in force, and on our arrival in front of the theatre we found a mighty mob of butchers. The doors were guarded by armed policemen; and as we did not think proper to abandon our right, we advanced until

the points of the bayonets were upon our breasts. The lessee of the theatre was present; he assured us that the hindrance to our entrance was through no action of his, and that he was quite willing to let us have his theatre the next day. We took it on the spot, and gave warning to the magistrates then present that we would take that theatre day after day, and every day until we should be allowed peaceably to hold our meeting.

Next day these worthy magistrates decided not only not to prevent the meeting, but also to take no measures to keep the peace: for the duty of magistrates and police in Ireland is not to preserve peace and good order, but only to support the authority of the Crown. Once more, then, the Confederate delegates went to the theatre; this persistence in determining to hold a meeting in Belfast, was rather from a disinclination to yield, than from any reasonable hope that we should have a patient hearing in Belfast. But O'Brien had certain facts and figures to present touching the financial plunder of Ireland by the Union; and out these must come. John Martin, too, who always believes men are going to be amiable and reasonable, if they only have matter placed before them in the proper light, was desirous to make one more effort to convince even Hercules Street against its will. As for Meagher, always disposed to regard such scenes on their ludicrous and grotesque side, he saw clearly that Hercules Street and John O'Connell had prevailed for this time (chiefly by help of the magistrates), and that we should not be allowed to say one word in Belfast in any public place: but, of course, he went to the theatre with others, carefully dressed, neatly gloved, beaming with good humour, his eyes twinkling with merriment at the absurd kind of figure we were beginning to make. No matter: O'Brien was, on that expedition, our acknowledged chief, captain, and head centre; and where he chose to lead the way all would follow, being very sure that though he might bring them into amusing situations, he could not bring them into any discreditable one. Arrived at the theatre, we found it already completely packed by the mob, and not a constable anywhere within sight. We saw that we were delivered over into the hands of Hercules Street. A respected Belfast merchant, Mr. Robert M'Dowell, offered to take the chair on this occasion; and being well known and popular in Belfast, he flattered himself that he could appease the raging butchers. On our appearance at the front of the stage, we were received, as before, with a tempest of whooping and whistling, intermingled with many butcherly expressions. When old Mr. M'Dowell rose up there was a momentary lull; till they should hear what had brought *him* there; but when he said he had come to request a patient hearing for the gentlemen by his side, the storm burst forth again wilder and louder than ever. For four hours we remained on that stage, our venerable chairman keeping his seat; while O'Brien would sometimes—when the shouting audience appeared a little exhausted—stand up and say: "Fellow-countrymen! At the period of the Union the funded and unfunded debt of Ireland—" he never got further than this—"Hold your jaw O'Brien!"—"It's no use!"—"Horay for John O'Connell!" and general chorus of whooping, with the accompaniment of marrow-bones and cleavers—for they had actually those instruments with them in many cases. Then John Martin would step forward, with his kindly and persuasive countenance, fondly imagining that he might conciliate even the butcher-mind: it was a dreadful failure.

Sometimes the attitude of our singular auditory grew very menacing, and as

there was no appearance of a police force to restrain them, there seemed imminent danger that parterre, dress-circle, and boxes would all precipitate themselves upon the stage, as they had done at the Music Hall. Meagher and myself had resolved in the morning that we could not again suffer ourselves to be at the mercy of a crowd of bellowing butchers, and had accordingly armed ourselves. Sauntering about the stage, also, we had found the door of the green-room; and, inside the door, two or three swords, which we disposed in a convenient place out of sight; a poor provision indeed against such a mob, if there had been any real disposition to harm us. But there was no attempt this day to invade the stage; and after vainly waiting four hours for a chance to say something, we bowed to the butchers, and went out into the street, fairly baffled. We were followed by the mob; it was roaring around us, when O'Brien, addressing his companions and the few friends around him, said: "I understand there is a street in this town called Hercules Street, inhabited by a large number of our fellow-countrymen; it is my intention now to proceed to that street and address the residents." At once there was a loud outcry against this; several Belfast gentlemen informed him of the dangerous character of that street when aroused; O'Brien serenely replied that he had no idea of any street of that city being closed against him if he wished to pass through it; that on the present occasion he was resolved to address the Hercules Street men at home; and set forward accordingly. We all went with him of course. As I knew the city, I guided him towards the street he wanted, warning him, however, that he never would get through it. We passed on through a wide space at the upper end of High Street, and from thence Hercules Street opens by a narrow entrance; the immense crowd rushing into this narrow way, choked it up, and O'Brien's party was for awhile the centre of a tossing, swaying multitude, which pressed on us more closely at each moment. In the meantime the street was flying to arms: and men and boys in their shirt-sleeves, with bloody hatchets in their hands, came pouring along from the lower part of the thoroughfare, fully resolved to guard the sacred soil of that virgin street. What might now have befallen I know not; for O'Brien was still advancing as serene as a May morning—Meagher by his side looking vexed but resolute—when suddenly a rush was made upon us from the rear; but it was a rush of friends; O'Brien was seized upon by two gentlemen, whose names I know not, lifted up from the ground, fairly carried back through the narrow defile into the open space, and Hercules Street was evacuated. Our faithful mob followed us, and seemed to increase every moment; but was now apparently in high good humour. O'Brien, seeing what multitudes surrounded him, bethought himself of trying yet once more to get that speech out: he stopped, looked around, and said, "My good friends, is there any little cart or waggon about here, or even a barrel, on which I could stand while I address these people." A brawny butcher, who was close beside him, said, "Here, your honour; you can stand upon my shoulders," and he stooped his head. Two others helped Mr. O'Brien to mount, and there he stood balancing himself a moment, with an umbrella under his left arm. His appearance on that singular platform was greeted with loud cheers, and his address was listened to with marked attention. Evidently he was fast rising in the esteem of that wild populace; but it was only that they admired his pluck. They did not appreciate nor understand the high civic virtue and courage which impelled that gallant spirit thus pertinaciously to insist upon his right to address the people of Belfast.

They did not know that it was for their sake he did so; did not know that all through these stormy scenes his great heart was swelling with love and pity for *them;* and that his sole aim was to raise them out of their stupid and factious abasement and make them comprehend the rights and dignity of our common country.

And in fact our Hercules Street friends were as patriotic, after their own fashion, as we were; hated English rule quite as bitterly, and only opposed us because they were told that we had been enemies to O'Connell, and therefore friends (perhaps paid agents) of the English government. Very soon after, these Old Irelanders, became Young Irelanders; and the men of Hercules Street formed Confederate Clubs.

After O'Brien's speech from the butcher's shoulders we went home to dinner: next day left Belfast; and two days after were received by John Martin in his cottage home of Loughorn, among the green hills of Down, in the shade of great trees, where we pleasantly rested after our labours in Belfast.

But worse awaited us at Limerick.

IV.

The nicknames of "Young Ireland" and "Old Ireland" may seem now vain and meaningless enough; yet in the year '47 it was a needful and real distinction, with a difference. Old Ireland meant Whiggery and office seeking, and a staff of paid officials to support the influence of Mr. O'Connell: Young Ireland meant perfect independence of all British parties, repudiation of offices under any English government, and absolute denial of the validity of London law. O'Connell saw plainly that this latter system, if it prevailed, would end in an armed struggle, or an attempt at that; and he saw, too, that such attempt must be futile, while England was at peace. Therefore he resolved, in his usual autocratic style, to crush us out of his Repeal Association. As he had certainly created that Association, he sincerely believed that he owned it altogether, and that nobody had any business in it who would not submit implicitly to his dictation. Many anxious deliberations were held amongst our friends on this subject. O'Brien, especially, was reluctant to abandon the only organised body which then possessed the confidence of the country. He thought that the Repeal Association was owned, not by O'Connell, but by the country; and he would not stand by tamely to see it made an agency of placehunting.

The two parties, Young and Old, were rapidly forming themselves. Richard Lalor Shiel, then Master of the Mint, offered himself for the representation of Dungarvan. Dungarvan was a constituency, altogether under the influence of the Repeal Association, and would have returned against the British placeman, any candidate recommended by "Conciliation Hall." But O'Connell would not put the machinery in motion against his old friend Shiel. In vain several members of the committee urgently pressed this action upon him; in vain the *Nation* proclaimed that if Dungarvan were given up to a Whig and a placeman, the Repeal Association might as well be shut up. O'Connell talked of "good measures" he expected from the Whigs, and of the headstrong folly of "rash young men"—meaning us. Meagher was emphatically one of these rash young men: he could by no possibility have attached himself to the "Old" party. His ardent and impulsive nature, his fine culture and

generous spirit, were irresistibly attracted towards the band of comrades, some of them about his own age, and others little over it, who received at the time, by way of nickname, the title of Young Ireland, but never themselves adopted or accepted the name. William Smith O'Brien, John Blake Dillon, Richard O'Gorman, Michael Joseph Barry, Michael Doheny, Thomas Devin Reilly, P. J. Smyth, and this present writer, were amongst the prominent members of the fraternity; besides two others whom I prefer not to name, as they have since become office-holders of the Queen of England, and no doubt have approved themselves her Majesty's faithful servants. Those I have named, I say, were the most prominent of that party, residing in Dublin, and regularly acting in the Repeal Association; but many gentlemen, both in city and country, gentlemen both old and young, and some as old as O'Connell himself, were in full sympathy with us, and equally resolute not to let the Association be turned into an instrument of jobbery.

We soon knew that the great Agitator was preparing to come down upon the "rash young men" with all his force. A resolution had been carried in the Association that none of the members of parliament connected with it should attend in their places except to assert some Irish right, or avert some Irish wrong; they went over to resist the passage of a new coercion act; and while there, the house took advantage of their being on the spot, to name both O'Connell and O'Brien upon a railway committee relating to English railways. O'Connell obeyed the order of the house; O'Brien declined, was arrested, and confined in the "cellar." This treatment of Mr. O'Brien exasperated Meagher exceedingly. Both in the Association and in the '82 Club, he expressed himself in terms of passionate gratitude towards O'Brien, which was an implied censure upon O'Connell. In the Club where the "young" party was strong, we adopted an address to the member in the "cellar," and a deputation proceeded to London to present it, in the cellar itself and in the uniform of the Club. Once more, then, Meagher was out on a deputation; it was summer this time, and the beautiful and rich midland counties of England were in their richest robes of verdure. Old Mr. Bryan of Raheny was of the party, a gruff but kindly old gentleman, always in a state of sustained indignation against England and everything English. There was some excuse for his wrath; he had come from the midst of a population, all in rags and hunger, or writhing in the famine typhus, while their abundant harvests were carried to England. Arriving in England, he saw everywhere signs of wealth and prosperity: he knew it was at the expense of his own people and naturally enough, he frowned and grumbled. "All our money, sir, every bit of it—this is where all our money goes," &c. A railroad official comes to the door and says, "Tickets, gentlemen," very civilly; Mr. Bryan, as he produces his ticket, looks at the man with a portentious scowl, which the poor fellow sees, but does not in the least understand. "Now," said the old gentleman, as the official turned away, "that fellow looks as if he *could* be insolent." Meagher and Doheny had gone up to London a day before us. When we were all assembled, the first thing to be done was to call on O'Connell, as a member of the Club, and ask him to join in the presentation of the address. This was a delicate matter; for the document substantially accused himself of doing that thing which it praised O'Brien for *not* doing. However, as he was in town, it was judged that to ignore his presence would be still more disrespectful to him than to ask him to join our deputation. Se we proceeded to his hotel in Jermyn Stret. Of

course he knew our errand. He received us all with paternal smiles and most gracious words. One of the party was Terence MacManus, now in Glasnevin Cemetery; another was John E. Pigot, son of that Chief Baron who has just been expounding the law of Irish American citizenship. His son was at that time a "rash young man," as the phrase went, and a very warm friend of O'Brien. We announced our object, told him we were going to present the address that day, at such an hour, and asked the honour of his company. He told us that he had a deep regard for Mr. O'Brien; said there was no more excellent gentleman, and nothing could give him so much pleasure as joining in any demonstration of attachment and gratitude to so worthy a person; but he gave us no answer. He told us an anecdote and made us a joke; then when one of the deputation modestly returned to the matter in hand, Mr. O'Connell suddenly called in his little grandson, who was playing in an adjoining room. The little fellow came up and stood at the Liberator's knees: he was dressed in green: "Are you an English boy, my child?" "No; I'm an Irish boy, and my name's O'Connell." This and the like infantine conversation went forward for a while, merely to gain time. This was O'Connell's way; and we had difficulty in keeping our countenance at his evident embarrassment. Indeed, Meagher was obliged to push his chair back a little, and to stuff his handkerchief in his mouth. It ended, however, in the Liberator's declining to accompany us, on the ground, I think, of the respect due to the House.

Having already arranged to be admitted to visit the cellar prisoner at a certain hour, we proceeded to Westminster in two carriages; and then, to the surprise of door-keepers and bye-standers, seven gentlemen in the uniform of the "82 Club" were seen to walk down into the species of ditch or hollow which at that time bordered the old Houses of Parliament on the side of the street; and there were ushered at once into a cellar door. It was not in fact a cellar, although its floor was somewhat beneath the level of the street; it was simply a low, small, damp-looking, and miserable room, with a truckle-bed and little deal table. O'Brien was walking to and fro, and his head almost reached the ceiling. He greeted us with his usual ease of manner, and politely apologised for the absence of chairs to seat us all, just as if he had been in his own house. When we told him Mr. O'Connell had been unable to join us, he smiled, but made no remark. Now here was certainly the purest and noblest man of the 650 in that house; and they considered their cellar the fittest place for him. It was the first of his series of imprisonments in his country's cause.

He was deeply gratified by the address of the Club. We soon left him; and old Mr. Bryan, looking up spitefully at the grand new Westminster Palace, stopped before entering his carriage, to exclaim vindictively, "Heaps of our money sunk here, sir!"

How O'Connell drove us at last to quit his Association, I need not record. O'Brien made an earnest protest on behalf of the "rash young men," and Meagher followed with that passionate speech so often quoted since, which gave to John O'Connell the occasion of pushing matters to extremity with us—his father was still in London. The excitement was intense; and the great hall was roaring forth is applause of one of Meagher's eloquent appeals, when John O'Connell arose and declared that if such a line of speaking was to be tolerated in that hall, *he* must leave it. We all knew this meant that his father would break up the Association. It might have been better

if we had allowed him to do so; but O'Brien took his hat, saying: "No, let *us* go rather!"—we all walked out; a large number of the people in the hall came away also, and never entered it again; and most of the ladies in the galleries came pouring down the stairs to make their exit at the same time.

It was the end of the Repeal Association for any good purpose; and the enemy's government never gave itself the least trouble about it any more.

Meagher had his full share of the *odium* which many of the people attached to us for daring to differ in anything from the great Liberator. "Old Ireland" became violent, not against the British government, but against *physical force*, and hence the series of Old Ireland riots, beginning at the Music Hall, in Abbey Street, propagating themselves in Belfast, making eruption in Cork, and, at last, bursting out into grand explosion at Limerick.

Meagher made an effort to be returned to parliament for his native city of Waterford, early in the year 1848. He was the favourite with the populace, but the constituency was a limited body, "small enough to be reached and penetrated by the touch and savour of official gold," and a Whig was returned.

But now the February Revolution in Paris shook all Europe; and Meagher's next deputation was to the *Hotel-de-Ville*.

V.

The winter of 1847–8 in Ireland was a terrible season. The people were perishing by myriads on the roadsides, or lying down to die of hunger on their own hearthstones. Their wealth of harvests and of cattle were going off for England, in countless ship-loads, upon every tide that flowed; while each measure of the British Parliament was expressly calculated to deepen the universal misery and continue the wholesale slaughter. If the sight of such agonies and atrocities did at length drive some Irishmen to desperation, it is not much to be wondered at. None of our countrymen in that day was more calm and moderate, more conscientious, more averse from wanton bloodshed, than Wm. Smith O'Brien; not one more gentle and forgiving, more attached to law and order than John Martin, or the late John Dillon; yet the irresistible course of events, and the unnatural horrors which their own eyes beheld, did at length drive even these men to counsel an armed insurrection against the desolating British power.

Some of our countrymen, attached to a younger "party of action," have freely censured what they call the "Young Ireland Party," for having given the signal of an insurrection, without arms, without preparation or organisation. This is less than just: at that day, if there were not "circles" there were clubs; very considerable progress had been made in arming and in drilling those clubs, even before the French Revolution of February burst upon Europe. The effects of that great event were electrical; and all oppressed populations were bound to rise against their tyrants, even in those cases where the oppression was political merely, and did not amount, as in Ireland, to systematic extirpation.

Carlyle, in his singular "Latter-Day Pamphlets," gives a vivid account of the exciting scene which all Europe presented in the early months of '48.

"The French explosion, not anticipated by the cunningest men there on the spot scrutinizing it, burst up unlimited, complete, defying computation or control. Close following which, as if by sympathetic subterranean electricities, all Europe exploded, boundless, uncontrollable; and we had the year 1848, one of the most singular, disastrous, amazing, and, on the whole, humiliating years the European world ever saw. Not since the irruption of the Northern barbarians has there been the like. Everywhere immeasurable Democracy rose monstrous, loud, blatant, inarticulate as the voice of Chaos. Everywhere the Official holy-of-holies was scandalously laid bare to dogs and the profane: enter, all the world, see what kind of Official holy it it is. Kings everywhere, and reigning persons, stared in sudden horror, the voice of the whole world bellowing in their ear, 'Begone, ye imbecile hypocrites, histrios not heroes! Off with you, off!'—and, what was peculiar and notable in this year for the first time, the Kings all made haste to go, as if exclaiming, 'We *are* poor histrios, we sure enough; did you want heroes? Don't kill us; we couldn't help it!' Not one of them turned round, and stood upon his Kingship, as upon a right he could afford to die for, or to risk his skin upon; by no manner of means. That, I say, is the alarming peculiarity at present. Democracy, on this new occasion, finds all Kings *conscious* that they are but playactors. The miserable mortals, enacting their High Life Below Stairs, with faith only that this Universe may perhaps be all a phantasm and hypocrisis—the truculent Constable of the Destinies suddenly enters: 'Scandalous Phantasms, what do *you* here? Are "solemnly constituted Impostors" the proper Kings of men? Did you think the Life of Man was a grimacing dance of apes? To be led always by the squeak of your paltry fiddle? Ye miserable, this Universe is not an upholstery Puppet-play, but a terrible God's Fact; and you, I think, had not you better be gone!' They fled precipitately, some of them with what we may call an exquisite ignominy, in terror of the treadmill or worse. And everywhere the people, or the populace, take their own government upon themselves; and open 'kinglessness,' what we call *anarchy*—how happy if it be anarchy *plus* a street-constable!—is everywhere the order of the day. Such was the history, from Baltic to Mediterranean, in Italy, France, Prussia, Austria, from end to end of Europe, in those March days of 1848. Since the destruction of the old Roman Empire by inroad of the Northern barbarians, I have known nothing similar."

It was altogether out of the question that Ireland, even if less prepared for fight than she was, even if less goaded by intolerable misery than she was, should rest quiet in such a condition of things. Between France and Ireland there has always been a telegraphic communication of moral electricity, a chain of inevitable sympathy, whose signals never fail. But even independently of this sympathetic thrill sent over to us from the barricades of Paris, there was the horrible fact, every day present with us—that our people were dying miserably under English law, and we felt that it was better for them to die by grapeshot or bayonet: no carnage could possibly be so fell as the British Famine.

I mean, therefore, to put in a plea for those men who at last resolved to rouse their people, if that were possible, to strike in their own defence, rather than tamely die like starved dogs. True, the effort was almost hopeless, a real paroxysm of desperation: for England was at peace: she had succeeded in quelling her own miserable Chartists, and in thus keeping away from her own shores the revolution which was surging over Europe: she had therefore full leisure to turn all her attention and to concentrate all her force upon our little island.

Perhaps nobody felt more keenly than Meagher the hopelessness of the struggle to which he invited his countrymen ; yet he flung himself into it with a perfect *abandon*, in a spirit of gay and jovial desperation. "I have but one life to give," said Reilly in his club, "and I give it." Alas ! it was not the fault of our friends if they failed in giving even their lives to the cause. "Give me liberty, or give me death !" exclaimed Patrick Henry. The men of '48 would have cheerfully embraced that alternative ; but they could get neither liberty *nor* death.

Thomas Devin Reilly was then one of the most intimate friends of Meagher : the two men, though differing much in individual character and temperament, were both intensely Irish ; and each received the news of the French Revolution as an irrecusable summons to the field or the barricade. Reilly, when the first news of the transactions in Paris arrived in Dublin, bowed his rugged head and wept in the passion of his joy. How shall I ever describe this exquite specimen of an "Irish Gasçon," as he called himself ? An eminent French writer, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, thus tries to do it :—

"Another excellent type of an Irishman is Reilly : a character widely different from that of Smith O'Brien. He does not present himself to us in person ; but unconsciously draws a portrait of himself in a letter written from the United States to Mr. Mitchel. It is very difficult to give an idea of this wild, dazzling, agile activity. This letter is a real phenomenon : it does not contain really one thought [I know not precisely what the Reviewer considers to be thoughts], yet each of these words is instinct with life ; each of these words is a gesture, a grimace, a gambol, a burst of laughter : there breathes throughout the whole a kind of unthinking turbulence which makes one dizzy : you think you are beholding the instinctive bounds of some grateful animal of the woods, or the active play of some supple greyhound. Reilly undoubtedly belongs to the breed of that Celtic chieftain, spoken of in a ballad cited by Mr. Mitchel, who had red lightning in his blood. He describes an interview of his with Kossuth, which must have been very amusing, and at which we should have loved to be present. Imagine those two strange interlocutors, the Celtic O'Reilly of Breffni-O'Reilly, and that descendant of the Tartars, gesticulating and crying out to one another !" "In the United States," continues the Reviewer, "he marries, loses his children, is on the point of losing his wife, laughs, weeps, loves, hates, intrigues. It is like looking upon the *pirouettes* of a dancing dervish. In truth we must use the most grotesque images to give an idea of the nature of this man, a nature similar to those souls condemned to whirl around incessantly, inclosed in a body made of an elastic substance which cannot touch ground without bounding up again, with quicksilver in place of blood, and for nervous system the wires of an electric telegraph. Intelligent he is beyond question as is proved by one of his sayings—'Ireland,' he says, 'may be either made the vanguard or the *La Vendee* of the European revolution. Throw an army upon her soil, and you will abolish, both materially and financially, the British Empire : but let that revolution break out in Italy—let it be presented under false colours by the English and the clergy, and Ireland will be the deadliest enemy of Republicanism in Europe.' "

Meagher, O'Brien, and O'Gorman are at the *Hotel de Ville*, in Paris : they have their interview with foolish old Monsieur de Lamartine, President of the Provisional Government of the new Republic, who, having previously made up his mind that the

Irish repealers were coming to solicit armed aid from France against the English Government, and having accordingly prepared his speech in reply to this address, did not hear one word of their actual address, and so responded to his own imaginary one. It is the way of that foolish old poet—he never sees or hears anything as it really is, but only as his morbid imagination conceives it. Even when the man is travelling in a distant country, and there is nothing to excite or disquiet him—as in his journey to the Holy Land, he sees nothing, hears nothing : from Dan to Beersheba, he voyages in the realm of his own fancy. At any rate, the colour which he thought fit to give to the mission of our delegates was an occasion for the British Government to commence measures of vigour. O'Brien, Meagher, and this present writer, were immediately arrested and held to bail to take our trial for "sedition." On our return from the Head Police Office in Lower Castle Yard, where our securities were given, we found Dame Street thronged with the people, cheering and blessing us. They escorted us to the council-room of our Confederation in D'Olier Street ; and from the window Meagher and O'Brien addressed the multitude in glowing words. It was only one of those many scenes in our history, where the national sentiment and aspiration of our country have found themselves face to face with British "Law," and have defied it, spat upon it, disavowed and renounced it : the men who were that day seized in the clutch of British Law were for that very reason worshipped by the Irish people. Long may it be so, until that foul pretence of Law is utterly abolished and wiped out from the face of the earth !

VI.

Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and myself being the three Irish Confederates selected for prosecution, by way of crushing out treason and sedition, immediately became the objects of respect and ovations with the great masses of the Irish people ; which was, of course, precisely right and reasonable—because they felt that the special enemies of that government must needs be their friends. Accordingly, we three were invited by the citizens of Limerick to a banquet (the famous Limerick soiree), and all three accepted the invitation. O'Brien was already at Limerick, in the house of his father-in-law ; so that Meagher and I, once again, were fellow-travellers, and again, in wintry weather, to make our appearance in that ancient city, throned upon the broad Shannon.

Neither of us could ever forget that journey. It brought us through several rich and populous counties ; in which extermination by ejectment had lately been raging relentlessly. Where villages had stood we saw ruins ; large fields by the roadside showed bars of fresh mould running through them—that was where ditches and hedges had been levelled ; those fields were now part of consolidated farms ; those villages had been the homes of poor farmers' families now all dead, or in the poorhouse. There were groups of homeless and shivering creatures on the roadsides, with a look of listless despair on their countenances ; for they saw no hope before them, no help, no pity ; justice and mercy, for them, seemed blotted out of this world. Stately Tipperary men, with hollow eyes and pallid faces, scowled fiercely upon our coach as we whirled by ; the vacant gaze of utter desperation, from some of those poor famishing women sitting by the wayside, with dying infants in their arms, had something sublime in its utter abandonment of misery. All in vain to attempt to be merry while on that

ghastly journey; more than once, in the midst of his pleasant discourse, some sight which Meagher's quick eye caught through the coach window made him grow pale and bite his nether lip with an expression of concentrated rage. It is no wonder—considering the situation in which we then stood, marked out for the savage vengeance of our enemy, and with the cause for which we had affronted that vengeance thus displayed at large before us, thus seared as it were into our very eyeballs—if we felt more deeply than ever the sacredness of our task, and knew that to perish in such an enterprise ours would be a noble fate.

Through many decaying little towns, and many half-ruined villages—and past some princely mansions in the midst of wide-stretching woodlands and high demesne walls, we passed along; and at last through the wretched little place called Toomevara, in Tipperary county—long famous in the annals of Quarter Sessions and Assizes; for in and around this Toomevara always dwelt a stubborn and rugged race, Ryans and Dwyers, who loved their own hearthstones, their children's lives, better than they loved London law; and who sincerely thought "the life of a peasant was worth as much as the life of a peer," and could be paid for only in that coin. "Such men are dangerous," and, accordingly, for many a year, the circuit judges and assistant barristers, the police, the redcoats, the sheriffs, and the "crowbar brigade," all had their hands full of these Toomevara folk. They had always been found hard to deal with; for they would, by no means, be converted; and would rather stone a "souper" or "bible-reader" than sell their souls for the soup or listen to the foul-mouthed interpreter of King James's Bible. On the whole, the best thing to be done with such a people as this, had long been determined upon—it was to "stamp them out;" and as they were generally poor and their enemies were rich (enriched by their industry)—and as the laws, law-makers, and law-administrators were not for them, but wholly against them—as they had been carefully disarmed, and their enemies were armed to the teeth—it is not difficult to divine what usually became of those remnants of the old clans of O'Ryan and O'Dwyer; O'Brien or Arra and O'Meagher; for now we were also passing near to the ancient territory of Meagher's own clan; and, doubtless, some of the tall spectres we saw stalking by, had blood in their veins kindred to his.

Two or three miles southward from Toomevara, the country rises into wild hills which stretch away to the south-westward, and terminate in the lofty summit of Keeper. I looked wistfully as we passed into the heart of those wild hills; for there, in a direction due south from Toomevara, is a valley known to me—not unknown also by fame, to Irishmen far and wide. It is the home of Father John Kenyon. Two small streams, coming down through gorges in the steep hills, unite in that vale and form the slender Templederry River, a pleasant trout-stream: near their junction is the old parish chapel; and at the time I speak of, Father John dwelt in a sacristy, or small building attached to the church. There was his treasure of books, many of them rare and precious, in a dozen languages; and there was a cordial and genial welcome for those whom the good hermit liked—not for any others. I narrated to Meagher (who had then never been at Templederry) the visit I had once made to that singular abode: for I was one of those who had the privilege of Father John's friendship. I made Meagher almost vow a pilgrimage to Templederry himself, as I told him of my meeting with the priest at Toomevara, how we walked briskly over the crisp snow of the hills till we came into his secluded vale, how the sacristy received

us with the glowing welcome of a hot turf fire, at which an old woman, one of the parishioners, was already roasting a piece of beef: how one side of the room was occupied by a turf-stack, while above the fireplace, and on the other side, were shelves laden with Latin theology, Spanish romance, German philosophy, besides novels of Dumas and of Thackeray; how, when dinner was ready, the host carefully removed two turfs from the face of the stack, thrust in his hand, and drew out two bottles (and if the reader asks me what was in those bottles, I answer *poteen* in one, Cognac in the other)—how we dined, talked of all the things on the earth, and over and under—how the next morning Father John accompanied me on my way up the mountain road that leads to Knockadhageen, till we came to the summit; and then dismissed me with his blessing. At the spot where we parted, I could see beneath me, on one side, the plain where Nenagh stands, on the other, the vale of Templederry, which I had just left, the scene of Father Kenyon's labours for many years. The valley looked dreary enough that morning, in its garb of frozen and glittering snow. I never saw it since, but with its two brawling streams, fringed here and there with tufted woodland, it must surely be a lovely region on a summer morning, when the trees are in leaf and the birds in song, and the springing trout can "breakfast upon bees." Father Kenyon is there still, though falling into the vale of years—long may he enjoy his peaceful hermitage, by the side of the murmuring brook, under the shadows of Knockadhageen!

But I must not forget that we two indicted rebels are on our way to the Limerick banquet. After travelling all night and crossing the broad Annacotty river, just as it is about to pour its waters into the Shannon, we arrived in the grey morning within the bounds of Limerick city; and soon became aware that the coach began to be surrounded by a sort of small mob—poor fellows who had risen early in the morning to be in time to hoot us as we came into town. Meagher and I looked at one another—"Here is Belfast over again!" In fact, on coming to Cruise's Hotel, and finding some of our Limerick friends awaiting us there, we learned that a good deal of agitation and excitement had been gotten up amongst that section of the population which called itself "Old Ireland." Just as "Hercules Street" had been the headquarters of that movement in Belfast, we were told that the "Abbey Boys" formed the strength of it in Limerick—the lowest and most rowdy portion of the populace in both places. We were further told that this violent opposition to us in Limerick had been stimulated by the Rev. Dr. O'Brien, a priest of highly O'Connellite type; but that the reverend man actually intended the popular indignation against us to go the length of riot (as it did that night) I have never been able to believe.

We learned also that most of the animosity was directed, not as much against Meagher or O'Brien, as against me; on account of some phrases in my paper of *The United Irishman* which seemed disrespectful to the memory of O'Connell. The evening came; and through the midst of a vast multitude we passed to the hall where the entertainment was prepared; found it already filled with our friends, and one side occupied by benches, rising tier above tier, and all blooming with the women of Limerick, a breathing bouquet. Dr. Griffin (brother of Gerald, the poet, dramatist, and author of the "Collegians,") was to occupy the chair. At his right sat the three invited guests. All went along quietly enough for a while; though we could hear the deepening roar of the mob outside. But before the chairman had yet risen to introduce Smith

O'Brien, everyone became aware that a serious assault upon the building had commenced. A bright blaze appeared through the front windows; the Abbey boys were burning a straw image of *me;* when it was all in a blaze they bethought themselves of setting fire to the whole place with it, and had actually commenced that operation. The building was of wood; it was half full of women; and there was no egress for them by a back way. When the purpose of the mob became quite apparent, and the front of the house was actually catching fire, it might have been supposed that the women would scream and faint and go into hysterics, &c.; there was not a move amongst them; and though pale and breathless, they sat in their ranks quite calm and still. In the meantime, many of the men inside, seeing the danger pressing, armed themselves with the legs of chairs and tables; and as the assailants had now beaten in the door, our friends made a charge out into the street in solid column and drove back the foremost aggressors. This manœuvre they repeated several times, always with success, though with many wounds given and received. Louis Kenyon, a brother of Father John, had his arm broken in one of these sallies. All this while the chairman remained in his seat, earnestly requesting us to do the same; as all would be over, he said, in a few minutes. Meagher, who sat by me, sat quiet enough, possessed himself of a formidable carving-knife, shook sometimes with his usual sort of silent laughter at the strangeness of the scene, and sometimes called upon me to admire the bravery and beauty of the Limerick women. "In fact," said he, "it was the great grandmothers of these same women who fought King William's soldiers on the breach out there; they have good blood, these girls."

At last O'Brien arose, walked straight to the front door, where our friends were, with difficulty, keeping the mob at bay, and notwithstanding urgent remonstrances to the contrary, strode out in the street, right into the midst of the raging mob. I am almost ashamed to tell what followed: He was set upon, hustled, beaten down, and trampled; in the streets of his own town of Limerick! Of this we knew nothing till the next morning.

For now at length (the Mayor of the city bethought himself of applying for military aid) a strong body of troops appeared upon the scene, cleared the immediate front of the building, put out the flames, and kept the mob divided into two masses, but who still gathered in great force to await our exit. The meeting then went on quietly, as intended, only the absence of Mr. O'Brien giving rise to various uneasy surmises.

I never heard from human lips so impassioned a discourse as Meagher poured forth that night, and under those strange circumstances. It had all his usual fire, and far more than his usual scathing indignation—not against the poor fellows roaring and struggling without—there was not a harsh word for them; but against the enemy's government, whose atrocious rule had debased his countrymen to such a depth of blind brutality. The whole affair passed off with great *eclat* and intense enthusiasm; and when it was over and the Mayor, a Mr. Quin, came in to offer us an escort to our hotel, we refused, preferring to trust to our phalanx of friends. Meagher and myself, however, were divided in the tumult; he reached the hotel first; was pursued by a furious crowd, and the proprietor and his servants with difficulty closed the front door, but not before poor Mr. Cruise received a blow from a large stone on the head. When I came up, I found the house shut up, and a wild mob yelling round it. They did not recognise me, or it would have fared ill with me that night; and I walked off to a friend's house, at about one o'clock in the morning.

Next day Meagher and myself travelled to Dublin. In the same car (when we arrived at Maryborough) we found Mr. Hughes, government reporter, who was extremely polite and respectful; but he was laden with notes of all we said, which he was carrying up to the Castle, and which he afterwards gave in evidence against us.

So ended the famous Tea-party at Limerick; a city which (as an Orange newspaper observed) might thereafter be termed "The City of the violated *Tay-tray.*"

VII.

The time was come when Meagher and I were to see each other for the last time—upon that old hemisphere. It was in Newgate prison, in Dublin, I, the prisoner: he, the visitor. He was powerfully excited, as he and Dillon and I walked to and fro in the flagged yard of the prison:—they were both eager for a decent chance of throwing their lives away; but could not have even that.

Once again I saw him: in the court-house of Green Street, as I stood up to receive my sentence from the lips of Baron Lefroy. The scene in that court has been often described, and need not be here detailed. Meagher, as well as others, took there the solemn obligation to repeat the "treason-felony" of the prisoner, or to avenge his fate. He redeemed his pledge; some others did not.

As these reminiscences are personal, and relate to the scenes in which I myself saw and accompanied my friend, it does not fall within their scope to narrate the hopeless attempt at insurrection made by him and O'Brien, Dillon, O'Gorman, Doheny, and M'Manus, with their few followers, after my departure from Ireland in chains. That attempt at insurrection failed utterly. Every attempt must fail, while England is at peace with the world, and while no revolution has yet burst out within her own borders. Nothing could have justified such an enterprise—except absolute desperation—short of the horrible conclusion that it was better to precipitate our countrymen on the points of their enemies' bayonets, than to let them live one other season in the pangs of the British famine.

The incidents of that hapless attempt have been sufficiently detailed elsewhere; and by Meagher himself. O'Brien, the chief actor, never would give any account of the affair, and preferred to endure all the reproach thrown upon him, both by enemies and by comrades, rather than say one word in his own justification. It is enough that my friends soon found themselves in the prisoners' dock of Clonmel Court house, before a packed jury of Tipperary Cromwellians and Orangemen, the always humble servants of the British enemy. Poor Meagher's speech in that court belongs to history. Condemned to be "carried on a hurdle" to the place of execution, and there hanged by the neck, with the privilege referred to the Queen to dispose of his four quarters, he uttered that calm, brave defiance—not calmer, nor braver than my good countrymen delivered the other day at Manchester or at Dublin—for, thank God! our people still know how to die; but yet one of the noblest and grandest speeches ever made by way of last protest before the butchers of British law.

It is sufficiently known that the paltry and filthy "clemency" of the Queen of England pretended to take credit to itself by commuting the death sentence of

Meagher and his friends to transportation for life—a foul aggravation of the original atrocity. And here let me say that I am altogether in favour of capital punishments, whether for political offences or any other. For "political offences," indeed—that is, for revolutionary enterprises which have failed—death is the peculiarly appropriate penalty. Romans always executed themselves in such a case: they fell upon their own swords and done with it. But we are Christians now, saving your presence; we keep such men alive, whether they will or no; we set them to break stones, and feed them on convict rations, and take credit for the enlightened humanity of our age.

Months passed over; O'Brien and Meagher, accompanied by the brave M'Manus and O'Donoghue, have arrived in the British convict colony of Van Diemen's Land. They are stationed in their several police districts, widely apart from one another. John Martin, of Loughorn, and myself follow them soon. It is the most beautiful country in all the world—magnificent forests, precipitous mountains, and grand lakes, lying in tranquil crystalline beauty amidst the umbrageous hills. O'Brien having refused to promise that he would not escape while he held a ticket-of-leave, has, of course, not been granted the high privilege of the said ticket; and is a close prisoner on Maria Island, situated near the eastern coast. But certain of the other exiles are living, or vegetating, as best they can, in various "townships" all over the island, under close police surveillance. One of them, in a journal which he kept at the time, gives this account of his first meeting with Meagher and O'Doherty:—

"15th.—Lake Sorel. Promontory of the 'Dog's Head,' or Cynoscephalœ. Yesterday morning dawned cold and gloomy, the first morning, apparently, of their Tasmanian winter. Before we rose it had begun to rain violently; and all the sky was dark—evidently, the day was to be tempestuous; and on the hills round about the valley we could see that it was snow instead of rain that was falling. Our landlady and her husband advised us not to move, as we might be stopped by floods in the high country; and besides, I was still extremely weak and nervous, though improving rapidly.

"We waited until noon; but at noon, as it rained more furiously than ever, we resolved to brave it, and mount. We set out north-eastward through the valley, which is perfectly level, sandy, clothed with a short, dry, yellowish grass, and sprinkled with trees; after a ride of four miles we passed a handsome stone house, with very extensive out-buildings for convict labourers and the tradesmen required on a sheep-farming estate. It lies nestled at the very foot of the great Quoin Hill; and commands a most extensive view over the plain in front and the distant mountains to the south. This is Dennistoun, the residence of Mr. Russell, a Scottish settler, and a good friend of Martin's; but he rode past without stopping, and through a large green paddock surrounded by the stables and workmen's huts; immediately on clearing this, we found ourselves in the wild, and ascending a gorge of the hill behind. From this point the rain began to change into snow, and for many miles we rode on through the blinding tempest, which prevented any special reconnoisance of the country. I was only sensible that we were continually ascending—that the track was very obscure, and wound amongst dead trees and rocks—and that at every mile the forest became more wild, and more encumbered with dead and fallen trees; until at last I thought the whole world might be challenged to show a scene of such utter howling desolation.

"Still we rode on; Martin always saying that when we should be half way to Lake Sorel, we might turn if we liked. Fifteen miles from Dennistoun we passed a rough log fence, and saw before us a level plain extending fully two miles, partially adorned with majestic trees, like some spacious park in Ireland. And though it was bleak enough yesterday, with a snow-storm driving and hissing over it, yet it was easy to see that we had got into a country of a different character. In short, we had finished the long ascent, and were now on the plateau of these two lakes. We galloped over the plain with the snow beating furiously in our faces, and found ourselves on the bank of a small river, beyond which seemed to be a tract of very close and rugged woodland. 'The Clyde again,' said my companion; 'we are but a quarter of a mile from the point of Lake Crescent whence it issues; but you cannot see the lake through the close bush.'

"We crossed the river by a rough wooden bridge, made by some of the settlers for the passage of their flocks when they drove them down for the winter to the low country, and then, for four miles farther, we had a most savage and difficult region to pass, covered with thick and shaggy bush, and very much encumbered with the monstrous ruin of ancient trees. No living creature was anywhere visible, but now and then a few sheep cowering under the lee side of a honeysuckle-tree (for all those regions are parcelled into sheep-runs)—no sound, but the roaring of the wind, and the groaning and screaming of the trees.

"Lake Crescent was now visible on our right; and for three or four miles we had no track or other guidance on our way, save that by keeping the lake in sight, on our right hand, we must strike on the point where the other lake communicates with it by a short stream. And there lay the hut where, I was assured, we should find a human being, a hermit named Cooper, who would be sure to give us a mutton-chop, and enable us to proceed on our way.

"I had pretended, up to this time, that I was not fatigued, and would still ride any distance; but the weakness produced by two years' close confinement began now to be visible; my companion encouraged me by the assurance that we were within two miles of Cooper's; and we now got into open country again, where we could push our horses to a canter. At last, we found ourselves on a low tract of land, about half a mile across, having Lake Crescent still to the right, and the great Lake Sorel to the left. This is a magnificent sheet of water, thirty-five miles in circuit, measured by the sinuosities of the shore, varied by some promontories, one small wooden island, and a fine range of high hills on its northern side. The water looked black, and had an angry curl; the snow, which had abated somewhat, came down thicker than ever; and, at last, to my great contentment, I could see a smoke mounting amongst the trees before us. There, upon the edge of a marsh, and just at the point where a sluggish winding stream leaves Lake Sorel, to carry its surplus waters to Lake Crescent, stood a small hut of round logs, thatched with grass; the first human habitation we had seen since we left Denistoun.

"The sound of our horses' hoofs brought out a man of about forty years of age, with a thin, sharp, intelligent face, and hair somewhat reddish, dressed in the blue woollen shirt, which is the invariable uniform of the shepherds and stock keepers. He welcomed us with great cordiality, and said at once that Mr. Meagher and Mr. O'Doherty were at Townsend's all day, waiting for us. Townsend's is another hut,

four miles further on, and situated in the district of Ross, which is usually made the place of meeting because it is a better house and has several rooms. On dismounting, however, to sit a little while at Cooper's fire, I found myself too much exhausted to ride any further; so Cooper took one of our horses and set off to Townsend's, to ask our friends to come to me, seeing I could not go to them.

"'You just keep the fire up, gentlemen,' said Cooper, as he girthed the saddle, 'that I may get the tea and chops ready when I come back; and I'll engage the other gentlemen will be here in an hour or less.' We threw on more wood, and tried to dry our clothes.

"It now began to grow dusk, for we had been four hours and a half on the way; and the evening was fast growing dark, when we heard the gallop of three horses, and a loud laugh well known to me. We went to the door, and in a minute Meagher and O'Doherty had thrown themselves from their horses; and as we exchanged greeting—I know not from what impulse, whether from buoyancy of heart or *bizarre* perversity of feeling—we all *laughed* till the woods rang around; laughed loud and long, and uproariously, till two teal rose startled from the reeds on the lake shore, and flew screaming to seek a quieter neighbourhood.

"I suspect there was something hollow in that laughter, though at the time it was hearty, vociferous and spontaneous. But even in laughter the heart is sad; and curses or tears, just then, might have become us better.

"Both these exiles looked fresh and vigorous. Kevin O'Doherty I had scarcely ever met before; but he is a fine, erect, noble-looking young man, with a face well bronzed by air and exercise.

"After giving the horses each two hands-full of oats, all we had, we turned them out to find shelter and grazing as they best could. Beside the hut is a large inclosure, made by an old post and rail fence; and into this, with much compunction on my part at least, we turned out the poor animals. However, such is the usage that horses are accustomed to here, where they are seldom stabled, even in winter. Indeed, the bush everywhere affords good close shelter for all sorts of animals, under the thickets of 'wattlegum,' and the dense dark shade of the honey-suckle tree. Horses also eat the leaves and tender shoots of both these trees when the ground happens to be covered with snow, which, even at this height among the mountains, is exceedingly rare.

"All this time, while we were employed about our horses, Cooper was in the hut, broiling mutton chops, boiling tea in an open tin can, slung over the fire, and cutting the damper into thick slices—mutton, tea, and damper being the morning refection, and mutton, damper, and tea being the evening meal in the bush. Damper is merely a large flat cake of flour and water, baked in the wood embers on the hearth. We sat down upon blocks of gum-tree, and Cooper being possessed of but one knife and one fork, we dined primitively; but all were ravenously hungry, and it seems Cooper is notorious in the lake region for the excellence of his chop cookery.

"Our talk was all of Ireland, and of Richmond and Newgate Prisons, and of Smith O'Brien; and it soon made us serious enough. I had still very much to learn—though before coming up to Bothwell at all I had met M'Manus at a wayside inn, and he told me all he knew. They have been in Van Diemen's Land just five months; and they inform me that Smith O'Brien has been during that time subjected to most

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rigorous, capricious, and insolent treatment by the 'Comptroller-General' and his subordinates. His confinement for a while, indeed, was as strict as my own had been at Bermuda; and only the representation of the medical officer, that his health was sinking under it, compelled him to relax the discipline, so far as that he is now allowed to wander over part of the island at stated times, attended by an armed constable. When he writes to any of the others, or they to him, the letters are all opened by the official people; and so petty has been the system of restriction exercised upon him, that they would not, for a good while suffer him to receive his usual supply of cigars, sent to him from Hobart Town. To a man all alone, and already goaded and stung by outrage and wrong, even such a small privation as this may be a serious grievance. The 'Comptroller-General,' one Hampton, is specially exasperated against him because O'Brien could not bring himself to show him some of those external marks of respect which he is in the habit of exacting from the real convicts; and being restrained from using his usual methods of coercion and punishment in our case, scourging, hard labour, and the like, the Comptroller (who is bound somehow to assert his dignity) strives to conquer and torture his haughty captive by hourly mortification in detail. I suppose it is the man's trade; and we must all live; but how much better it had been for that gallant heart, if he had been shot down at Ballingarry, or even hanged before the county gaol at Clonmel.

"Our meeting at the Lakes begun with factitious jollity, soon grew dismal enough; and it was still more saddened as we talked of the factions of our Irish refugees in America—factions founded principally on the momentous question, who was the greatest man and most glorious hero of that most inglorious Irish business of '48; and each imagines he exalts his own favourite 'martyr' by disparaging and pulling down the rest—as if the enemy's government had not pulled us all down and ridden roughshod over us. It seems that I have my faction, and Meagher a still stronger one. If our respective partisans could have but seen—as we discussed this question of our own comparative importance—how bitterly and how mournfully we had smiled at one another across the gum tree fire in that log hut amongst the forests of the antipodes, perhaps it must have cooled their partisan zeal.

"This morning, when we looked out on the snowy waste, we found that all the horses had broken out through the fence into the woods. So we sallied out and spent an hour in searching for them all over the rocky country between the two lakes. At last, in a dense part of the forest we found them cowering under some honeysuckle trees and nibbling the leaves—a sorry breakfast. Drove them in; and after partaking of Cooper's breakfast, we mounted and rode on to the 'Dog's Head.' This is a fine promontory, running about a mile out into the lake, and fringed all round with noble trees. In a snug cove at the northern side of the 'Dog's Head' is a stone house, inhabited by the shepherd in charge of a large flock, belonging to a Mr. Clarke, the owner of all the eastern shores of the lake. The day became beautiful and bright. The snow had all disappeared by twelve o'clock, and the lake lay smooth as a mirror. Opposite to us rise several rough-wooded peaks; and all that side of the lake is said to be utterly trackless, and nearly impervious, swarming with 'native devils' and 'native tigers,' two species of hideous beasts of prey about the size of sheep dogs, which at times make great havoc among the flocks. We have taken the little boat belonging to this station and rowed over to the island, then to another quiet bay where

there is a sandy beech called by the shepherds the 'diamond beach,' from beautiful little agates and pieces of yellow quartz often found amongst the sands.

"18th—To-day we reluctantly parted, promising to be at the rendezvous again the week after next; and rode our different ways. This day, as the snow was gone, and the forests were all glowing in the sunshine, I wondered the country had seemed desolate to me before. We passed along the skirts and nearly under the perpendicular precipices of Table Mountain; and at last found ourselves on the shoulder of Quoin Hill, and looked-down over the valley of Bothwell, which already seems a sort of home to me. From this point the view is wide and magnificent—endless forests and mountains; with small bits of clearing here and there, looking like impertinent intrusions upon the primeval solitude. Two eagles soar majestically above; and from far down in the profound umbrage below rings the clear bugle-note of the white magpie—a bird which, though it is called magpie by the colonists, is of a species wholly unknown in the northern hemisphere.

"So ends my first visit to Lake Sorel: and it has pleased me well, at any rate, to find my friends are all *unsubdued*."

VIII.

Nobody who has not himself experienced the like, can well understand the kind of life destined for men who have been suddenly wrenched and uprooted from all their associations and environment, divorced from all their old duties and pleasures, and doomed to years and years of enforced idleness and vacuity at the uttermost ends of the earth. Such was the lot destined for Meagher and his comrades in that far island of the Southern seas. They were all *misplaced* in the world. The real criminals of that unblessed island had their natural place and work; not very much differing from their ordinary life at home, save that they had easier work and larger wages. The respectable colonists, also, who have gone out thither voluntarily, live like other settlers of a new country, and after the first discomforts of settlement, live in abundance, and many of them in elegance; form sociable and agreeable neighbourhoods in the several districts; and all having plenty of horses at command, and a most lovely country to ride over; receiving also European books and magazines by every ship, pianos in all their houses, and an air to breathe as exhilarating as champagne, have a very reasonable enjoyment of life. Many of those colonists also have high-bred and well-educated families, and social intercourse is delightful. Their one trouble was the necessity of employing convict servants and labourers; a terrible class of people—a rickburner or burglar for your steward or butler; a shoplifter and a prostitute for your chambermaid; a poisoner for your cook—these were the sad exigencies of the situation at the time I am speaking of; although matters have been greatly improving since, because Van Diemen's Land has not for some years been used as a convict-colony.

Now Meagher and his friends were suddenly thrown into this anomalous state of society, and between these two widely-differing elements—the honest colonists and the felonious population—yet belonging to neither. To add as much as possible to the torture of such a state of being, we were not even permitted to make our abode all together, and so form a small colony of our own; but separated widely, and enclosed

within the bounds of certain districts, where we might live as we pleased, but bound to report once in the month to the police-magistrate of the district.

In such a condition of our affairs I am bound to acknowledge that the worthy colonists of Van Diemen's Land did their best to relieve us from the anomalous position which the Government of England had thought good enough for rebels. Whether those colonists were English, Scotch, Welsh, or Irish, they refused from the first to class us with the real criminals; and in our several districts the agreeable society of their hospitable houses was open to us. They all knew we had no business there, among convicts, and very kindly interposed between us and the extreme vengeance of their own home government. But this courtesy of the colonial gentry was a thing offensive to the local government. The lieutenant-governor, then, was a certain Sir William Denniston, head jailer of the island prison, and very fit for that office. This creature, in one of his despatches to the home government, had the excessive meanness to complain that he was much embarrassed in his administration by the extraordinary behaviour of some of the colonists—some of them magistrates, holding Queen's commissions—receiving into their houses on a footing of equality these felons from Ireland. His Excellency had reason: Meagher and his comrades were on a footing of perfect familiarity in houses to which the lieutenant-governor and his staff were never invited during their periodical progresses through the island. Sir William Denniston, however, issued strict orders to his police magistrates throughout the colony that they must never meet the Irish felons in social intercourse, which was considered a greater privation to them than to us.

About half-way between Hobart Town and Launceston, on the great road leading north and south through the island, lies the small village, or "township" of Ross. Immediately near the road is some fertile and well cultivated land; but on either side, to east and west, are far stretching forests of gum-trees, with occasional copses and thickets of "wattle," a kind of mimosa growing every season with beautiful bright yellow flowerage. On the west, at a few miles distant, rise the first slopes of the great ridge of mountains, densely clothed with dark woods. In the village are two doctors, two grocers, two inns, two blacksmiths, and some forty or fifty houses, generally surrounded by gardens. Most of the people are convicts. In this valley of the shadow of death, the glowing and fiery young life of Meagher is plunged into eclipse. In his physical nature, indeed, he grows here, and develops in the golden southern climate; morally and intellectually, he collapses, as we all do. He rides a great deal, and occasionally visits the families of neighbouring colonists; but his chief companionship is with Doctor Macnamara, an old county Clare man, and desperate hunter of kangaroo. I know not if the good doctor still lives; but if so, his grey head will be bowed down with grief at the news of the dark disaster on the Missouri River.

Doctor Macnamara was a man of middle height, very straight, with a spare, wiry frame; an excellent horseman, whose chief care was to breed thorough-bred horses. He was extremely excitable; and, being a Catholic, was highly enraged by the stupid agitation which then prevailed in England and extended to the colonies, against what they called "Papal Aggression." He had a splendid colt, which he named "Papal Aggression," and swore he would win every cap in the colony with him. It was truly a God-send to Macnamara when Meagher chose Ross for his dungeon-district; and many a jovial night they spent together.

Twenty miles southward from Ross was Oatlands, the "registered dwelling" of Kevin O'Doherty. He also was surrounded by the same death-like atmosphere of a convict village in Tasmania, but had a few good friends as Meagher had. They were both within easy reach of the mountains to the westwards, and their choicest hours were devoted to the meeting, at Lake Sorel, up in the very heart of those gloomy ridges. At that lake, for two years, John Martin and myself used to meet our two friends, and spend a day or two boating, or riding, or shooting. There was no fishing; for in this great lake, thirty-two miles round, there was not a fish longer than the little finger. The air up in those mountains was exhilirating and delightful; and the health of all of us became almost brutally robust—the brains proportionately torpid and inert. It was a powerful effort, by means of artificial gaiety and mere physical enjoyment, to endure life.

There was one little old boat on the lake, belonging to a shepherd who dwelt near its shore, and whose hut was our usual rendezvous. Meagher was discontented with this boat; and proposed that we should join in getting a good boat built at Hobart Town. It was a rather heavy undertaking; the lake is seventy miles from Hobart Town, and at least two thousand five hundred feet above the sea level; and there was no way of transporting this boat to the lake save by teams of oxen dragging it through the woods and up the mountains. The boat, however, was built—a four-oared boat, 22 feet long, with a step for a mast, and a fore-and-aft mainsail and foresail. A track had to be made for our ship; four oxen were yoked to it for transport in the low country where there were roads; but four more were added to haul it up the mountains. Six days were occupied by the transportation; and at last, on a bright and genial morning, we four, Meagher and O'Doherty from the east, Martin and I from the south, rode up to our rendezvous on the lakes to christen and launch our boat. It arrived safe and sound: we soon put it on the water, shipped a small provision of sandwiches and brandy, spread the sail, and put forth immediately into the broad lake. It is the fashion, I believe, to have some scientific object in view when a man makes an excursion in these days. Even Dr. Hayes, the Arctic-boat journeyer, who went up there to the Pole only because his disposition and temperament impelled him to be going—moving somewhere—persuaded himself that he would benefit his species and do honour to his country, by ascertaining the place of the magnetic pole, or something of that sort. Lieutenant Lynch, of the American navy, who navigated the Dead Sea, and made soundings all through it, fondly imagined he was discovering the site of Sodom and Gomorrah, to the immortal honour of American geography. Lander, in his explorations upon the Niger, Livingstone on the Zambesi, Sturt on the Australian continent, all thought, or imagined that they thought, they were going to do some good to that tiresome human species (God bless it!) by finding available cotton lands, or practicable commercial routes, or favourable markets for textile fabrics of a cheap and nasty sort. Now, in our exploration of the great Lake Sorel, I am ashamed to say we had no useful or philanthropic object in view; nothing but to kill some of the heavy time, and leave it dead behind us. We called the boat the "Speranza," in compliment to a woman whom I need not here name by her true name; the word Speranza is enough; and it is immortal. While Liffey river flows to the sea, or Lake Sorel glances in the sun, that name and fame shall live.

There was a fine breeze, and we flew through the lake; the boat behaved

splendidly; took in no water, notwithstanding her long land journey over the rocky hills. Meagher was radiant with good humour, insisting upon scarlet cushions being procured for the stern of our boat; the colour of scarlet was always his weak point, though in his capacity as an Irish Nationalist it was his duty to lift the green above that colour. We shot through the lake in every direction; visited the beautiful wooded island, containing about forty acres: coasted along under the steep precipices of the "Old Man's Head," all clothed with wood, however, save a few half-seen steeps of grey stone, and drew forth its echoes—a pistol-shot, fired on the lake a hundred yards from the shore, brought out a terrible pealing roar of reverberations, very pleasing to some persons, but not to me, who would prefer always that rocks and trees should hold their tongues.

In the afternoon we made the shore at Townsend's hut, our usual retreat, and as Townsend had shot some wild duck, we dined well.

It is well known that Meagher married in his exile, and built himself a house on the shore of Lake Sorel. The same comrade from whose journal we quoted before, gives an account of a visit to this hermitage of the Lakes:—

"Oct. 18th—Mounted our horses, and rode straight towards a gloomy gorge of the 'Western Tier,' as the colonists name the great ridge of mountains that run north and south through Van Diemen's Land; passed some handsome houses of settlers, in the plain; and at eight miles from the Sugar Loaf found ourselves among the mountains. Our guide, young Connell, now left us; and we pursued our way up a rude track which climbs amongst rocks and huge trees. The mimosa soon disappeared; shortly after the white and blue gum; and a thousand feet above the plain we found ourselves amongst lofty, straight, and gloomy 'stringy-bark' trees, a species which does not shed its bark like the other *Eucalypti*, and whose wood is very hard, heavy, straight-grained, and durable, so that it is much used for building and fencing.

"We still ascended, the mountain becoming wilder and steeper at every mile, until we were full two thousand feet above the plain of Ross. Here, an opening among the trees gave us a view over the low country we had left, wide, arid, and parched in aspect, with ridge after ridge of rugged-looking wooded hills stretching far towards the Pacific eastward. High and grim, to the north-east, toward the vast Ben Lomond, and we could trace in the blue distance that valley of St. Paul's where we had left O'Brien wandering on his lonely way. We were now almost on the ridge where our track crossed the summit of the western range; we had dismounted, and I was leading the horses up the remaining steep acclivity, when we suddenly saw a man on the track above us; he had a gun in his hand, on his head a cabbage tree hat, and at his feet an enormous dog. When he observed us, he sung out 'Coo-ee;' the cry with which people in the bush make themselves heard at a distance. 'Coo-ee!' I shouted to reply; when down came bounding dog and man together. The man was Meagher, who had walked four miles from his cottage to meet us! the dog was Brian, a noble shaggy greyhound, that belonged to M'Manus, but of which Meagher had now the charge.

"We continued our ascent merrily, and soon knew, though the forest was thick all around us—that we had reached the mountain top, by the fresh breeze that blew upon our brows from the other side.

"And now, how shall I describe the wondrous scene that breaks upon us here—

a sight to be seen only in Tasmania, a land where not only the native productions of the country, but the very features of nature herself seem formed on a pattern the reverse of every model, form, and law on which the structure of the globe is put together—a land where the mountain tops are vast lakes, where the trees strip off bark instead of leaves, and where the cherry-stones grow on the outside of the cherries?

"After climbing two thousand feet, we stand at one moment on the brink of the steep mountain, and behold the plain of Ross far below; the next minute, instead of commencing our descent into a valley on the other side, we are on the edge of a great lake, stretching at least seven miles to the opposite shore, held in here by the mere summits of the mountain-range, and brimming to the very lips of the cup or crater that contains it. A cutting of twenty-five feet in depth would, at this point, send its water plunging over the mountain to form a new river on the plains of Ross. At another part of its shore, to the north-west, a similar canal would drain it into the Lake River, which flows along the foot of the mountains on that side. As it is, the only outlet is through Lake Crescent and the Clyde, and so it comes to fertilize the vale of Bothwell, and bathe the roots of our trees at Nant Cottage.

"We pass the Dog's head promontory, and enter a rough winding path cut among the trees which brings us to a quiet bay, or deep curve of the lake, at the head of which, facing one of the most glorious scenes of fairy-land, with the clear waters rippling at its feet, and a dense forest around, and behind it, stands our friend's quiet cottage. A little wooden jetty runs out some yards into the lake; and at anchor, near the end of the jetty, lies Speranza, a new boat built at Hobart Town, and hauled up here through Bothwell, a distance of seventy-five miles, by six bullocks.

"On the veranda we are welcomed by the Lady of this sylvan hermitage, give our horses to Tom Egan to be taken care of, and spend a pleasant hour till dinner time sauntering on the lake shore. After dinner a sail is proposed. Jack is summoned, an old sailor kept here by Meagher, to navigate the boat; the stern sheets are spread with oppossum skin rugs and shawls; the American flag is run up, and we sally forth, intending to visit the island, and see how the oats and potatoes are thriving. For Meagher means to be a great farmer also, and has kept a man on the island several months ploughing, planting, sowing. The afternoon, however, proves rough; the wind is too much ahead, and when a mile or two from the shore we give up the trip to the island, and put the boat about. She stoops, almost gunwale under, and goes flying and staggering home. The afternoon had become raw; and we enjoyed the sight of the wood-fire illuminating the little crimson parlour, and the gaily-bound books that loaded the shelves. Pleasant evening, of course, except when we spoke of Ireland, and the miserable *debris* of her puny agitators, which are fast making the name of Irishman a word of reproach all the world over.

"We talked much, however, of the Van Diemen's Land election, and of the Australasian League, wherein I and Meagher take considerable interest. We both sympathise very heartily with the effort of the decent colonists to throw off the curse and shame of convictism—not that the change, indeed, would at all affect us, who would be quite sure to be kept safe at all events—but because all our worthy friends here feel so great and so just a concern about the question, for the sake of the land they have adopted for their home and their children's inheritance. Our interest in the matter is also heightened (at least mine is) by the inevitable satisfaction which I

needs must feel at every difficulty, every humiliation of the Carthaginian Government. For this I enjoyed the Cape of Good Hope rebellion; for this I delight in the fact that these colonists are growing accustomed to regard Downing Street as a den of conspirators and treacherous enemies, accustomed to look for nothing but falsehood and insolence from that quarter; for this I mean to publish shortly an account of the anti-convict resistance at the Cape of Good Hope, from materials collected on the spot. The *Colonial Times* will be sure to print it for me in consecutive numbers to any length I please.

"Meagher, also, has not been idle in this Good cause; nor is his influence small at Ross and Campbelltown. I took up, at Avoca Hotel, the 'Address' to the electors of that district, printed in large placards, and brought down there by Mr. Kermode, to be posted and distributed. A pile of them was lying on the table while the candidate addressed his supporters. An expression caught my eye, that led me to look farther—the sharp pen of the hermit of the Lake pointed every sentence; in every line I recognised 'the fine touch of his claw.'"

IX.

The term of Meagher's imprisonment had now come. He gave notice of his intention to leave the penal colony, and afforded the authorities full opportunity to arrest him if they were able. Some friends of his repaired to his cottage at Lake Sorel, in order to prevent that arrest if it should be attempted; but he remained at his cottage, to give ample time and opportunity for his capture. Police officers came up to the Lakes, were frightened, and withdrew in a hurry; then he mounted a good horse, and, accompanied by a faithful guide, rode to the other side of the Lake, and passed down the mountains to the hut of an old shepherd named Job, where he received all needful furtherances for his progress towards the sea.

Meagher has himself described most graphically the perils and vicissitudes of his escape. The next time I saw him was at Pier No. 3, North River, New York, where he met and greeted me on my arrival in this city from California.

And now began the second part of Meagher's life—his American life. He had always admired and loved the Great Republic; the American flag had generally floated from the stern of the Speranza on Lake Sorel; and he came to this land with the ardent desire and resolute intention to bear the flag aloft against all enemies, but especially and particularly against our hereditary enemy of England. We met continually for about a year, until I removed to Tennessee; and after that our meetings were few and far distant.

Meagher in this country became restless and erratic. Sometimes he was in Central America, digging up old Indian cemeteries in search of gold ornaments; sometimes in a South American Republic, as Secretary of Legation, with the learned and jovial Professor Dimitry. At last came the election of Mr. Lincoln; and the war. I was then in France; and I never saw Meagher more. My personal reminiscenes of my friend come here to a close. Technically and formally we became enemies—at heart, as I trust, always friends. His home was at the North; mine at the South. He took the part which he believed his duty as a citizen called for; I did the same;

between the two I would desire no fairer judgment than that each should be judged by the other.

In all these sketches of Meagher I have confined myself to what I actually knew of the man personally. It is all pleasant to my recollection. If there was anything in his life of a more painful character—anything that his friends would rather not see recorded, but his enemies would be glad to read, I know nothing of all that: his enemies must apply to some other authority than the present writer. I wish to keep the image untarnished in the chambers of memory, as one of the very brightest and bravest natures I have ever had the good fortune to encounter in this world.

DENIS FLORENCE MacCARTHY:

NATIONAL SCHOLAR-POET

By A. J. Leventhal

It is difficult to assess whether alliteration or mere abuse decides the unfriendly rhetorician to choose the adjective "narrow" as an inevitable modification of "nationalism." Probably the pseudo-aesthetic impulse is as strong as the polemical one. But it is lamentably inaccurate as a description of the unimpeachable nationalism of the Young Irelanders. When Lord Plunket, reading a copy of *The Nation*, was asked what was its tone, he replied: "Wolfe Tone." *The Nation*, however, was no Irish wolfhound yapping crudely at the British lion. Its tone was, in an old-fashioned French phrase, "bon ton." There was a cultural element in the paper that was a repercussion of contemporary advanced European thought and all the talents of its contributors were used to educate the people not only to an eager awareness of Irish history, Irish literature and language and Irish political ambition, but to a sense of the universality of the arts.

Denis Florence MacCarthy was one of the most active agents in bringing about the national cultural revival. It has nevertheless come about that too much stress has been laid on his literary tastes as opposed to his nationalism. Ramsay MacDonald, writing the notice about him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, was the first to quote Gavan Duffy's dictum that MacCarthy loved his Young Ireland colleagues more than he shared their political views and since then hurried chroniclers of the movement have accepted and repeated the remark. He was certainly no fighter in the physical sense. His admiration for Shelley, about whom he wrote a remarkable book dealing with the English poet's visit to Dublin, caused him to be classed with him, in the curious jargon of his day, as a "metaphysical" bard. His *Waiting for the May*, which had an enormous popularity that waned after a generation, gave colour to this contention. Familiarity with this lyric made evident its "somewhat sickly cast of thought." His equally popular *Pillar Towers of Ireland*—a more lasting poem—evoked in his readers a feeling that its author was an idealising archaeologist, a sort of Petrie Petrarchised.

MacCarthy, however, was as doughty a fighter for freedom as any of the other Young Irelanders and certainly more so than his fellow-barrister Alexander Stewart Meehan who parodied him:

Ah, my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the fray—
Waiting for the sunlight dancing,
Where the bristling pikeheads glancing
With the rifles alternating
Ranks in green and grey.
Ah, my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the fray.

and died in his bed as Recorder of Derry.

MacCarthy believed in the spoken and written word as weapons of freedom:

Let a word be flung from the orator's tongue,
Or a drop from the fearless pen,
And the chains accursed asunder burst
That fettered the minds of men!
Hurrah!
Hurrah for the Voice and Pen!

He did not hesitate to bring his lyrical irony to castigate the English gaolers who inscribed "Cease to do evil, learn to do well" over the gates of the Richmond Penitentiary in Dublin in which O'Connell and other political prisoners were incarcerated:

"Learn to do well"—ay! learn to betray—
Learn to revile the land in which you do dwell—
England will bless you on your altered way—
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well."

He felt his mission as a poet with a fervour equal to that of any contributor to *The Spirit of the Nation*:

There's not a man of all our land
Our country now can spare,
The strong man with his sinewy hand,
The weak man with his prayer!
No whining tone of mere regret,
Young Irish bards, for you;
But let your songs teach Ireland yet
What Irishmen should do.

Later Oscar Wilde was to use the same metre writing out his own pain in Reading gaol.

It can be said, however, that the publicity attendant on political activity, the hurly-burly of the hustings, was repellent to his nature. Though he praised oratory—the Voice—he suspected a consequential "et praeterea nihil." He put greater trust in his pen which he wielded throughout his life with amazing energy. Law was his profession but literature was his passion—a passion which included love of his country. It was thus that he sought by cultural means to bring the sense of freedom, of emancipation from tyranny which was intoxicating Europe and which burst into civil war in America, to his Irish compatriots. Youth was really young in those Young Ireland days. Adolescents carried round with them pocket editions of Béranger's poems. In the springtime of the national renascence contacts with freedom-loving nations abroad were made. A delegation of Irish patriots went to France to pay homage to the poet and politician Lamartine. Poetry and patriotism walked hand in hand. At the first banquet of the '82 Club Thomas Davis proposed an astounding toast: "The advancement of the Fine Arts in Ireland." "Art," said Davis, "is the born foe of slavery and of the friends of slavery, of ignorance, of sensuality and of cowardice. . . . How can he who never heard the shout of freemen—never looked on 'the sight entrancing' of citizens arrayed in arms for freedom—

how can he who rarely meets a face confident with patriotic strength, or a form lifted by a great ambition—how can he reach the form of a great artist?"

MacCarthy was present at this banquet. He had already contributed to *The Nation*, but his first book had not yet been published. In the faces of his friends and collaborators on the national weekly he saw the patriotic strength in which Davis said inspiration was to be found. There, indeed, he found his inspiration. In the first instance this showed itself indigenously. He rifled ancient Irish manuscripts for his themes and in his published poetry evidence of the fruitfulness of this research in the cause of cultural nationalism can be found in plenty: *The Voyage of St. Brendan*, epically rich in legendary lore and lyrical scenic descriptions of Kerry, Clare and Connaught; *Ferdiah*, an ambitious epic drawn from the *Táin Bó Cuailgne* which preceded Aubrey de Vere's and later modern treatments of the same theme; *The Foray of Con O'Donnell*, a rousing poem based on a passage from the *Annals of the Four Masters*, in which the hero acts with greater Christian forbearance than the original warrants; *Alice and Una*, a long ballad combining the lush orientalism of *Lalla Rookh* with regional Phooka fantasy.

All this might easily be related to a Romantic movement in Ireland—the cult of the ballad under Ossian influence or a Celtic parallel to the Romantic reaction to medievalism. MacCarthy, however, was not content to restrict himself to the local approach. Like many of his contemporaries he turned his attention to foreign literature. "Speranza" translated from eight European languages. Mangan claimed to go outside Europe for more tongues to conquer. MacCarthy, in an unsigned article in *The Nation* of January 20, 1877, pokes good-humoured fun at the Manganese dialect of his Persian versions. MacCarthy himself, beginning his verse translations in the mathematical spirit of the composer of an acrostic (in which curious art MacCarthy, by the way, excelled), turned, in his peculiarly facile style, French, German and Spanish lyrics into an easy flowing English rhythm. He ended in the realisation of the seriousness of the task of the translator.

In one of his manuscript notebooks he has inserted a cutting from a newspaper which refers to a work as being a "mere translation." This he underlines heavily and adds a bitter remark about the ignorance of the comment. Translation has now come to mean for him much more than an exercise. Awakened to an interest in Calderon by Shelley's translation of several scenes of *El Magico Prodigioso*, it became his life work to turn as many plays as possible of the Spanish dramatist into English. He was tireless in his pursuit of manuscripts to clarify the Spanish text. He visited the libraries of Spain, France, England and Italy in his quest. Restless by nature, his family never knew when they were to be moved from one house to another even in Dublin. He found it irksome to face the endless sedentariness of the Chair of English Literature at the Catholic University which Cardinal Newman had offered him but which he could not bear longer than three months. To him Calderon was more important than Shakespeare. His versions have a fidelity to the text which, despite their exactness, reproduce as near as may be the music as well as the spirit of the original. Here, in his own words, is the mood in which he approached his task:

"To translate Calderon—to clothe, in English words, his poetry—which, as Schlegel truly says, 'whatever the subject may ostensibly be, is an unceasing

hymn of joy on the splendours of creation,' seems to awaken all the glow and rapture—the enthusiasm and excitation of the most fervid original composition!"

English speaking peoples owe MacCarthy an immeasurable debt. He was a pioneer. Earlier translations were either incomplete, few or faulty. Many dramatists had boldly plagiarised Calderon but few recognised the thefts. Strangely enough, when MacCarthy's first translations of the dramatist appeared, another translation by Edward Fitzgerald was published in the same month. The plays chosen were not the same but it is interesting to read Richard Garnett's comparison: He finds that they have both erred, Fitzgerald by resorting to blank verse entirely, MacCarthy by discarding it altogether. The one is too English and the other too Spanish. Garnett insists that MacCarthy's assonant rhyme is entirely imperceptible in English. This view regarding assonance in English verse is shared by John Eglinton but the experiments of William Larminie, F. R. Higgins and Austin Clarke have disproved this entirely, certainly so far as the Irish ear is concerned.

It is difficult to quote from a play without lengthy explanation or I should give an example here of MacCarthy's skilful handling of re-echoing vowel sounds. Instead I shall quote his translation of a sonnet which can be lifted bodily from *The Constant Prince* without discomfort to the sense:

These points of light, these sparkles of pure fire,
Their twinkling splendours boldly torn away
From the reluctant sun's departing ray,
Live when the beams in mournful gloom retire.
These are the flowers of night that glad Heaven's choir,
And o'er the vault their transient odours play.
For if the life of flowers is but one day,
In one short night the brightest stars expire.
But still we ask the fortunes of our lives,
Even from this flattering springtide of the skies,
'Tis good or ill, as sun or star survives.
Oh, what duration is there? who relies
Upon a star? or hope from it derives,
That every night is born again and dies?

Recognition came to the poet from the discerning few. Longfellow and Ticknor waited impatiently and expectantly across the Atlantic for his latest Calderon drama. The Spanish Academy awarded him a medal. The Royal Irish Academy made him a Member. Carlyle forgot his anti-Irish prejudice and invited him to his home. After his death his friends had his bust placed in the City Hall where it still stands. But general recognition has yet to come and one finds signs of this in a reawakening interest in the Spanish dramatist, the seeds for which were sown by Denis Florence MacCarthy who in his efforts to bring world culture to Ireland helped to bring Irish culture to the world.

THE "LIBRARY OF IRELAND" 1845-1847

"EDUCATE, THAT YOU MAY BE FREE"

By P. S. O'Hegarty

MORE thoroughly than any other group of Irishmen of whom we have cognizance, the Young Irelanders believed in education, in learning, in the accumulation of knowledge and the spread of knowledge. Their main preoccupation was with the education of the mind, and all their projects were somehow pointing to that. It was not they who had suggested Repeal Reading Rooms, it was Tom Steele, but it was they who made the Repeal Reading Rooms a reality, an asset, a place where young Irishmen might get knowledge, and access to the things of the spirit. Even yet there is nothing like knowledge, reading, education, to kindle young human souls to a fervour akin to that of Young Ireland, though not always on the same plane.

It is true that their own literary and educational projects were all patriotic ones and, in the circumstances of the period could not be other than patriotic and propagandist. But they were a group such as has not been seen in Ireland since, in quite the same brilliance, unselfishness, and generous-mindedness. They were interested in Goodness as a virtue, in Nobility of thought as well as of act, and all meanness, all littleness, were abhorrent to them. They were, above all, righteous men, and when Thomas Davis sang about Ireland's need of righteous men he was thinking of his friends and colleagues, and praying for men of their sort, righteous men, generous men, nobleminded men, to make their country what she had the right to be and what she could be. The influence which they exercised on the Ireland of their time and the Ireland since their time will never be understood until it is realised that they were essentially generous, fairminded, and good, hating cant, hating narrowness and intolerance, always speaking the truth, writing the truth, and acting the truth. They kept their knightly honour unstained. And they have ever since been a beacon light to every unselfish and generous soul in Ireland.

The Nation had been in being for more than two years, increasing in circulation, increasing in influence. It was the main mental food of every branch of the Repeal Association, of every Repeal Reading Room, of thousands of other Irishmen who frequented neither the Repeal Branch nor the Repeal Reading Room. The *Spirit of the Nation* had been published in two parts at sixpence each, and James Duffy, who had published it, was induced by its success to undertake other literary projects. A series of reprints of the speeches of Curran and other Irish orators was in progress. But Thomas Davis, in 1845, was very concerned about the lack of a good history of Ireland, and he was considering withdrawing himself from everything for twelve months in order to write one. [Twenty-three years later, that desire of his found partial

fulfilment in John Mitchel's magnificent continuation of MacGeoghegan's History, published in New York in 1868, and written out of a remembrance of the importance attached by Davis to a good Irish history]. In discussing this amongst themselves, Charles Gavan Duffy, who had been struck by a series of shilling books issued by an English publisher, suggested that a series of such books should be issued in Ireland, and that the group should write them, to cover history, literature, including essays poetry, and biography. The suggestion was discussed, was enthusiastically approved of, and the result was *The Library of Ireland*, written by the Young Irelanders, published monthly by James Duffy, one volume a month, and comprising in its original form twenty-two volumes, at one shilling a volume, in paper wrappers. They were also issued, later, in green cloth, and some of them in green morocco, but paper wrappers was the original binding. Their circulation was immense, and has continued right down to our own time. The volumes were all well written, they were nearly all original books, and the fruit of original research, and they have for the most part not been superseded. They are still current, still books which are indispensable to any proper collection of Irish books. They were the beginning of popular patriotic literature in Ireland, and their influence has been material and lasting.

The volumes were as follows:

Vol. I. The History of the Volunteers of 1782. By Thomas MacNevin. This is still the most readable popular account of the Volunteers. Lecky covers the period more comprehensively and in much greater detail, but the student of this period will still do well to begin with MacNevin.

Vol. II. The Ballad Poetry of Ireland. Edited by Charles Gavan Duffy. This little book has gone through countless editions. It was one of the earliest of modern Irish anthologies, and, though there have been many since, it holds its own. The long introduction of the Editor is still of interest: he described the material which he used thus:—

> "Another class remained: our Anglo-Irish Ballads; the production of educated men, with English tongues but Irish hearts. From this class the greater part of our material has been drawn; and we trust that it will appear that in them, in the few street ballads not written to sell, but from the fulness of the heart, and in our adequate translations from the Irish, we possess a popular poetry, less ancient and precious, but not less instinct with the spirit of the country, than the venerable minstrelry of England and Scotland."

Vol. III. Rody the Rover. By William Carleton.

Vol. IV. The Life of Aodh O'Neill. By John Mitchel. Mitchel's first book. A fine piece of writing, and the truest popular account of the Great O'Neill and the great fight he made against Elizabeth.

Vol. V. Parra Sastha. By William Carleton.

Vol. VI. The Songs of Ireland. By M. J. Barry. This little book has also had a very large circulation. It has prefixed to it Davis's *Essay on Irish Songs*, which was not printed in his Essays until O'Donoghue's edition of them in 1914, and it has some poems not otherwise readily available.

Vol. VII. Literary and Historical Essays. By Thomas Davis. Edited by Gavan Duffy. The corner-stone of the whole Young Ireland edifice; but how informed with knowledge, with accuracy, with patriotism. A book which influenced every after Irish leader, down to Griffith and Pearse, and a book which by its qualities of mind and heart will always influence Irish readers.

Vol. VIII. The Irish Writers of the Seventeenth Century. By Thomas D'Arcy McGee. Biographical Sketches of Irish writers of this century, in Irish, in Latin, and in English, from Florence Conroy, Archbishop of Tuam, to William Molyneux.

Vol. IX. The Casket of Irish Pearls. Edited by Thornton MacMahon. An anthology of prose and verse "from the best Irish writers." A good anthology, containing many things not otherwise readily available. The extracts cover a wide and very catholic Irish field. Thornton MacMahon was a pen-name of Mrs. Callan, sister of Terence MacMahon Hughes, sister-in-law of Gavan Duffy. She edited *The Nation* when he was in prison in 1848. She must have been one of the earliest women editors.

Vol. X. The Poets and Dramatists of Ireland. Vol. I. Edited by D. F. McCarthy. Biographical and critical notices, with extracts, from Richard Stonyhurst to Thomas Parnell, a companion volume to VIII, with extracts from such writers as Thomas Southerne, and Rev. Wm. Dunkin. It has a 58 page introduction on the early religion and literature of the Irish.

Vol. XI. The Poems of Thomas Davis. Another foundation stone of Irish national literature. The poems of Davis have sometimes been sniffed at since, as propaganda, but they are that and more. The poetical talent which Davis possessed is used in the expression of the patriotic enthusiasm and knowledge he possessed, naturally and poetically, and the poems are high-water rather than mediocre level of national literature. They are edited by Thomas Wallis his tutor in Trinity College, and a man who had a lot to do with turning his mind into patriotic studies.

Vol. XII. The Confiscation of Ulster. By Thomas MacNevin. The story of the plantation after the Flight of the Earls. A concise and reliable popular account of the most fatal happening in Irish history.

Vol. XIII. The History of the American Revolution. By Michael Doheny.

Vol. XIV. The Confederation of Kilkenny. By Rev. C. P. Meehan. A book which went through many editions, revised and enlarged as fresh evidence became available, and still the best starting point for its subject.

Vol. XV. The Life of J. P. Curran. By Thomas Davis. A short but adequate life of Curran, though Davis is rather kinder to Curran's treatment of Emmet than modern opinion would admit.

Vol. XVI. The Book of Irish Ballads. By D. F. McCarthy. A companion volume to the other books of poetry, containing many anonymous poems of interest, not otherwise found. Went through many editions.

Vol. XVII. The Historical Works of the Rev. Nicholas French, D.D., Bishop of Ferns.

Vol. XVIII. Narrative of historical events of the seventeenth century. Contemporary and very unfavourable comments on Ormonde. Edited by S. H. Bindon.

Vol. XIX. Art Maguire. By William Carleton.

Vol. XX. O'Daly's History of the Geraldines. Translated by Rev. C. P. Meehan. Another of Meehan's valuable historical essays, a little book which is still indispensable.

Vol. XXI. Edward Hay's History of the Insurrection of 1798. A contemporary account by an eye-witness, of great value and interest. It was first printed in 1803, and had been reprinted in 1842 in cloth by Duffy. It has been steadily reprinted since.

Vol. XXII. The Life of Art MacMorrogh, King of Leinster. By T. D. McGee. The story of the great Art, and one of the most popular volumes of the series.

These twenty-two volumes formed the original series of the Library of Ireland, and were published between 1845 and 1847, when the growing stress of the Starvation and the political conditions terminated the project. Two years later another volume was published, as in this series, *The Songs of Ireland, Second Series*. Edited by Hercules Ellis. A worthy addition to the other volumes, containing over 300 items, a great many not in any other anthology. A book with this title had been announced in 1846 as in preparation, edited by Gavan Duffy. The following are amongst the volumes which were projected and announced as in preparation, but were not written :—

The Insurrection of 1641. By Gavan Duffy.
Life of Owen Roe O'Neill. By John Mitchel.
Biographies of the United Irishmen. By Thomas Devin Reilly.
The Best Lawyers of the Seventeenth Century . By Sir Colman O'Loghlen.
Life of Sarsfield.
Life of Tone.
The Williamite Wars. By T. F. Meagher.
The Penal Days. By Thomas Devin Reilly.
The Military History of '98. By M. J. Barry.
The Constitutional History of the Irish Parliaments. By Sir John Grey, together with the second part of Vols. VIII and XVI and numerous other volumes now unnecessary to mention.

The volumes published in two years comprised something which adorned every phase of Irish history and letters, and many of the volumes projected have not yet been adequately substituted by later generations. notwithstanding so much greater facility for research. The high standard of the books is as remarkable as their spontaneity. Davis and Gavan Duffy, early on, decided that popular poetry and ballads were essential to their purpose, and they set to and wrote them. They decided that a whole Irish Library was essential, and they and their colleagues set to and wrote them. The idea was Gavan Duffy's, but the whole inspiration of what the Young Irelanders did, in this and in other ways, was Thomas Davis's. He it was who decided what was to be written, and who was to write it, and his passionate patriotism and purpose informed the others, so that they wrote what he directed,

wrote it not alone well but very well. No better group-body of writing has come out of Ireland since.

The Library of Ireland was the father and inspirer of all Irish popular literature of the last century. Apart from the books written by Young Irelanders, it inspired, James Duffy to undertake many other projects of a literary nature. In the years following the collapse he published many other little books in the same size and binding, and in their green paper and green cloth they have been the most familiar things in Irish reading. Other publishers were also inspired by them, and the very considerable and valuable output of the Sullivan Brothers in Dublin and of Cameron and Ferguson of Glasgow followed directly from *The Library of Ireland*.

The purpose of *The Library of Ireland* was national and educational. Davis wanted Irishmen to know Ireland, to love Ireland, not blindly but intelligently. He believed that knowledge was incompatible with serfdom, and that to educate the people was to free them. But his education would be broad, not narrow. He was for the truth, first and last, and always. Propaganda in the modern sense would have been abhorrent to him. At the height of O'Connell's power Davis reproved him for a slimehouse attack on the Duke of Wellington. He held that we must win our battle without slander or misrepresentation, without ignoble thoughts or ignoble acts. He was a uniter and not a sunderer, and not in internal differences only. He would have had Irishman to be Irish first, and Irish always, but to remember nevertheless that they belonged to civilisation, and that all mankind are brethren. In the worst period of the nineteenth century he gave England credit for her good points, and that did not prevent him being the most potent Irish influence of this century.

Tomás Dáiḃis—Staraiḋe

Séamus Ó Néill

Ní minic a tugtar meas eolaiḋe do Tomás Dáibis. An fear a caiteas a ṡaoġal leis an poilitiḋeaċt, a ġriosas an pobal le óráidaiḋeaċt nó le sgríbinní mórtasaċa, ní bionn an t-am aige leis an stuidéar a ḋéanaṁ atá riaċtanaċ le cliú eolaiḋe a baint amaċ, agus le n-a ċois sin, is deacair do an grinn-dearcaḋ neaṁ-ċlaon a beit aige atá de ḟeiḋm ar an eolaiḋe. Aċ cé go mba ḟear mar seo Tomás Dáibis d'ḟág sé in-a ḋiaiḋ againn saoṫar staire a taisbeánas go rab damna an eolaiḋe ann, agus ní aṁáin sin, aċ a taisbeánas, dúinn go rab sé roiṁ n-a am i scagaḋ na staire, go díreaċ mar a bí ins an leagan amaċ nua a bí aige do náisiún na h-Éireann.

Ní rab i stair na Sasana i n-aimisr An Dáibisig aċ móraḋ na Muirteaċta Glórṁaire. Is le bliaḋanta beaga anuas a toisig na Sasanaig a d'aiṫne go mb'ḟéidir go rab dá innse ar an sgéal. An caidreaṁ a bí aige leis na Gaeḋil, an tuigse a bí aige do ṡeanċus na h-Éireann, a rinne a ṡúile do Tomás Dáibis, san ċrut is go mba léir dó go gcaitḟiḋe beaċtaiḋeaċt ġéar a ḋéanaṁ ar starta oifigeaṁla na Sasanaċ, má bitear le teaċt ar an ḟírinne. Ba sin a ċuir a ṡiortú an eolais é fá'n pairlimint a tug Séamas II i gcionn a céile i mBaile Áta Cliat. Agus nuair a d'ḟoillsig sé toraḋ a ċuid oibre, ba dréaċt staire é a bí lán ċóṁ réabloiḋeaċ le h-aon-ċeann a tug na staraiḋte nua-aoiseaċa dúinn féin, agus dréaċt a rab buainṁeas ann.

Níl tuairisce iomlána againn ar imteaċta Páirlimint seo Ríog Séamas. Do réir na Sasanaċ ní rab ugdaras ar bit ag Séamas gairm a ċur ar Pairlimint i n-Éirinn ar an ábdar naċ rab sé do réir dligeaḋ i n-a ríg ar Ṡasain san am ; agus i n-aċt ṁinigte do dligiḋ Poyning dearbuigeaḋ nár bféidir Pairlimint a tionól i n-Éirinn go dtí go bfuigtiḋe cead ó'n ríg faoi ṡéala mór na Sasana. Dóigeaḋ tuairisce na Pairliminte, dá bárr sin, le cur i n-iúl nár Páirlimint ar bit í. Annsin leis an réim nua a ċaomnaḋ, agus le leit-sgéal a ġabáil as na péin-dligte toisig scríbneoirí na Sasana a fógairt go mb' uatbásaċ na tioránaig luċt Pairliminte Ṡéamais, agus gur ṁait an airiḋ orta droċ-íde ar bit a bitear a tabairt dóbta, nó dá n-iarmairt. Bain siad úsáid mór as dá reaċt a cuireaḋ i bfeiḋm san Pairlimint le n-a gclaṁsán a ḋéanaṁ :

(1) Aċt leis na talta a baineaḋ do na Gaeḋil le linn plannḋála Ċromail a at-ġabáil, agus

(2) Aċt a ċuir tréas síos do na daoine a bí i ndiaiḋ teiċeaḋ as an tír ċun na Sasana. Dubraḋ fá'n dara reaċt acu seo go rab sé " without a parallel in the history of civilised countries,"

agus glacaḋ leis an baraṁail sin i gcoitċian fá'n Pairlimint. B'furust, ar ndóig, bréag mar sin a ċraob-scaoileaḋ nuair a bí an dream ar cuireaḋ air i treasgarta. Ba ṁait an ṁaise do Tomás Dáibis é gur noċt sé an ḟírinne fá'n scéal, agus noċt ar dóig a bí ealaḋanta, sgolárta, cruinn.

I dtaca leis an ċéad-reaċt acu seo, féadtar a ráḋ nárb ábdar iontais é go nglacfaḋ clanna na bfear a díbrigeaḋ le linn plannḋála Ċromail at-ṡeilb ar talta a n-aitreaċ. Ba

deacair loċt a faġáil orta as sin, aċ ó tarla go rab a lán talaiṁ ag sealbtóirí a ċeannuig siad i ndiaiḋ na plannḋála, b'éagcóir orta sin an reaċt gabála, dá mbaḋ rud é naċ mbeaḋ aon-ċúiteaṁ le faġáil acu as an talaṁ a bainfiḋe diobta faoi. Sin an ráfla a scaipeaḋ amaċ, naċ rab aon-ċúiteaṁ le faġáil acu-sin do réir an reaċta, agus dubraḋ go mba leor sin le crutú nár bféidir a beit ag súil go n-iomċaraḋ Catoilicig iad féin mar béaḋ daoine sibialta ann dá bfuigeaḋ siad treis, agus nár ċóir annsin ceart dligeaḋ a tabairt dóbta. Aċ ní rab an ḟírinne san ṁéid sin, mar socruigeaḋ ins an reaċt go mbéaḋ cúiteaṁ le faġáil ag daoine a ċeannuig an talaṁ.

Má ba ṁór an callán a tógaḋ fá reaċt an talaiṁ, ba ṁó ná sin arís an callán a tógaḋ fá'n reaċt tréis. Do réir an reaċta béaḋ na daoine a bí i ndiaiḋ imteaċt as an tír ciontaċ i dtréas muna bpillfeaḋ siad ċun na h-Éireann roiṁ dáta áirite le n-a gcosnú féin ins cúirteanna. Luaḋaḋ na daoine a bí i gceist san reaċt, aċ dubraḋ nár foillsigeaḋ na liostaí ainmneaċ go dtí go rab na laete cáirde caitte, rud naċ rab fíor. Aċ os a ċoinne sin, ní dearna aon-iarraċt faġáil amaċ an mbéaḋ na daoine a luaḋaḋ in-ann teaċt arais, agus níor leig luċt cáinte na Pairliminte sin i ndearmad aċ oiread, agus bí siad díbirceaċ fá ċás Lord Mountjoy ; tárla go rab seisean i n-a príosúnaċ san Bastille san am, agus béaḋ sé deacair go leor aige pilleaḋ go h-Éirinn, dá mbíoḋ a fonn sin air. Ar ndóig, bí an reaċt seo ionċáinte, ní ar an ábdar go mba reaċt tréis é, aċ as ċóṁ neaṁ-ċúramaċ éagcóireaċ is cuireaḋ in-alt a céile é. Cuireaḋ tréas síos ann do fir a bí ar taoib Ṡéamuis. Bí ainm Éamoinn Céitinn ann, a bí in-a ṡaigdiuir i n-arm Ṡéamuis a bí ag déanaṁ iom-ṡuiḋe ar Doire san am, agus níor luaḋaḋ cuid de na fir a bí i n-a gcrainn taca ag Liam.

Aċ ba é an loċt a ba ṁó a bí ar na gnaití uilig go rabtar ag cur ama amuda ag díos-bóireaċt agus ag aċrann fá'n iar-ċogaḋ sul má bí an cogaḋ tart. B'fearr a d'foirfeaḋ sé dóbta a beit ag cur eagair ar an arm. Aċ taisbeán An Dáibiseaċ nár tuill luċt na Pairliminte sin an ṁí-ċliú a cuireaḋ orta, nár tuill siad ar ċor ar bit é.

Geallaḋ saoirse creiḋiṁ faoi'n Pairlimint, agus bí sé sin úr-nua san ré sin.
" Thus, then, this Parliament exercised less severity than any of its time ; it established liberty of conscience and equality of creed ; it proscribed no man for his religion—the word Protestant does not occur in any Act . . .", arsa 'n Dáibiseaċ. Bí Protustúnaig san láṫair, agus labair fear aṁáin acu, Dopping easbog na Miḋe, go borb i n-éadán cuid de na billí, agus ní aṁáin go bfuair sé cead cainnte, aċ tugaḋ gárda dó ar eagla go n-ionnsóċaiḋe é ar na sráideanna. Ba é a tug an t-seanmóir iomráiḋteaċ in-diaiḋ sighniú Connarta Luimnig in-ar dubairt sé nár ċóir aon-ċonnraḋ a ċoiṁlionaḋ le Catoilicig. Taisbeán na reaċtanna eile a cuireaḋ i bfeiḋm, go h-áirite na cinn fá loingseoireaċt agus tráċtáil, go rab luċt na Pairliminte faḋ-dearcaċ go ṁait.

Is fíor naċ sásóċaḋ páipéar An Dáibisig ar Pairlimint Ṡéamuis staraiḋe de ċuid na h-aimsire seo ar faḋ. Beir staraiḋe acaḋaṁla na h-aimsire seo iarraiḋ teaċt ar an ḟírinne, agus ní bacann siad le ritlearg, nó leis an teagasc atá le baint as a saoṫar. Aċ ċuir An Dáibiseaċ roiṁe ní aṁáin teaċt ar an ḟírinne, aċ treoir a baint as a' stair do ṁuinn-tír na h-Éireann, cuspóir a cuirfeaḋ scát, b'ḟéidir, ar eolaiḋte na linne seo. Mar sin féin, bain An Dáibiseaċ a ċuspóir amaċ, mar d'aidig an staraiḋe cliúiteaċ Lecky go rab an cunntas a scríob sé ar Pairlimint Ṡéamuis ar an ċeann a b'fearr a bí le faġáil.

JAMES DUFFY, THE YOUNG IRELAND PUBLISHER

By " Bibliophile "

ON a tombstone in Glasnevin Cemetery there is the following inscription:

> " Pray for him, O reader, for he deserved well of religion and country. His devotional publications have instructed many unto salvation, and the historical works he published have exalted the character of his native land and saved saints and heroes from oblivion."

The tombstone stands above the grave of James Duffy, and the inscription was written by his friend Father C. P. Meehan.

Disappointingly little is known about the early career of Duffy, the enterprising publisher who played a part of the first importance in the Young Ireland movement. He was born about the year 1809 and, like his namesake Charles Gavan Duffy, was a native of County Monaghan. At the hedge school where he was educated he made the acquaintance of a lad named John Donegan, who a few years later removed to Dublin and founded a watch-making business which became exceedingly prosperous. Duffy joined his friend in Dublin, and it was through Donegan's assistance that he made his first start in bookselling.

His early efforts to establish himself are described in Henry Curwen's well-known *History of Booksellers Old and New*:

> " The Bible Society in Dublin was very busy distributing new Bibles in all directions, which the good Catholics at once carried to the pawnshops. These were purchased again by Mr. Duffy, who brought them over to Liverpool in huge sacks and exchanged them for books more agreeable to Irish taste . . . He also invested his spare coppers in picking up old books. At last he found trade so bad that he determined to emigrate, and, accordingly, as he possessed no funds, he took his books to an auctioneer. At the sale, to his surprise, he found that the books he had purchased for pence now produced as many shillings. Upon this he determined to drop the scheme of emigration and to turn bookseller. As we have before mentioned he collected the Bibles which the Catholics got from the Church of England propagandists only to turn into money, and took them over to Liverpool, where he exchanged them for books less unlawful in Papist eyes. At first he hawked these about the country, but eventually took a place of business in Anglesea Street, Dublin and there began to publish the " Bruton " series of thrilling tales of robbers, battles, adventures, and the like at the low price of twopence each."

As Curwen's book appeared only two years after Duffy's death, the author was in a position to verify some, at least, of his facts.

It has been stated that the first of Duffy's twopenny publications was *Napoleon's Book of Fate*, an enormously popular dream-book which he issued under the title of " Boney's Oraculum." Others were of the type of *Redmond O'Hanlon the Rapparee* and *The Life of Freney the Highwayman*.

At the time when Duffy started business in Anglesea Street the price of books was extremely high—the average novel, published in three volumes, cost a guinea and a half—and the masses of the people had to be content with literature of the chap-book type. Duffy set out to give them something better and, finding that he had a ready market, he flooded town and country with inexpensive works of Catholic and national interest. But although his wares were cheap, he tried as far as possible to prevent them from being shoddy. He possessed a natural good taste which served him well in the matter of book-production and both the typography and the binding of the little volumes he published compared very favourably with those of rival publishers with larger resources. As a result, his business flourished and soon he was able to move from Anglesea Street to more commodious premises on Wellington Quay.

How he became the Young Ireland publisher is described by Gavan Duffy:

> " He was originally a bookseller on a small scale in an obscure street, dealing chiefly in reprints of religious publications, but enterprise and liberality carried him into a wider field and ultimately created a trade extending to India, America and Australia. The *Spirit of the Nation* was issued in the first instance from the " Nation " office, but as the demand for them became embarrassing, I looked for a publisher and fixed upon James Duffy. This was the beginning of his connection with the Young Ireland party."

The connection proved of the greatest value to both Duffy and Young Ireland. Duffy was able to move into still larger premises, where at one time he employed no less than 120 hands; the Young Irelanders were able to have their books produced expeditiously, cheaply, and in a satisfactory format. Of the volumes in his famous " Library of Ireland "—familiar to four generations of Irish readers—it is unnecessary to speak; it has been made the subject of another article in this memorial volume.

In the dark and dismal period that followed Forty-Eight—the period of the Coffin Ships, of political stagnation, of Sadlier and Keogh—Duffy continued, in spite of every adverse circumstance, to publish books worthy of the reputation he had established and such names as Kickham, Father Meehan, Dr. (afterwards Cardinal) Moran and Canon O'Hanlon figured prominently in his lists. But, according to Curwen, he had more than one setback and narrowly escaped complete disaster. After the Famine there were few books-buyers among the classes who had in better times so eagerly devoured the " little green books " and the time came when Duffy found himself heavily in debt. His creditors, however, knowing his sterling honesty, gave him time, and agreed that the money owing should be paid in instalments. By selling his English copyrights he was able to meet the first call, but when the second came he found himself at the end of his resources. At that critical moment, however, his old companion of hedge-school days, John Donegan, hearing of his plight, " carried him a stocking full of money, his life's hoardings, threw it down before him, with ' Just take that and see if it is any use to you,' and refusing to take a receipt rushed out again." The stocking contained £1,200 in gold and Duffy was able not only to re-

establish and greatly extend his business, but to repay with interest his friend's loan. "He died," concludes Curwen, "on July 4, 1871, regretted by his fellow citizens in Dublin and by his brother bibliophiles throughout the kingdom."

In private life Duffy was a man of the most amiable qualities, who made many friends and no enemies. That he possessed a keen sense of humour is attested by an anecdote that Gavan Duffy has recorded. D'Arcy Magee in one of his poems had described the hero of some national legend as having hair "black and glossy as the wing of a young raven." When Duffy suggested altering this Magee wanted to know why. "Well," said the publisher, "when I was a boy the wing of a young raven was grey; but 'tis long ago and I suppose they have altered since then."

By those whom he employed Duffy was held in great affection, though he had ideas about working hours which seem strangely remote from present-day conditions. It is said that he never took a holiday himself and although in every other way most considerate to his staff he would not allow any member of it a holiday either. But on every Christmas Eve he presented each one with a sealed envelope containing a substantial money gift.

When Ireland, in this Centenary Year, recalls the names of the men who made Young Ireland the great national movement that it became, that of James Duffy should not be forgotten. When the Young Irelanders chose him for their publisher they chose well.

THE WOMEN WRITERS OF "THE NATION"

By L. M. O'Toole

THERE were five of them—"Speranza," "Mary," "Eva," "Thomasine" and "Finola"—and they all wrote verse: not great verse, by any means, but verse which was admirably suited to its purpose and which found a quick response from a people who have never been deaf to a poet's song. To-day, with standards that have changed out of all knowledge, it may be that their personalities are of greater interest than their poems.

"Speranza," who was to become the wife of Sir William and the mother of Oscar Wilde, was born Jane Francesca Elgee, grand-daughter of Archeacon Elgee, Protestant Rector of Wexford. Whilst paying a visit to Dublin in her eighteenth year she saw an immense funeral procession passing through the streets and made an inquiry. "They are burying Thomas Davis," she was told. Her curiosity was aroused. Who was this dead young man to whom such an impressive tribute was being paid by all classes and creeds of his countrymen? A volume from the "Library of Ireland"—the library Davis had brought into being—came her way and from that moment she became enthusiastic about the new resurgence. 'Once I had caught the national spirit,' she wrote later, 'all the literature of Irish songs and sufferings had an enthralling interest for me. Then it was I discovered that I could write poetry. In sending my verses to the editor of *The Nation* I dared not have my name published, so I signed them 'Speranza' and my letters 'John Fanshawe Ellis' instead of Jane Francesca Elgee."

Davis was dead when Miss Elgee's first poem appeared in *The Nation*, but Gavan Duffy gave the new writer a cordial welcome, and soon the pen-name "Speranza" was a familiar one in every part of Ireland. Writing forty years later, Martin MacDermott—himself a *Nation* poet—said: "No voice that was raised in the cause of the poor and oppressed, none that denounced national wrong-doing in Ireland was more eagerly listened to than that of the graceful and accomplished woman known in literature as 'Speranza' and in society as Lady Wilde."

When a prose article that she wrote under the heading of "Jacta Alea Est"—an article which showed that she had fully accepted the revolutionary doctrines of Mitchel and Devin Reilly—was mentioned by counsel for the Crown in the prosecution of Gavan Duffy, "Speranza" from the gallery of the courthouse interrupted the proceedings to avow authorship. After the tragedy of the Famine and the failure at Ballingarry, she wrote little verse. She did not lose sympathy with the national cause, but she had expected too much. She did not realise that Forty-seven had made the fiasco of Forty-eight inevitable. Once again, indeed, in later years, she displayed a flash of the old spirit, when she wrote a poem in defence of the Fenian prisoners, but for the most part her writings were concerned with archaeology and folk-lore.

A picture of her in her declining years is given in Catherine Jane Hamilton's *Notable Irishwomen* :

"A tall woman, slightly bent with rheumatism, fantastically dressed in a trailed black and white checked silk gown. From her head floated long white streamers mixed with ends of scarlet ribbon. What glorious dark eyes she had! Even then, and she was over sixty, she was a strikingly handsome woman."

She died in 1896.

From very different stock came Ellen Mary Patrick Downing—"Mary of *The Nation*." Born in Cork, and brought up on the writings of Gerald Griffin and the Banims, she had her first poem published in *The Nation* when she was only seventeen. "She came to write lyrics," wrote Gavan Duffy, "as summer rain, and as passionate, spontaneous and native as anything in the circle of song. Her first contribution came in a scrawl such as boys write in their teens, and girls only permit to be seen by their writing-master—crooked, blurred and totally without punctuation."

A year or two after her first appearance in print, Miss Downing met Joseph Brenan in the rooms of the Cork Historical Society. She was a singularly attractive brunette, with eager dark eyes and a vivid complexion ; Brenan, was of her own age, talented, ardent, and like herself, a verse-writer for *The Nation*. The two fell deeply in love, but after Forty-eight Brenan became a fugitive and an exile, and the romance came to an end. Brenan wrote in America for the newspapers of Mitchel and Devin Reilly and was an enthusiastic supporter of the Southern cause in the American Civil War. He married a sister of John Savage, still another '48 man and *Nation* contributor.

The enforced exile of nearly all the men she most admired affected "Mary" so deeply that she was stricken with a serious illness. During a long convalescence, her thoughts turned more and more to religion and in 1849 she entered the North Presentation Convent in Cork and became Sister Mary Alphonsus. For the rest of her life she was seldom free from illness and she died in Cork in 1869 in her 41st year. Her religious poems, edited by Dr. Leahy, Bishop of Dromore, were published in Dublin in 1880.

"Eva" was Mary Eva Kelly and came of a well-to-do family living at Headford, Co. Galway. Educated at home by a governess, she fell under the spell of the *Nation* writers whilst still in her teens. Coming to Dublin she made the acquaintance of many of the young men of the Young Ireland Movement and fell in love with one of them—Kevin Izod O'Doherty. When the *United Irishman* was suppressed and its editor, John Mitchel, sentenced to transportation, O'Doherty, with other students like Richard D'Alton Williams and John Savage, started the *Irish Tribune*. That paper suffered the same fate as its predecessor and O'Doherty was indicted for treason-felony. After three trials he was found guilty and sent to Van Diemen's Land to serve a ten years' sentence.

"Eva's" romance turned out more happily than "Mary's." She promised that she would wait for her lover and wait she did. O'Doherty was released after five years and the couple got married and settled in Queensland. Thirty-two years later O'Doherty, who had become a member of the Legislative Assembly, returned to Ireland and was elected to the British Parliament as a supporter of Parnell. He died in 1905 and "Eva" five years later.

During her long exile "Eva" wrote verse at intervals and her collected poems were published in Dublin in 1909 by Seamus MacManus. In a biographical introduction to the book Justin MacCarthy wrote : "'Eva' threw her whole soul into the national movement. She contributed to the *Nation* prose-essays as well as ballads and other poems. No native of Ireland in past or present history ever devoted a life more constantly or consistently to the service of the country than did 'Eva' of the *Nation*. She might, indeed, be described as a living symbol, an illustration in human form of Ireland's noblest characteristics in poetical imagination and in patriotic zeal."

"Thomasine" was Miss Olivia Knight and was born at Castlebar, where she became a teacher. She was only eighteen when the '48 Rising took place and it was a year or two later before she contributed her first poem to the *Nation*. Taking the words of Davis to heart in which he urged the song-writers and ballad-makers of his time to banish the plaintive, despairing note from their verse, "Thomasine" wrote poems that were full of hope and spirit. When, in 1852, a poem from "Eva," entitled "A Lament for Ireland," appeared in *The Nation*, "Thomasine" replied with "A Remonstrance to Eva." The first stanza runs :

O sister, say, is there never a string
In that Celtic harp of thine,
Of courage and hope and help to sing—
Sweet counsel and cheer to our land to bring,
And bid her cease to pine?
For her heart still beats, though Famine and sorrow
Have chased from her cheek the glow,
And the vigil of years for the promised morrow
Has dimmed her brow of snow.

"Thomasine" emigrated to Australia in 1860, where she married a young journalist named Hope Connolly and where she continued to write patriotic verse and to publish translations from the French. She died in 1909 in Queensland. Her native town paid a tribute to her memory in 1943 by placing a plaque on the house where she was born.

In the little volume of her poems that he edited Charles Gavan Duffy wrote : "In the far past I can remember what a comfort it was to read Miss Knight's contributions among the blurred and hasty, and sometimes super-delicate and almost hieroglyphical handwriting of ladies. One gifted writer for the early *Nation* was so habitually and intractably illegible that it became necessary to remonstrate. She was informed as a literal fact that it commonly took two compositors to read her verses ; to which she saucily replied that four compositors could not write them, and there was no remedy but patience. But 'Thomasine's' writing was always like copperplate. Her poems have nowhere a taint of the fault so common in patriotic poetry at an earlier date, imitation of writers who had already gained the public ear. She may confidently say with Alfred de Musset, if my glass be not large, at least it is my own wine that fills it."

The poet who used the name "Finola" came from the Black North and was brought up in an Orange environment at Ballymena. Her name was Elizabeth Willoughby Treacy. In 1871 she married Ralph Varian, a Corkman who was one of the

Nations gifted band of writers and whose *Harp of Erin*, a collection of popular Irish songs and ballads which he edited, had a wide circulation during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. When "Finola's" poems were published in Belfast in 1851 the *Nation* said of them that "they are Irish to the core; Irish invariably in their inspiration; Irish in their aim, and sometimes, though not often, or very successfully, Irish in their language and idioms."

All through her long life—she lived to be seventy-five—Mrs. Varian remained faithful to the principles of Young Ireland. In Fenian times she worked actively to relieve the sufferings of her imprisoned fellow-countrymen and later still she appeared on public platforms in support of the Land League and Home Rule.

LAMENT FOR THOMAS DAVIS

"Ferguson, who lay on a bed of sickness when Davis died, asked me to come to him, that he might ease his heart by expressing his sense of what we had lost. He read me fragments of a poem written under these circumstances, the most Celtic in structure and spirit of all the elegies laid on the tomb of Davis."—Charles Gavan Duffy.

I WALKED through Ballinderry in the spring-time,
When the bud was on the tree;
And I said, in every fresh-ploughed field beholding
The sower striding free,
Scattering broadside forth the corn in golden plenty
On the quick seed-clasping soil,
"Even such this day, among the fresh-stirred hearts of Erin,
Thomas Davis, is thy toil."

I sat by Ballyshannon in the summer,
And saw the salmon leap;
And I said, as I beheld the gallant creatures
Spring glittering from the deep,
Through the spray, and through the prone heaps striving onward
To the calm, clear streams above,
"So seekest thou thy native founts of Freedom, Thomas Davis,
In thy brightness of strength and love."

I stood in Derrybawn in the autumn,
And I heard the eagle call,
With a clangorous cry of wrath and lamentation
That filled the wide mountain hall,
O'er the bare, deserted place of his plundered eyrie;
And I said, as he screamed and soared,
"So callest thou, thou wrathful, soaring Thomas Davis,
For a nation's rights restored!"

And, alas! to think but now, and thou art lying,
Dear Davis, dead at thy mother's knee;
And I, no mother near, on my own sick-bed,
That face on earth shall never see;
I may lie and try to feel that I am dreaming,
I may lie and try to say, "Thy will be done,"
But a hundred such as I will never comfort Erin
For the loss of the noble son!

Young husbandman of Erin's fruitful seed-time,
In the fresh track of danger's plough!
Who will walk the heavy, toilsome, perilous furrow,
Girt with freedom's seed-sheets now?
Who will banish with the wholesome crop of knowledge
The daunting weed and the bitter thorn,
Now that thou thyself art but a seed for hopeful planting
Against the Resurrection morn?

Young salmon of the flood-tide of freedom
That swells round Erin's shore!
Thou wilt leap against their loud oppressive torrent
Of bigotry and hate no more;
Drawn downward by their prone material instinct,
Let them thunder on their rocks and foam—
Thou hast leapt, aspiring soul, to founts beyond their raging,
Where troubled waters never come!

But I grieve not, Eagle of the empty eyrie,
That thy wrathful cry is still;
And that the songs alone of peaceful mourners
Are heard to-day on earth's hill;
Better far, if brother's war be destined for us
(God avert that horrid day I pray),
That ere our hands be stained with slaughter fratricidal
Thy warm heart should be cold in clay.

But my trust is strong in God, Who made us brothers,
That He will not suffer their right hands,
Which thou hast joined in holier rites than wedlock
To draw opposing brands.
Oh, many a tuneful tongue that thou madest vocal
Would lie cold and silent then;
And songless long once more, should often-widowed Erin
Mourn the loss of her brave young men.

Oh, brave young men, my love, my pride, my promise,
'Tis on you my hopes are set,
In manliness, in kindliness, in justice,
To make Erin a nation yet;
Self-respecting, self-relying, self-advancing—
In union or in severance, free and strong—
And if God grant this, then, under God, to Thomas Davis
Let the greater praise belong.

Samuel Ferguson

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