

BEER-DRINKING PLANTS.

[From the 'Rochester Express.']

ANY one who is interested in plant culture, more particularly window gardening, cannot fail to have observed how beautifully climbing and flowering-plants, and more especially the ivy and rose geranium, always look in the larger-beer saloon windows. No matter what the exposure of the window or whether it be of large or small dimensions the plants it contains invariably present an appearance of such thrift and luxuriance as to cause the envy of the observer, and evoke the query as to the cause of the phenomenon.

Accordingly, while passing by a saloon window the other day, the plant stand of which was more than ordinarily beautiful, we determined, if possible, to solve the mystery. An ivy, which climbed up the window in a wealth of foliage and thence was trained along the wall and reached nearly to the centre of the large room, was our first object of investigation. Approaching a rubicund Teuton, with a well-developed forehead, and persuasion distilling from his mildly curling lips, we asked him, after tossing off a schoppen of beer, "How is it your plants always do so nicely—this ivy, for instance, which was only one quarter its present size last summer?" "Ah! mein freund, I tell you," was the reply: "I put mein plants in big pots to start mid, den I always give dem plenty light, and every Wednesday und Saturday I feed dem mit beer—from a half glass to a pint, according to de size of de plant—de hops in de beer make him fat. I change mein soil every five or six months, and de cigar smoke in de saloon keeps de bugs away."

Here, then, was the solution. We were aware that beer was fattening to many persons, but it was the first time that we had ever heard of its fattening plants. The ivy in question was started from a slip a year ago only, and on measuring it was found to be a trifle less than twenty-four feet long. In addition to the main leader, which was remarkably thick and covered with leaves and small side-shoots, were three other shoots, varying in length from ten to fifteen feet, and apparently hurrying to catch up with the leader. The growth of the plant did not appear at all forced, but, on the contrary, healthy and natural. Other plants in the window were of equally remarkable growth.

To all those who have been unsuccessful in house culture we commend the above diet. The stimulating properties of ammonia and liquid manure as applied to growing plants are well known; wine diluted with water is also used in some parts of Germany where the article is cheap, but for a steady diet we are inclined to the belief that beer and cigar smoke will carry off the palm.

DECLINE OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

WE recently quoted from a Dublin contemporary [the remarkable statement that while in Scotland no less than *three* serials devoted to the cultivation of the Gaelic language and literature were published, Ireland possessed not *one*. This is the more remarkable when we recollect that Scotland has a much smaller population than Ireland, and that the bulk of that population are lowland Scotch of German or Danish descent, who care nothing about Gaelic. If the Scotch had such a mine of archaeological lore in their ancient language as Ireland can boast of, it would be some apology for their Irish neighbors, who have not, however, even that poor excuse. On this head Professor Spalding, of Aberdeen University, himself a Scotchman, tells us, in his "History of English Literature:"—"It does not appear that the Scottish Celts can point to literary monuments of any kind having an antiquity at all comparable to this (the Irish). Indeed, their social position was in all respects much below that of their Western kinsmen. It does not appear rash to say, that the Irish possess contemporary histories of their country, written in the language of the people, and authentic, though meagre, from the fifth century or a little later. No other nation of modern Europe is able to make a similar boast." If this national disgrace arose from apathy on the part of Irishmen in general we should not refer to it; but it does not. It is part and parcel of an Irishman's nature to love his land and to love his land's language. How, then, are we to account for the anomaly noticed above? Simply by stating that it has been and is English policy in Ireland to eradicate the ancient language of the people. And the reason is obvious.

The language and the nationality of a nation are so closely interwoven that if either be destroyed the other will probably perish. There was a philosophy in Sir Walter Scott's observation, that when Frederick the Great affected to patronise the French language and literature, and to despise his own, he paved the way for the subsequent success of the French army and the humiliation of Prussia. We know, too, that the first German movement against French domination in the beginning of the present century originated with the poets and universities of Germany. The "Niebelungen" and many a "vaterslandlied" had their share in the great result. If the Irish national language and literature are allowed to die on the lips and in the hearts of our people, in vain [will Irish nationalists agitate and make speeches; they will have lost their plea, and the name Irishman may be exchanged for West Briton. Nationality bids us cherish our native Gaelic; but it stands on its own merits. "Its form hath not lost all its original brightness." Its Phœnician origin connects it with the language of the Pentateuch, and it takes its place with the Hebrew as one of the daughters of Aryan Sanscrit. Some sentences in one of the plays of Plautus prove to a demonstration that it is almost identical with the language of Carthage, the haughty republic that long rivalled Rome in arms, and surpassed her in wealth and commerce. It is, therefore, not the rude dialect of the unlettered serf; it is the language of the navigator who doubled the Cape of Good Hope three thousand years before Vasco de Gama was born—of the general who crossed the Alps 2000 years before Buonaparte. Some of our countrymen may be misled into the belief that its literature contains nothing to adequately reward the student for his pains; this is a grave mistake. The array of its lost books is indeed enough to sadden the Philo-Celtic student; but besides the twenty-

seven books on various subjects which are known to be lost, enough still remains to reward the laborer one hundred-fold. Its MSS., it is true, are scattered over Europe; but the library of Trinity College, Dublin, alone contains more than one hundred and forty volumes; the collection in the Royal Irish Academy is even more extensive; there is a large collection of Gaelic MSS. in the British Museum, and in the Bodleian Library at Oxford; there is the Stowe collection of Lord Ashburnham, and the collection at Louvain, Brussels, Bobbio, and Rome. The late Professor O'Curry has well observed that "any one well read in the comparatively few existing fragments of our Gaelic literature, and whose education had been confined solely to this source, would find that there were but few indeed, of the great events in the history of the world with which he was not acquainted." Enough has been said to show that the present supine indifference with regard to the cultivation of Irish national literature ought not to be allowed to continue. Isolated efforts in some of the great cities have from time to time been made; it is to be regretted that these have not been as successful as they deserved. Yet it needs but to arouse our people to the importance of the subject and set before them some tangible mode of dealing with it, and we are sanguine it would be an accomplished fact.—'Pilot.'

THE MARTYRS OF PARIS.

THE 'Illustrated Monitor' gives the following letter from a Priest residing in Paris, to another living in Laval:—

"A sudden cure took place here last Wednesday at the altar of our Martyrs. Mdlle. de Ris, a very pious girl, aged 20 years, had been suffering for more than a year, from a violent disease, causing one of her legs to be completely bent, so, in order to keep it straight, the doctors made use of an appliance which, though it partly effected its purpose, caused the poor girl intense pain. Mdlle. de Ris at length finding that her cure was not likely to be wrought by any earthly means, begged to make a novena to our Martyrs, fully convinced she would be cured if she were carried to the tomb of the Fathers. A novena of Masses and prayers was begun, and on Wednesday, at ten o'clock, the sick girl arrived; she was in her bed, which was borne by two litter-bearers, and was accompanied by two Infirmarian Sisters, her mother and father; the former a good Christian, the latter a Freethinker. During the Mass Mdlle. de Ris suffered great pain, which lasted until the Communion, when she received our Divine Lord, and offered herself resignedly to Him. Then it was that her sufferings gradually abated, and soon after she felt able to move the bandaged leg, and uttered in a low voice, 'I am cured,' which words were heard by her friends around her, and P. Martignan at that moment descending from the altar. The young girl was then carried to the parlor, where only a few persons were admitted to examine the limb, now quite flexible and free from pain. She expressed a wish to get up and walk about, which her father would not permit, and he ordered the litter-bearers to convey her back to the house. On arriving there Dr. Desormaux was summoned, and after examining the leg, pronounced her cure incontestable; the second doctor, a Freethinker, also came in, and he said that the imagination had reacted upon the nervous system, and that when the excitement would subside, the malady would return, therefore, in prudence she should not be permitted to leave her bed. This latter advice the father faithfully carried out, and only to-day Mdlle. de Ris has been permitted to rise. She feels no pain whatever, but the leg is extremely weak, and not able to sustain the weight of the body. It is thought that another novena will complete the cure thus marvellously effected, the sight of which filled those who were witnesses of it with deep gratitude and emotion."

DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH.

In eighteen centuries this title has only been conferred upon seventeen of the host of learned writers whom the Church records among her canonized saints. The last of these was St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori, Bishop of St. Agatha, in the kingdom of Naples, and founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, and of the cloistered nuns of the same name, who, by a decree of Pius IX. of the 23rd March, 1871, was placed in the same rank in the Church's Liturgy. This act of the Holy See had been solicited by no less than eight hundred and three Bishops, that is, by a large majority of the episcopate of all countries, and by twenty-five generals of religious orders, besides theological faculties and chapters. Nothing could more forcibly prove how widespread has become the influence and how great the reputation for sanctity and learning of St. Alphonsus during the eighty-nine years that have elapsed since his death. The following is a list of the Church's Doctors, arranged according to the date of their death:—

- A.D.
- 368. St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers.
 - 373. St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria
 - 379. St. Basil, Archbishop of Cæsarea
 - 389. St. Gregory Nazianzen, Patriarch of Constantinople
 - 397. St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan
 - 407. St. John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople
 - 420. St. Jerome, Priest
 - 430. St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo
 - 450. St. Peter Chrysologus, Archbishop of Ravenna
 - 460. St. Leo, Pope
 - 604. St. Gregory, Pope
 - 606. St. Isidore, Archbishop of Seville
 - 1072. St. Peter Damian, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia
 - 1109. St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury
 - 1153. St. Bernard, Abbot of Cîteaux
 - 1274. St. Thomas Aquinas, O.P.
 - 1274. St. Bonaventure, Cardinal Archbishop of Albano
 - 1787. St. Alphonsus de Liguori, Bishop of St. Agatha.

It will be seen by this list, that of all the great canonised writers who have appeared within the last six hundred years only St. Alphonsus has as yet received the title of Doctor.—N. Y. 'Freeman.'