

more and more difficult to provision the army, and soon it became apparent that hunger and privation were destroying and demoralising the national force. This evil in itself was bad enough, but a worse followed upon it. As privation and hunger loosed the bonds of military discipline, the soldiers spread themselves over the country seeking food, and soon there sprung up between the Scottish contingent and the Irish troops and inhabitants bitter ill feeling and contention. The Scots—who from the very outset appear to have discriminated nought in plundering castles and churches when the opportunity came fairly in their way—now, throwing off all restraint, broke into churches, and broke open and rifled shrines and tombs. The Irish, whose reverence for religion was always so intense and solemn, were horrified at these acts of sacrilege and desecration, and there gradually spread through the country a vague but all-powerful popular belief that the dreadful scourge of famine was a "visitation of heaven" called down upon the country by the presence of the irreverent Scots!

Meanwhile the English were mustering a tremendous force in the rear of the wasted Irish army. The Bruces, on learning the fact, quickly ordered a night retreat, and pushed northwards by forced marches. An Anglo-Irish army of 30,000 men, well appointed and provisioned, lay across their path: yet such was the terror inspired by vivid recollection of the recent victories of the Irish and the prestige of Bruce's name, that this vast force, as the historian tells us, hung around the camp of the half-starved and diminished Scotto-Irish army, without ever once daring to attack them in a pitched battle! On May 1, after a march full of unexampled suffering, the remnant of the Irish army safely reached Ulster.

(To be continued.)

IN OFFERING.

From Achill came an offering,
Sweet gale and asphodel
Plucked from a copper pool,
Wild aster like a quivering,
Gold-hearted soldane!

My brown faun dancing on the shore,
I took it all and asked for more.
I am your lover and a Fool!

I took it all and asked for more,
The hand that gathered them.
The slant Puck-eyes that make
Their laughing plea in my heart's core,
The blossom on the stem:

To cool my cheek in your wild hair
Entangled round me like a snare
And lie beside you till you wake!

I cannot send you myrrh or musk.
As gage of love, take these
Poor flowers. Beloved, see
These daisies gathered in the dusk
Beneath stripped apple-trees.

These hawthorn berries, one bull-rush,
This tattered ragwort, the wine-blush
Of lovely hemp-agrimony!

They're like my heart, outworn and old
And lonely for the sun.
They once were glad and new,
But wind has blown them and the cold
Rain cruel havoc done.

They're withered now and battered sore,
They never will bear seed: their store
Of life is spent, death overdue!

S., in *New Ireland*.

Every housewife who provides her home with the pure "GOLDEN RULE" Soap is doing much towards the world's betterment. Price 1/3. All grocers.

THE PASSING OF THE LAST IDOL

(By J. B. CULEMANS, in *America*.)

The last few years have witnessed the collapse of many of the idols which Francis Bacon set out to demolish with such reckless vehemence. The "*Idola Tribus*," the common preoccupations of mankind, as the lure of ease and pleasure, the lust for rank and gold, have gone by the board at the call of stern duty. The "*Idola Specus*," the selfish tendencies of the individual, have been merged into an ardent striving after the common good. The "*Idola Fori*," whose votaries, by making wordy professions of patriotism and other high ideals, endeavored to give substance to a shadowy reality, were all thrown pell-mell into the discard, as attention became focused on the need and the reality of suffering and sacrifice which, unvoiced, become stepping-stones to higher and better things.

One last sanctuary stood inviolate, that of the "*Idola Theatri*," shielding the dogmas foisted upon many minds by the presumed authority of modern scientists and philosophers whose eminence and repute none dared question. Non-Catholic scholars and university teachers never weary of pointing to the wonderful achievements of science, continued to advocate unlimited freedom of research and investigation into all departments of knowledge; they decried loudly the enslavement of reason to authority and exhibited undisguised pity for the Catholic would-be investigator, shackled and hemmed in by a thousand restraints. They abolished God and His revelation as incompatible with the empirically ascertained laws of the universe, while they bowed humbly and reverently before the dictates of Haeckel and Huxley, and Darwin and Tyndall and Bergson. That last refuge of superstition is being rudely shaken, and is crumbling to dust under our very eyes.

For the cult of science was a superstition, with its priests and high priests, its devotees and dupes, its temples and its idols. There is little need to recall at length August Comte, the first pontiff of positive science raised to the dignity of a religion, although he had set out to disprove the need of any religion whatever. Those whom he had dazzled at first, forsook him then, and none among his successors have dared to assume his mantle in so brazen a fashion. But self-appointed university luminaries have continued to proclaim themselves the true reformers and saviours of mankind, holding up science as the light of the world and the lodestar of the race. The apotheosis of science was celebrated in dithyrambic language, and to the multitude of its blessings there was no end. Second-rate lecturers and popularisers were anxious to be the lesser lights basking in the sunshine of the great men and with the fervor of zealots they helped in spreading the new evangel from platform and college chair, through book and pamphlet and magazine. The protagonists of the new learning in the days of the Renaissance were eclipsed by the fiery enthusiasts who have been abroad for the last half-century announcing the good tidings of the wonderful discoveries that are leading to the final emancipation of the human mind.

The temples of the living God could henceforth be dispensed with. They had merely a sentimental interest as lingering historic monuments of a dead past and of an outworn creed. For all nature is a temple whose rites are performed in the laboratory, where also are evolved the ultimate doctrines without which the human mind is never at rest. Profess your firm adhesion to the laws of the chemist-philosopher, the physicist-theologian, the psychologist and the sociologist—they are from all eternity. No God can derogate from them by any miracle. Behold they are your dogmas; for dogmas we must have. Faithful followers flocked to them in great numbers. Bewildered, enthralled, ignorant of any revelation, they succumbed to the magic spell and became willing worshippers at the shrine of science. They endowed it with preternatural powers, occult potentialities; looked upon it as the ruler of the present world and the interpreter of the world to come;