

DE VALERA'S BOYHOOD.

So much has been written about Eamonn De Valera and so little that is really tangible, that I thought it would be interesting to your readers to give some facts from the standpoint of a former schoolmate (says a correspondent to *America*).

De Valera attended the village school, the so-called national school, in Bruree (in Irish, "Brugh Righ," "Palace of the King"), County Limerick, in which I was a pupil until my 20th year. De Valera then lived with his grandmother and his uncle in a little cottage on the road towards Kilmallock. I often saw his grandmother when she came to the school at noontime, bringing a warm lunch for her grandchild. She belonged to the family of Coll, typically Irish in name and character. My father, who knew them well, tells me that he spoke Gaelic as well as English, so that the statement that De Valera spoke Gaelic fluently when 12 years of age may not be very greatly exaggerated. Still, from personal experience I incline to the belief that his acquaintance with the language was casual until contact with the Dublin intellectuals spurred him on to closer study of his native tongue. He like many another, became a true child of the renaissance. As he worked his way through the university by means of "exhibitions" or scholarships I followed up his success as they were reported in the daily press, while attending a sister college of Blackrock, where De Valera won his greatest scholastic successes—he must have been infected with enthusiasm for the Celtic past. I noticed his name some years after as one of the instructors in Gaelic at a summer school in Galway, devoted to the study of the Irish language. What laborious days and nights before attaining to that proficiency, with prospects of no financial returns for the sacrifice, but with that love that urges on the true, heroic renaissance-man.

His mathematical bent early showed itself at the village school. He was appointed "monitor" or pupil-teacher whilst there. I remember distinctly getting my first knowledge of proportion or the rule of three from him. Needless to say that the teaching was thorough and lasting. Our instruction in literature was only casual. I remember some discussion amongst a circle of boys, including, I believe, De Valera, as to the justice of including so much non-Irish matter in our school reader. At that time Irish literature to me meant Moore, Davis, and the Anglo-Irish school, not the least inkling of the existence of heroic saga! What had "Whang the Miller" to do with our native land?

De Valera was an object of myth and fable to most of us boys. His name was hibernicised into Divvelera; my father still calls him "Belvidera"—an unconscious compliment. According to gossip, he was descended from a stray, shipwrecked Spaniard from the Armada. Only recently did I discover that his father, a Spaniard, in New York City, had lived only a short time after his romance with an Irish colleen. Romance still rules his life, whether from the viewpoint of fact or fable. May the story have a happy ending!

IRELAND, AT LAST.

(By MICHAEL WILLIAMS, in the *May Catholic World*.)

The most remarkable of the numerous utterances of Franklin is taken by Mr. O'Brien from a document which, strangely enough, is not printed in any of the editions of Franklin's works, and which apparently has escaped the attention of American historians, though the original printed copies thereof are on file in the records of the Public Record Office in London. It is "An Address to the Good People of Ireland on Behalf of America," written in Versailles, where soon the new Treaty of Peace will be signed, October 4, 1778. The address begins with these words, which are as exactly applicable to-day as when the philosopher penned them:—

"The misery and distress which your ill-fated country has been so frequently exposed to, and has

so often experienced by such a combination of rapine, treachery, and violence, as would have disgraced the name of government in the most arbitrary country in the world, has most sincerely affected your friends in America, and has engaged the most serious attention of Congress."

After explaining fully that the colonies were fighting not only for constitutional liberty, but commercial liberty as well, and drawing attention to the analogy between the cause of Ireland and that of America, he says:—

"But as for you, our dear and good friends of Ireland, we must cordially recommend to you to continue peaceable and quiet in every possible situation of your affairs, and endeavor by mutual good-will to supply the defects of administration. But if the Government, whom you at this time acknowledge, does not, in conformity to her own true interest, take off and remove every restraint on your trade, commerce, and manufacture, I am charged to assure you, that means will be found to establish your freedom in this respect, in the fullest and amplest manner. And as it is the ardent wish of America to promote, as far as her other engagements will permit, a reciprocal commercial interest with you, I am to assure you, they will seek every means to establish and extend it; and it has given the most sensible pleasure to have those instructions committed to my care, as I have ever retained the most perfect good-will and esteem for the people of Ireland."

Not only by Franklin, speaking for the new American nation, but by the Congress of that nation itself, was thanks given to Ireland and acknowledgment made of America's debt to Erin, in the famous "Address to the People of Ireland," adopted by the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, July 28, 1775.

There are those that say—it would be hard to believe that they really are convinced of the truth of what they say, were it not for the fact that prejudice often lends more force to opinions—more violent and destructive force, than calm truth may do—there are those who say that a free Ireland means an open gate for the enemies of England to enter that island, and that it would constitute a standing menace to the peace and safety of the English people. For those who hold that view, the great war has been waged and won in vain. If the opinion holds and prevails that the peace and safety of any nation depend primarily upon the subjection of weaker peoples, and armed dominance over the lesser in favor of the material interests of the greater, then has the great war been waged—and lost; lost for all; lost for every nation under the sun; and the future holds nothing but warfare, or the miserable troubles and intrigues and festering rebellions which lead up to war. Unless, on the contrary, justice, which is based, and can only be safely based, upon the religious, the Christian knowledge of what justice is—based upon the law of God, and not the selfish interpretations of imperialists, and materialists—unless, I say, justice become the basic principle of the treaty at Paris, America's participation in the war will become the most saddeningly ironical failure of all history.

AMERICAN HIERARCHY AT IRISH CONVENTION.

Among the members of the Catholic Hierarchy at the recent Irish National Convention were:—His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, his Grace Archbishop Dougherty of Philadelphia, his Grace Archbishop Messmer of Milwaukee, Right Rev. Peter J. Muldoon of Rockford, Ill.; Right Rev. John P. Carroll of Helena, Mont.; Right Rev. V. Van de Ven of Alexandria, La.; Right Rev. Joseph J. Rice of Burlington, Vt.; Right Rev. John J. McCort of Philadelphia, Pa.; Right Rev. William Turner; Right Rev. Thomas J. Shahan of Washington, D.C.; Right Rev. P. R. McDevitt of Harrisburg, Pa.; Right Rev. John E. Gunn, Natchez, Miss.; Right Rev. Thomas J. Walsh of Trenton, N.J.; Right Rev. Edward Patrick Allen of Mobile.