

entrance. On the night before I thought this must be a school for Irish soldiers of the Malta garrison. But in the clear daylight I now saw that it was too big for that purpose.

My finger was on the electric button, and the door swung open in obedience to the strong arm of a smiling porter with a decidedly Irish cast of countenance. I was taken aback when he answered my questions in English, but with a distinctly foreign accent. 'Why,' I said, 'you are surely Irish?' 'No,' he said, 'I was born in Malta, but my mother was Irish.' I heard the hum of workshops within as I stood in the hall waiting for the arrival of Father O'Grady. When he came there was no doubt of his nationality, nor of his accent, nor of the Irish welcome for a transatlantic Gael.

The Irish are Ubiquitous.

My conversations with Father O'Grady must always remain among my most pleasant memories, as well as the most instructive lessons I have had in Malta. They reminded me that the world is getting small, that the Irish are ubiquitous, and that now, as in the early Middle Ages, they are in the forefront of the noble army of missionaries who carry the banner of Christ into every part of the earth. This Irish boy, who had first seen the light in the County Sligo, early developed the missionary spirit of his race. He heard the call, and he hesitated not to follow. He volunteered first for the Canadian mission, whither he was invited by the great Archbishop Walsh of Toronto, who was himself an Irish boy and a great missionary. The boy was sent for his studies to Italy, where during one of his vacations he came to Turin and there met the priest, the very first interview with whom determined his whole future life. This priest was no other than the great Don Bosco, the founder of a new religious Order that is now doing missionary work in every part of the world, whose canonisation as a saint of God's Church will be one of the events of the near future.

The Don Bosco Society.

Father O'Grady tells with evident pride how the first meeting with Don Bosco captivated his soul and determined his vocation. Having made his novitiate at Turin and completed his studies under the watchful eye of the future saint, he was sent with others of the Don Bosco Society to do missionary work in the Argentina. Between that country and the Falkland Islands—which you will find on the map off the coast of Argentina—he labored for twenty years. His health failed, and he was recalled to Europe.

But his vigor returning, a new field of labor opened providentially for him in Malta. A wealthy Maltese gentleman, seeing the sore need among the rising generation of Malta of learning some trades, donated a large plot of land here in Sliema to build a technical training school. In his will he left 5000 dollars to commence the work, and a Maltese lady gave a like sum. A condition of the gift was that the work should be entrusted to the Salesian Society, a community of priests and Brothers, founded by the venerable Don Bosco.

Such was the work that Father O'Grady undertook at Malta six years ago, a training school for poor Maltese boys. At present along with reading, writing and elementary studies, they are taught the English language and their choice of three trades—shoemaking, tailoring, and printing. They are taught by priests and lay brothers who have been specially trained for the purpose in the Salesian house at Turin. Father O'Grady's first assistant and prefect of studies is a Father Kilkenny, who spent six years on the Salesian mission in Central Africa before he was recalled to this work in Malta. The second assistant is a Father M. Cambridge, also from the Emerald Isle. But the Fathers themselves would all declare that the finest type of manhood and the most successful teacher at the institution is a Sicilian lay-brother, who is at the same time bandmaster, teaching in the grammar department and head master of the tailoring shop. He has made St. Patrick's boys' band the first in Malta.

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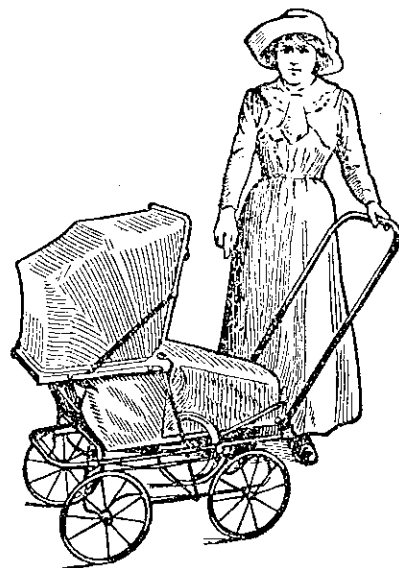
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