

to stand in the Liberator's shoes, tried to do so. He seems to have been both arrogant and narrow-minded; and the combination of these qualities is a curse in a political leader. He widened the breach between his father and the Young Irishmen, and the advent of John Mitchel, too fearless, too outspoken, too bold for any compromise, brought on dissension. Mitchel, Smith, O'Brien, and Meagher—a young Waterford man endowed with marvellous oratorical powers,—now advocated physical force as the remedy for Ireland's wrongs. A poor little rebellion began and ended quickly. The leaders were transported or escaped to distant lands, and the turbulent decade of the forties ended. Meantime O'Connell died. In February, 1847, he made his last speech in the British Parliament, and a few months later expired in Genoa, on his way to Rome. Heart-broken Erin hid her head in grief, and the whole Catholic world kept vigil with her in her night of sorrow by the bier of the great immortal Liberator. He, in his own way, and, hardly less the young Irishmen in their way, sowed in Ireland the seeds which have since borne fruit in better laws and better conditions for the people of Ireland, which, we trust, soon will reach the full ripeness of harvest in the passing of the Bill which will for ever place in Irish hands the government of Ireland. Thus much, it seemed to me necessary to say, in order that you may more surely grasp the inner meaning of the Poetry of the *Nation*. Remember that it was a poetry with a message, and that often to the poet the message was more than the poetry, and you will be ready to make due allowances for whatever of grace and polish and melody is sacrificed for the sake of intensity and earnestness. I recommend you to read it for yourselves and let it sink deep into your hearts if you love Ireland; for the deeper it sinks the richer harvest will it bear in love and loyalty to Ireland.

I purpose to read for you a few verses chosen here and there to illustrate the general trend of the poetry of the period, and to give you a fair insight into the 'Spirit of the *Nation*.' Let us first take a couple of stanzas from Mangan's magnificent poem, 'Dark Rosaleen,' which is a work of genius saturated through and through with intense love for Ireland, and which voices in deathless song the ardent yearning love of their country burning in the hearts of the Young Irishmen:—

'All day long in unrest,
To and fro do I move,
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!
The heart . . . in my bosom faints
To think of you, my queen;
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!

'Oh! the Erne shall run red
With redundancy of blood;
The earth shall rock beneath our tread
And flames wrap hill and wood;
And gun-peal and slogan cry,
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My dark Rosaleen,
My own Rosaleen!
The judgment hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My dark Rosaleen!

In this poem Mangan expresses all the sorrow and all the hope and all the love of Irish patriots, and I don't think the patriotic literature of any country has a nobler song than 'Dark Rosaleen.' When poor Mangan, probably the greatest, and certainly the most unfortunate, of Erin's poets, came to die, Sir William Wilde found him starving in a cellar, from which he had him brought to a hospital. So Mangan's name naturally reminds us of Lady Wilde, who, under the name of 'Speranza,' wrote many poems for the *Nation*.

She was a young lady of fashion, daughter of a dignitary of the Church of Ireland, and of a different race and a different class from the Irish peasants. But no voice was wider heard than hers, no pen pleaded more earnestly in the cause of the poor and oppressed people. Her poetic work burned with a white fire of intensity; her voice sweeps forward with immense power and compelling harmony. After Mangan she has perhaps more real poetic genius than any other contributor to the *Nation*. Listen to this pen picture of the famine years:—

Little children, tears are strange upon your infant faces,
God meant you but to smile within your mothers' soft embraces,
'Oh, we know not what is smiling, and we know not what is dying;
But we're hungry, very hungry, and we cannot stop our crying;
And some of us grow cold and white—we know not what it means—
But as they lie beside us we tremble in our dreams.'

'O Christ, how have we sinned, that on our native plains
We perish houseless, naked, starved, with branded brow like Cain's?
Dying, dying wearily, with a torture sure and slow—
Dying as a dog would die, by the wayside as we go.'
'We are wretches, famished, scorned, human tools to build your pride,
But God will yet take vengeance for the souls for whom Christ died.'

Here is a strange poem from John O'Hagan containing an exhortation to Irishmen to read the history of their country and draw from the past enthusiasm to stay them in their fight for liberty:—

Deep let it sink in Irish hearts the story of their rise,
And waken thoughts of tenderest love and burning wrath the while;
And press upon us one by one the fruits of English sway,
And blend the wrongs of bygone times with this we fight to-day;
And show our fathers' constancy by truest instinct led,
To loathe and battle with the power that on their substance fed;
And let it place beside our own the world's vast page to tell
That never lived the nation yet could rule another well.

Darcy McGee, who surpassed even Thomas Francis Meagher as a speaker, was, more than any of the party, drenched with the spirit of the past, and perhaps in his poem on 'The Four Masters' does this spirit find its clearest utterance:—

Many altars are in Banva,
Many chancels hung in white,
Many schools and many abbeys
Glorious in our fathers' sight;
Yet whene'er I go a pilgrim
Back, dear native isle, to thee,
May my filial footsteps lead me
To that abbey by the sea.
To that abbey, roofless, doorless,
Shrineless, monkless though it be!

He goes on to describe the toilful, prayerful days of the pale scholars bent over their tomes, and concludes:—

'Oh, that we, who now inherit
The great bequest of their toil,—
Were but fit to trace their footsteps
Through the annals of the isle!
Oh, that the same angel, Duty,
Guardian of our tasks might be;
Teach us as she taught our masters,
Faithful, grateful, just, to be;—
As she taught the old "Four Masters"
In that abbey by the sea!'

Photographs!

How sweet she looks in her Spring Frock? Yes—but Spring will pass, and she won't always look the same. Get pictures made of her now by . . .

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