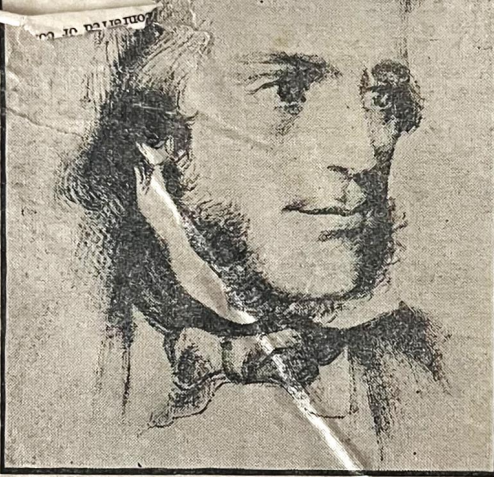


September 16, 1945

MITC

"He



THOMAS DAVIS

"They looked to him
as the first Irishman
of his day"

DAVIS—the PATHFINDER

Oh, brave young men, my love, my
pride, my promise,
'Tis on you my hopes are set,
In manliness, in kindness, and in
justice,
To make Erin a nation yet;
Self-respecting, self-relying, self-
advancing,
In union or in severance free
and strong—
And if God grant this, then, under
God to Thomas Davis
Let the greater praise belong.
SAMUEL FERGUSON.

MUCH will be spoken and
written about Thomas Davis
during the celebrations that mark
his centenary. Men will laud the
amazing work that he did for his
country in a short lifetime; they

will speak of the magnetism of his
personality and of the tragic loss
that Ireland suffered by his early
death; they will dwell on his
creed of tolerance and brother-
hood and on his passionate
striving for unity; they will re-
iterate the oft-expressed wonder
that he should have become a
poet over-night; and they will
wrestle with the puzzle of how
one of his upbringing and environ-
ment should have become the
greatest single force that the
nineteenth century produced in
the world of Irish nationalism.
When he defined Nationality it
was in no narrow or insular
fashion. "It must contain and
represent all the races of Ireland.
It must not be Celtic; it must not
be Saxon; it must be Irish. The
Brehon law and the maxims of
Westminster, the cloudy and
lightning genius of the Gael, the
placid strength of the Sassenach,
the marshalling insight of the
Norman, a literature which shall
exhibit in combination the
passions and idioms of all, and
which shall equally express our
mind in its romantic, its religious,
its forensic, and its practical
tendencies—finally, a native
Government which shall rule by
the might and right of all, yet
yield to the arrogance of none—
these are the components of
nationality."

Thomas Wallis, the Trinity
College tutor, claimed that it was
he who set the spark alight in the
mind of the slow-thinking under-
graduate, and that he had an in-
fluence there can be no doubt.
But it was not so much that he
lit a fire as that he released a
spring. Davis seemed to have
reached intellectual maturity at a
bound. At one moment he is the
shy and diffident student, given to
solitary walks and voracious
reading; the next he is electrifying
the most hard-boiled audience in
the world—an audience of young
Varsity men—and assuming

without effort and without desire,
a clear and undisputed leadership.
It is not given to all leaders to
draw towards themselves all that
is best in every section of their
nation, or to have interests and
enthusiasm as wide and as varied
as the whole range of the nation's
activities; still less is it given to
every leader to be practical at
almost every point. And that is
precisely what distinguishes Davis
from the rest of his comrades.

By

M. J. MacMANUS

They all looked to him, those bril-
liant and talented men of young
Ireland, as the first Irishman of
his day; not only that, but to
them he was the great unifying
element in the movement, the man
whom each of them, with the
deepest affection, regarded as
guide, philosopher and friend. No
man, unless it be O'Connell—and
he was quick to make amends—
ever quarrelled with Thomas
Davis. There was something in
his personality so transparently
frank and generous, so far
moved from petty jealousy or self-
seeking, so free from vanity or
intellectual arrogance, and yet so
full of quiet strength, that all who
were brought in contact with him,
no matter how able or dis-
tinguished, looked up to him at
once as greater than they. The
proud and passionate Mitchell, who
did not make friends easily; the
versatile and gifted Gavan Duffy;
the haughty and somewhat aloof
Smith O'Brien; the dour and im-
placable Fintan Lalor; Ferguson,
whose political sympathies were
of a different order—all of these
have left tributes to Davis such as
no public figure in the whole of
Ireland's history has ever re-
ceived. Padraic Pearse likened
him to the Apollo Belvidere—"in
whose presence all men stood
more erect."

Davis, then, was a man of

DAVIS and the YOUNG IRELANDERS

1845--1945

MEAGHER of the SWORD

MEAGHER defiant in the
dock at Clonmel Court-
house,
Meagher drowning in a wild
Missouri flood
Meagher of the lighted sword
Meagher of the brightening sword
Was Ireland's brain and sinew,
bone and blood.

MEAGHER was a young
man when he fought for
Ireland
Bringing a flag from Europe to her
aid
And new sounds for an ear
Tuned to a rebel year
And Meagher went into exile
unafraid.

O H long had we to wait
another like him
So gay so passionate, so
brave and young,
His legacy a sword,
A flag, a rebel's word
That taught new language to a
people's tongue.
—Donagh MacDonagh

CONCILIATION HALL Scene of the Sword Speech

CONCILIATION HALL, famous
in the history of the Young
Ireland movement, stood where THE
IRISH PRESS buildings on Burgh
Quay now stand. It was the
rendezvous in the 'forties of the
Nationalist opinion, the scene of
O'Connell's power and influence,
and the rostrum from which im-
portant political pronouncements
were made.

When O'Connell started his Repeal
Association, the need of a suitable
meeting-place was felt and a handsome
and commodious building was erected
adjoining the Corn Exchange. Three
years later—in 1846—an English visitor
wrote his impressions of the place:

"I had heard so much of Con-
ciliation Hall that my curiosity was
greatly excited. I pictured to my
imagination a huge, misshapen build-
ing—half hall, half barn—with great
doors wide open, a dilapidated plat-

form, a broken roof, and a rearing
mob. How I was surprised! Con-
ciliation Hall is a large, new building,
very plain but quietly elegant. In it
there is respectability and perfect
order. About one-third of the mem-
bers appear to be respectable trades-
men, one-third the better-class
mechanics, and one-third women—
many very pretty young women, too.
The hall is lit by twelve brass can-
delabra, each containing two lamps of
ground-glass ranged round the panels
of the gallery, and another row of
candelabra extends round the walls.
On the ceiling are three large and
beautiful roses of pale green and
gold, containing the shamrock in low
relief, with a harp in the centre.
Few distinguished visitors to Dublin
left the city without calling to see
Conciliation Hall. Thomas Carlyle
visited it in the company of Charles
Cavan Duffy and John Mitchell, and
was chiefly impressed by O'Connell's "green
Milesian cap." On a July day in 1846,
it was the scene of Thomas Francis
Meagher's historic "Sword" speech,
after which the Young Irelanders left
it, never to return.

History Was Made Here

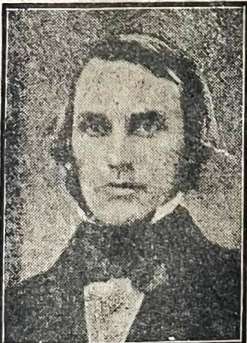


extraordinary talents. Yet, when
all is said and done, it is in what
he was, rather than in what he
did, that his true greatness lies.
Personality is an intangible, in-
definable thing, but nobody who
comes into contact with it can
mistake it. Around Davis there
gathered men of all types of char-
acter and genius and accomplish-
ment—scholars, antiquarians,
politicians, scientists, men of
letters. And none of them was in
any doubt about his greatness or
his genius. Writing of him in the
Nation the week he died, one of
his colleagues—probably Gavan
Duffy—said:

"He was a man of large sym-
pathies, reaching intellectual
persons of various accomplish-
ments and various pursuits. He
had a forbearing and entirely
tolerant nature. The trans-
parent sincerity of his soul no
one could question, and his
guilelessness and simplicity of

heart made him trusted as soon
as he was known. Of the most
cultivated in Ireland, there are
many indeed who bear to her a
true attachment—who are
anxious to improve her condi-
tion, who would give her a his-
tory and a literature, and who
would make art with all its
glories native to the soil, but
who stand apart from the great
movement of the people.
Between such men and Thomas
Davis political antagonism could
not prevent a close alliance; they
knew and honoured him; and he
was preparing the way for a
combination fruitful of the
highest benefit to the country."

Such men are rare in public life,
but when they arise the best minds
of the time are at one in paying
them honour. For Davis no tri-
bute can be too great; with the
writer in the Nation of September
20, 1845, we say: "Irish soil holds
no more precious dust than his."



JOHN BLAKE DILLON, who was
born at Ballinaderreen in May, 1814,
studied at Maynooth for the priest-
hood for a short period, but later went
to Trinity College, where he graduated
in 1841. He died at Killiney, Co.
Dublin, in 1866, at the age of 52.
Although practising at the Bar, he
wrote regularly for "The Nation"
until 1844. He took part in the
Rising of 1848, and afterwards
escaped to America in clerical attire.
He returned to Ireland in 1855 and
became an Alderman of Dublin Cor-
poration and M.P. for Tipperary.

(Picture by courtesy of Dr. T.
W. T. Dillon.)

THE REAL REVOLUTIONARY

By
Francis MacManus

**He Hated Landlords — "Strangers"
they are in this Land they call theirs"**

AMONG the figures of the Young Ireland Movement that are being paraded commemoratively before the public, it would be easy to neglect James Fintan Lalor. Davis was a personality who attracted various men; Meagher was colourful; Mitchell was a brilliant and varied writer; but Lalor, a little asthmatic hunchback from Tinakill, County Leitrim, was almost as impalpable as an idea. But what an idea his was, which he brooded over in solitude in an old farmhouse, and expounded in letters and articles. He was more than they, was the revolutionary.

It was good that the Young Ireland men should ask the people to educate themselves that they might be free and to find nourishment for their human dignity in whatever was valuable in past history. The people were mainly rural; more specifically, they were the poor insecure tenants and pauperised labourers of landlords who owned the main means of production, and of them who were to die of famine and go into exile by the million, the Young Ireland leaders asked for spiritual change. To a mind like Lalor's it must have seemed like putting the cart before the horse to ask for things of the spirit when primary things of the body were wanting.

Freedom without economic freedom was stones for a parliament of illusions without bread for the people.

"For let no people deceive themselves," Lalor wrote, "or be deceived by the words and colours and phrases and forms of a mock freedom, by constitutions and charters and articles and franchises. These things are paper and parchment, and of them who are less than the wind, who are less than the law, and institutions say what they will, this fact will be stronger than all laws, and prevail against them—the fact that those who own your lands will make your laws and command your liberties and your lives." The quotation illustrates the fanatical drive of his mind, but then he was a revolutionary made more furious, like many of his contemporaries, by the Famine. He saw only his truth. Had he been permitted to put his ideas into practice he might have become more temperate, and perhaps more respectful towards papers and parchments and laws and institutions which later helped, not without the pressure of the people of course, to make Irish farmers owners of their farms. But there is nothing of his that tells us he would have been an able, clever man of action. John O'Leary describes the insurrection which he and Lalor and Luby tried to raise in Tipperary after the Ballingarry fiasco as "only a mouse, and in so far ridiculous."

LALOR was hot with his idea, and in so far as he preached his idea forcefully he was a man of action. He preached it in letters to the Nation, and he preached it in the Irish Felon, started by John Martin, friend of Mitchell, after the seizure of the United Irishman by Dublin Castle. He helped to change John Mitchell's mind about expectations of liberality from the landlords; indeed, he made Mitchell's fury articulate. The little secret society that he and O'Leary and Luby founded in Capel Street, Dublin was the forerunner of Fenianism.

John Devoy later testified: "Disciples of John Mitchell, who more than any other of the men of Forty-Eight gave voice to the popular sentiment, the early members were mainly brought into the movement (Fenian) by men who

had kept alive a remnant of an organisation started by James Fintan Lalor in 1849, and the destruction of the foreign landlord system was one of the cherished objects of the majority."

So fiery was Lalor's idea about land-ownership and revolution that destruction of the foreign landlord system as an aim is not easily distinguishable in his writings from destruction of the landlords.

He hated them with a hate that made them a principle of evil, not seeing that they too, by force of circumstance, tradition and inheritance, were caught up in a system.

They form no class of the Irish people, or of any other people, he wrote. "Strangers" they are in this land they call theirs, strangers here and strangers everywhere; owning no country and owned by none; rejecting Ireland and being rejected by England; tyrants to this island and slaves to another; here they stand, hating and hated, their hand ever against us, as ours against them, an outcast and ruffianly horde, alone in the world and alone in its history, a class by themselves." It is ultimately the lot of every conqueror who does not assimilate. Hardly ever has it been more cruelly and succinctly described, but for all that, it is a simplification which omits to mention the grip of the money-

lenders on the same landlords who shipped produce to pay debts, and the taint of subjection in a people gone beyond hating who needed leader after leader and insurrection after insurrection to be shaken from apathy.

BUT hate of the landlords was not the essence of Lalor's idea. That destructive emotion may have been ancestral—Lalor's ancestors were outlawed by early confiscations; it was exacerbated by the treachery of the Union, and made incandescent by the Famine. Had he lived—for he died in 1849 at the age of forty—it might have cooled and he might have thought it a better policy to buy the land-

POETS in a HURRY

**"They have still power
to move an Irish Crowd"**

IN October, 1845, exactly a hundred years ago, was published "The Spirit of the Nation." No anthology of verse ever before, or probably since, won such popularity in Ireland and it is worth a few minutes' consideration in this supplement for the centenary of the "Young Ireland" movement.

It is a mark of low intelligence, if not of something worse, to judge more leniently the work of those we admire than that of those we dislike and distrust; and it is equally a mark of low intelligence to credit men with success in one kind of work because they are patently successful in another. So the fact that we are this year giving fully-merited praise to Thomas Davis and his fellows, for their great hearts, fine sensibilities, clear and bright vision, and legacy of splendid doctrine and example, would not excuse us if we lowered the artistic standards on which we insist so forcibly at other times and when speaking of other writers. Therefore we must say that, considered as poetry, most of the pieces in "The Spirit of the Nation" do not rate very high. The criticism of Yeats was, in the main, justified; these poets cared little for poetry, apart from the power which rhythmic speech has of expressing ideas ardently and producing immediate results; also the Young Irelanders, who so greatly wished and strove to make the Irish aware of, and proud of, their own place and race, seemed unconscious that in verse they followed only English example. They had not caught in their busy lives the hints which the translations from Irish of Mangan, Callanan and Walsh have given of the possibility of an Irish style in poetry.

With this proviso we may find much to be glad of in "The Spirit of the Nation."

And the first thing to be said on the credit side is that the more acute among them would have disclaimed any fame as serious poets.

No serious poet, or informed reader of poetry, is pleased to see verse used for any but poetic purposes, or to put it more precisely, to see other purposes preferred in verse to poetic purposes. But one must judge men by their intentions, and the intentions of most of the poets of the "Nation" were to teach Irish history, to awaken patriotic feeling, to kill the slave mind, to add the vividness and the concreteness of verse to their

arguments and to provide the Irish mass with readily-understood slogans. Most of these intentions were in large measure achieved. I have remarked the great success of the anthology. The preface to the 1845 volume describing the success which the original smaller anthology of the same name had had:

"In March, 1845, we printed a little sixteenpenny book, containing the poems which had appeared in our paper up to that date. Last autumn a second part appeared."

"The success of the work was marvellous. It was seized on by Ireland's friends as the first bud of a new season, when manhood, union and nationality would replace submission, hatred and provincialism. It was paraded by our foes as the most alarming sign of the decision and confidence of the national party, and, accordingly, they arranged it in the Press, in the meetings in Parliament, and, finally, put it on trial with the conspirators of Ireland."

"Its circulation was proportionate. It went through several editions here, was extracted into all the periodicals in Britain, and, passing to America, was reprinted by a dozen publishers. It is to be found everywhere from the English Admiralty to the Dublin of the Irish peasant—from Dublin to Boston, to Sydney and to Calcutta."

It was, indeed, a remarkable success. Apart from this record we have our own proof that the songs in "The Spirit of the Nation" went into the hearts and the memories of those for whom they were intended—the common Irish people. The proof is in the titles of many of the songs.

"Clare's Dragoons," "The Memory of the Dead," "A Nation Once Again," "O'Donnell Abu," "The West's Asleep."

THESE songs came up afresh on every wave of political feeling that swept across Ireland in the century which followed their publication. Two of those named above were many times on the point of being chosen as the National Anthem, but the special associations of another song with the struggle which led directly to the establishment of the State prevailed over them.

All of these songs have still power to move an Irish crowd, and all of us who can remember the years between the Rebellion and the Truce can recall that many of them were sung at election meetings, at patriotic concerts, at aeridheachta and indeed, at every demonstration connected with the Independence movement.

We can remember, too, other songs than those I have named.

ROIBEARD Ó FARACHÁIN

Reviews the songs

written in

"The Spirit of the Nation"

"Step Together," for instance, which was the first song I myself heard the Volunteers sing. The establishment of the National Army has given these songs a firm place in all national parades. Many of them were included by the late Colonel Brasse in his "Irish Fantasias," and Army bands and choirs play and sing them constantly. Such songs as these, too, gave latter-day song-writers models when they wished to use the potent weapon of rhythm and note to stir the feelings of the common people. The "Sean-bhean-bhoicht" was a stock commentator at the aeridheacht on the miseries which England was suffering at the hands of the Irish, and the "Sean-bhean-bhoicht" appears in "The Spirit of the Nation." Even the sage idea that humour could make propaganda doubly effective was known to the masters of the eighteen-forties; their patriotism was not always a matter of out-flung hands or foamy lips.

They would have been very well pleased to know that their hastily-written, fluent, shallow rhetoric would endure so long, and so long serve the ends they proposed for them. But one is glad to find that, although, as I said, little in this book rates very high, yet it is the better pieces which have worn the best. But before attempting to speak of these, it is worth remarking that the "Nation" writers had the good sense to follow Moore's lead in writing words for Irish tunes and the initiative to have tunes composed for songs not so written.

This is another point which must be remembered in evaluating their verses: that they were mostly intended to be sung, and when sung gain somewhat in aesthetic worth. They are of the class of the "Marsellaise," no lower and no higher.

It is regrettable that they do not reach the higher level of the lovely Scottish Jacobite songs, or of the patriotic songs of the Gaelic poets of the previous century; regrettable that there was no Béanger among them who could make pure politics into pure song. But, as patriotic songs, some of them are not contemptible.

THE poets include Davis, Drennan, Florence MacCarthy, Mangan, Edward Walsh and Gavan Duffy. Mangan and Walsh one might expect to be at the top

lords on
For his
that
Ireland
the
is
Ire
the
makers
laws are
by them,
invalid not
by them."

The idea was Lalor's life. For it he spent a few terms in gaol, took part in the nationalist movements of his time, wrote with violence, hated, and died ill from exhaustion. No wonder Michael Davitt said: "There was no real revolutionary mind in the '48 period except Lalor's. There were brilliant writers, ardent patriots, eloquent orators and nationalist characters, a galaxy of talent, of fine poets, a galaxy of noble idealists, and of splendidly earnest men. But it was only in the head and heart of a little, deformed gentleman-farmer's son that the spirit and fire and purpose of a true Celtic revolutionist were found."



LADY WILDE

"Speranza" of "The Nation"

of this ladder, but neither had at that time contributed anything of value. Davis, I think it is unquestionable, easily leads. We know he did not think of writing poetry until the need for poems and songs for "The Nation" was seen. He wrote much mighty poor stuff, but that is not the wonder: the wonder is that this poet-by-request gave more than a hint that a real vein ran in him. Remember, he died at the age of 31 and had then been only three years writing verse. Yet he wrote a fine song in "Clare's Dragoons," another with drama and colour in "The West's Asleep"; he wrote "Pontenoy" which, with all its lush rhetoric, is the best of the battle-pieces for which the Young Irelanders had a fondness; he, more than most of them, made an occasional break-away from public poetry and wrote such things as "The Marriage," "My Grave" and "The Bride of Mallow," which, in subject, situation and characterisation showed a feeling for the common virtues of poetry; and then he wrote, as well, the "Lament for Owen Roe O'Neill" and "The Battle-eve of the Brigade," which have strong feeling, dramatic force, and, in the second, irony. Yes, Davis had a grain. He might have been a poet, given time.

It may be remarked that if the Young Irelanders found impossible the task of marrying poetry and politics, the two have hardly found a priest since that time: political poetry of real merit is always rare, but Anglo-Irish writing is not the least deficient in it. And if it is really first-class patriotic poem came from these men they roused a man outside their ranks to write such a poem. I mean, of course, Ferguson's "Lament for Thomas Davis."

MITCHEL of ULSTER

"He Walked Amidst the
Very Houses of the Dead"

—As I was walking through
Dromolane
I saw John Mitchel there
again:
"There's one thing wanting
from this dear scene—
The Flag of the Orange, White
and Green!"



John Mitchel.

His story told again

by

AODH
de
BLACAM



Thomas Francis Meagher's house in Van Diemen's Land, drawn by his fellow-exile, John Mitchel.

NEWRY was a beautiful town, when John Mitchel was reared there six score years ago. English travellers describe its rising terraces, fair to behold, and some small-paned bow windows remain in the streets by the Butter Market to testify to the handsome dwellings and business houses of those times. Ballybot, across the river, was a place of prosperity, and in the neighbouring Dromolane, the Reverend Mitchel had his manse. "That is the great rebel's father," said a Unitarian minister of our own time, pointing to an autograph of his predecessor in the records of the ministry.

I think it was the second minister before the Reverend John, who was a Gaelic speaker, and used to ride over from Newry to Ballymacanlon once a month to preach to the Scots Gaelic settlers of that end of Ravensdale.

Gaelic Scotland and Lowland Scotland, both Celtic enough to belong to the same elder civilisation, penetrated Newry and the country round, in those days. That, I daresay, is why a book like *Kedgumlet*, which describes old Drumfries, is so congenial to us, of that region. The reader remembers the Jacobite clock-maker who lost his job in Drumfries, and the time went wrong until he was retrained; and that recalls a certain horologist in Newry, the present writer's great-grandfather, who took away parts of St. Mary's clock, and left Newry timeless for a while, as a ballad still relates—

*Turf cadgers from Killeavy
Brogues greased with lard and
gravy,
Their asses lame and spavy
Come trudging on their way:
Ears straining for the hour
That should spake from Mary's
Tower,
But speech was past the power
Of the Dummy Time o' Day.*

Mitchel used to read Scott's novels to his household, when he was a young solicitor at Banbridge. Doubtless, he loved them because there was so much in them of the life and speech that he knew from his surroundings. Indeed, Ulster generally loved Scott. I have heard that custom of reading Scott *en famille* described by an elder, who lived to the age of 100 and could remember the generation of Mitchel's youth.

Let no one dream that this was a vague only among the so-called Anglo-Irish. On the contrary, when the Gaelic bards of Armagh and Louth held their festival in Dundalk in 1827, they shewed themselves much under the influence of the Wizard of Abbotsford. They even imitated his metres, in their own new Gaelic verse, as well as his themes. One, for example, took from some publication of the time the legend of the MacSwiney who was left to guard and provide for the Lady O'Sullivan Beare when the Prince of Beare marched to Leitrim. I recalled how MacSwiney used to rob eagles' nests of food for his starving mistress, and he made lines that she is supposed to speak:

RACAO LE MAC SUINNE PÁ MÍAB ANOM,
RACAO LE MAC SUINNE PÁ BHUAC NA
COONN,

"Thee Suinne, thee Suinne, tupe mo
cáirde
D'áiríonn an t-ádhgail, a theic
Suinne!"

"I'll travel with MacSweeney the
mountains o'er,
I'll go with MacSweeney along
the shore,
MacSweeney, MacSweeney, my
only friend,
Despite the whole world,
MacSweeney!"

The calamity of Ulster (from the point of view of literature) is that no Scott, writing in either Gaelic or English, rose in that time to give permanent and vivid and sustained record to the racy life which was young Mitchel's environment. We recall in scraps of song, of family tradition, of scattered writings, the South Ulster of his day. Yet, we who know that region will know enough to understand why John Mitchel hungered for Dromolane, when he was in exile, and why his pen commanded such passion when he wrote of Irish Ireland.

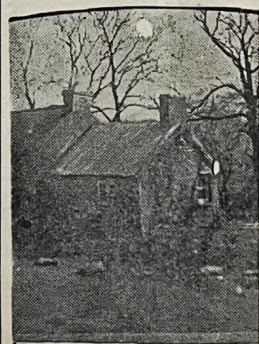
TO US, the modern attempt to belittle Mitchel's Irishness is nothing short of infuriating. If John Mitchel was not racy of historic Ulster, no man ever was. There was nothing English about him: his only affinity outside Ireland was in that Scots country which is part of the one world with Ireland.

How passionately he loved Ireland!—and all the more sincere was his love because it matured, and was no mere boyish whim. He entered Trinity on the same day as Thomas Davis, and like Davis studied for a lawyer's career, though neither of them was destined to flourish in that trade. Years later, when Davis, Duffy and Dillon had founded the *Nation*, Mitchel was in touch with his old classmate, but did not throw himself immediately into the Young Ireland movement. He was rather slow to accept the invitation to stand for the Council of Three Hundred—the proposed National Assembly,—not because he did not approve that fine, although abortive plan, but because he had his family responsibilities to consider. In a word, he was the reverse of impetuous in his patriotism.

It was by deep feeling and deep conviction that he came to throw himself into the fight. Two things mainly decided him. One was O'Connell's rude treatment of Davis. That stung Mitchel, and he lost his old trust in the Liberator; after Davis's death (for which he blamed O'Connell) he took up Davis's work. The second factor was the Famine. In no other soul, one thinks, did Ireland's anguish and wrath flame more intensely than in this lion-hearted Ulsterman.

Take that wonderful passage which he wrote in *The Nation* about the Famine year. He had been given some travel books to review. He began with a meditation on the splendour and beauty of our land, which he envisioned as if from the height of Slieve Gullion, where lochs and seas and distant mountains are spread out under the skies; and from the height his fancy went down to the valleys, thus—

"As we come down towards the roots of the mountain, you may feel, leading the evening air, the heavy balm of hawthorn blossoms; here are whole thickets of white-mantled hawthorn, every mystic tree (save us all from fairy thrall!) smothered with snow-white and showing like branching coral in the South Pacific. And be it remembered that never in Ireland, since the last of her chiefs sailed away from her, did that fairy tree burst into such luxuriant beauty and fragrance as this very year. The evening, too, is deli-



The House at Dungiven, where Mitchel was born.

clious; the golden sun has deepened into crimson, over the sleeping sea, as we draw near the hospitable cottages; almost you might dream that you beheld a vision of the Connacht of the thirteenth century; for that—

The clime, indeed, is a clime to
praise,
The clime is Erin's, the green
and bland;
And this is the time—these be
the days—
Of Cathal Mór of the Wine-
Red Hand:

Cathal Mór, in whose days both land and sea were fruitful, and the yearlings of the flocks was doubled, and the horses clamped yellow wheat in the mangers—

Now mark the sudden turn in the writer's meditation, as his

dream is broken by dreadful realisation:

"But why do we not see the smoke curling from those lowly chimneys? And surely we ought by this time to scent the well-known aroma of the turf-fires. But what (may Heaven be about us this night)—what reeking breath of hell is this oppressing the air, heavier and more loathsome than the smell of death rising from the fresh carnage of a battlefield? Oh! misery, had we forgotten that it was the Famine Year? Are we here in the midst of those thousand Golgothas that border our island with a ring of death from Cork Harbour all round to Lough Foyle. There is no need of inquiries here—no need of words; the history of this little society is plain before us. Yet we go forward, though with sick hearts and swimming eyes, to examine the Place of Skulls nearer."

"There is a horrible silence; grass grows before the doors; we fear to look into any door, though they are all open or off the hinges; for we fear to see yellow chapless skeletons grinning there; but our footfalls rouse two lean dogs, that run from us with doleful howling, and we know by the felon-gleam in the wolfish eyes how they have lived after their masters' dead."

Many Englishmen wrote compassionately about the Famine, but who among them could touch that note of passionate Gaelic sincerity? Could the best of foreigners feel for Ireland thus?—

"We walk amidst the houses of the dead, and out at the other side of the cluster, and there is not one where we dare to enter. We stop before the threshold of our host of two years ago, put our head, with eyes shut, inside the door-jamb, and say, with shaking voice, 'God save all here!'—No answer: ghastly silence, and a mouldy stench, as from the mouth of burial-vaults. Ah! they are dead! they are dead! the strong man and the fair, dark-eyed woman and the little ones with their liquid Gaelic accents that melted into music for us two years ago,"—the Gaelic of Killeavy and Omagh—"they shrunk and withered together until their voices dwindled to a rueful gibbering, and they hardly knew one another's faces."

That was Irish Mitchel, Gaelic Mitchel, Mitchel that was the very voice of Ireland mourning for her dead.

MITCHEL was as Irish as the waters of Glanrye or the woods above them; but when we have established that, we hear another charge that makes us even angrier than the demise of his robust nationhood.

We hear it alleged that he and other Young Irelanders, and the United Irishmen before them whose work they consciously reviewed, were Red Revolutionaries, actuated by secret societies on the Continent; that they were freemasons, Rosicrucians, dear know what: we daily expect to hear them described as Jews, and in-

involved in a fanatical anti-semitic denunciation. There are school-books which propagate this false representation; and I have seen John Mitchel written of by a Professor of the National University, in a learned journal as an enemy of the Catholic Church.

These false allegations need to be refuted, if a perverted doctrine of history is not to take root among us. The authors of the allegations have a merely national grasp of orthodoxy. They come on some regrettable phrase of Mitchel's, in his political controversy with an Archbishop, and they build on this, without considering the merits of the political dispute, and without taking into account the life-long bent of Mitchel's mind.

Mitchel was a friend and champion of the oppressed Catholic multitude. All his sympathy was with the maligned Church. Take that saying of his when bigots in New York assailed the Catholic religion. "These men differed with one another on almost every topic they discussed," he said to a great Franciscan, "but they were united on one point—hostility to your Church. This arises from the fact that you represent the Truth and they the World. The World will always fight against the Truth, and hate."

When we consider those words of the Newry Presbyterian, must we not be ashamed of Catholic writers who treat him as a sort of Red?

Take again, his splendid defence of the rights of conscience when his daughter became a Catholic and a member of the Sacred Heart community in Paris. Bigots wrote to say that "the gentlemen of Newry" were annoyed about it. He wrote back to say that the only gentlemen he remembered in Newry were the men in the mole-skin breeches, and he did not believe that his daughter's conversion to their faith annoyed them! He expressed his own heart-sympathy with his daughter in her decision.

Take again a passage in which he describes a district that he knew well—Ravensdale, over the moor from Newry. He is writing of the Penal days:

"In a remote part of Louth County, near the base of the Fenns mountains, is a retired nook called Ballymacanlon, where dwelt for years, in a farmhouse that would attract no attention, the Primate of Ireland and successor of St. Patrick, Bernard MacMahon, a prelate accomplished in all the learning of his time, and assiduous in the government of his archdiocese; but he moved with danger, if not with fear, and often encountered hardships travelling by day and by night."

Archbishop MacMahon's dwelling, I think was close to the house now the residence of Miss Donn Byrne: a spot that Mitchel knew well. Let us read more of his meditation on a Penal Primate: "Imagine a priest ordained at Seville or Salamanca, a gentleman (Continued on Page 8).

"IN THIS CLASS I FOUND THE BEST IRISHMEN"—O'LEARY

Dublin's Workers Rallied to Lalor

A HUNDRED years ago our trade unions were wholly Irish and, as in our own generation, leaders of theirs were active in Dublin in the national struggle. In 1847 and 1848 they rallied

Head," by the way, was a favourite of James Connolly's, and I still recall very vividly how forcibly Connolly recited it for us at a gathering of Fianna Éireann in our hut at Willowbank, Belfast, in 1913 or 1914.

As I have shown elsewhere, John O'Leary early in 1849 found that even in his sick bed in Capel St., Lalor was deep in a new conspiracy, and had "gathered about him many ardent spirits, notably among the more intelligent of the artisan class." That recollection prompted O'Leary to say publicly what he had all his life been saying privately:

"That it is in this class I have always found the best Irishmen. Mechanics are, as a rule, in my opinion, more intelligent, and even more virtuous than any, save the professional and professedly cultured class; that is, such portions of the middle or upper class as in some shape or other devote themselves to the acquisition of knowledge. . . . Your average bourgeois may make a very good sort of agitator. . . . A rebel, however, you can rarely make him."

Unfortunately, O'Leary does not give us names of the artisans rallying to Lalor in that conspiracy. But he and others do tell us of Philip Gray, was, I think, a Meathman, although O'Leary describes him as "a Dublin mechanic, of fair intelligence and well educated for his class." He was out in 'Forty-Eight with John O'Mahony and John Savage in their attempt around the borders of Tipperary; he shared after that in what O'Leary calls "a little

By

Cathal O Shannon

affair of Gray's and my own, in which there was, happily—or unhappily—no killing at all"; and in the Waterford mountains he had charge of a body of men who were to join in the attack on Clonmel barracks to rescue Smith O'Brien and his fellow-prisoners after Ballingarry. Unlike O'Leary, Gray avoided capture, got away to France, returned in ill-health to Dublin and lived just long enough to bring Fenianism into County Meath in the organisation's first year.

Irish exiles and Chartists in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester alike were stirred by Mitchell's arrest and conviction and the fire and eloquence of the *Irish Felon* and the *Irish Tribune*. English trials of the year refer again and again to the felons in Dublin. Thus, in May and June, 1848, protest meetings in London produced at the Central Criminal Court in July a whole crop of prosecutions. John Joseph Fussell, English Chartist labourer, was sentenced to two years imprisonment for sedition and riot at a meeting organised at Clerkenwell Green by an Irish Confederate, Charles McCarthy, and an English working-man, Joseph Williams. Alexander Sharpe was convicted for a similar offence committed at a meeting of Irish Confederates at Bonner's Fields.

Ernest Jones, poet and Chartist leader and journalist, who in 1867 was to be the able counsel for the Allen, Larkin and O'Brien at the trial of the Manchester Martyrs, was another of the speakers at the Bonner's Fields meeting.

Among other utterances there, it was sworn against him, he had said: "The green flag shall float over Downing Street and St. Stephen's; only energy is wanted, only determination, and what will be the result? Why, that John Mitchell and Frost will be brought back, and Sir George Grey and



JAMES FINTAN LALOR.

Lord John Russell will be sent to change places with them." Jones got — and served — two years, not twelve months as stated in error by James Connolly. The Chartist convict of 1848 was the right choice for counsel for the Fenian Martyrs of 1867.

The bold spirit of these Irish workers in exile and at home was typified in the declaration made by Francis Looney before sentence was passed on him for his language at a meeting in the Chartist Hall, Blackfriars, on Mitchell's conviction. Looney told the court:

"The Attorney-General stated that I was an Irishman. I wish to state again that I am, and I am so well satisfied with the manner in which the Attorney-General and his Government have governed my country that of course I shall take

CATHAL MÓR OF THE WINE-RED HAND

I walked entranced
Through a land of morn;
The sun with wondrous excess
Of light.
Shone down and glanced
Over seas of corn,
And lustrous gardens a-left and
right.

Even in the clime
Of resplendent Spain
Beams no such sun upon such
a land;
But it was the time,
'Twas in the reign
Of Cathal Mór of the Wine-red
Hand.

Anon stood nigh
By my side a man
Of princely aspect and port
sublime,
Him queried I,
"O, my Lord and Ceann,
What clime is this, and what
golden time?"
When he—"The clime
Is a clime to praise,
The clime is Erin's, the green
and bland;
And it is the time
These be the days,
Of Cathal Mór of the Wine-red
Hand."

Then I saw thrones
And circling fires,
And a dome rose near me, as by
a spell,
Whence flowed the tones
Of silver lyres,
And many voices in wreathed
swell;

And their thrilling chime
Fell on mine ears
As the heavenly hymn of an
angel-band—
"It is now the time,
These be the years,
Of Cathal Mór of the Wine-red
Hand."

I sought the hall,
And, behold!—a change
From light to darkness from joy
to woe!
Kings, nobles, all,
Looked aghast and strange;
The minstrel-group a tale in
dumbest show!
Had some great crime
Wrought this dread amaze,
This terror! None seemed to
understand!
'Twas then the time,
We were in the days,
Of Cathal Mór of the Wine-red
Hand.

I again walked forth;
But lo! the sky
Showed fleck with blood, and an
alien sun
Glared from the north,
And there stood on high,
Amid his shorn beams, A
SKELETON!
It was by the stream
Of the castled Maine
One autumn eve, in the Teuton's
land,
That I dreamed this dream
Of the time and reign
Of Cathal Mór of the Wine-red
Hand!

J. CLARENCE MANGAN.

THE GIRL DAVIS LOVED



whatever sentence you pass. I am quite satisfied."

That was the spirit of the working men in Young Ireland and it was the spirit that animated so many of their fellow-workers in the long struggle of the next three-quarters of a century.

In the above picture you see Annie Hutton (seated, on right), with her two sisters. She was the daughter of Thomas Hutton, former M.P. for Dublin, who the family lived at Elm Park, Drumcondra. Gavan Duffy wrote of her: "Miss Davis met her she was barely twenty—a slender graceful girl with features of classic contour and marble hue. . . . On Thomas Davis's suggestion translated Cardinal Ruffini's correspondence with the Vatican on his visit. They fell in love and had been engaged just one month when he died. She wrote to a friend, saying: 'If I were to live through an eternity I would not give up that short month of happiness, that King Ireland communion with all that was most pure, most holy on earth. . . . I'd be found aged 28, in 1853—eight years after Davis, not misplaced.

National Ideals

"The High Post of Freedom"

IT is not a gambling fortune, made at imperial play, Ireland wants: it is the pious and stern cultivation of her faculties and virtues, the acquisition of faithful and exact habits, and the self-respect that rewards a dutiful and sincere life. To get her possessions into her hands with well-tilled fields and placid hearths; to develop the ingenuity of her artists, and the docile industry of her artisans; to make for her own instruction a literature wherein our climate, history and passions shall breathe; and to gain conscious strength and integrity, and the high post of holy freedom—these are Ireland's wants.

—THOMAS DAVIS.

round the young men of advanced views like Fintan Lalor, Joseph Brennan and Devin Reilly, and for that they too are worthy of remembrance.

Indeed it was a committee of Dublin workmen, who in John Savage's words, "undertook the desperate task of remonstrating with the Repeal Association" in the autumn of 1846, when the O'Connells had driven John Mitchell and the Young Irelanders into seclusion. This committee of proletarians who "exerted influence chiefly among the trades, but were then unknown in public" found their penman in Thomas Devin Reilly. Reilly drew up the remonstrance for them. In a few weeks of hard, silent work they secured 1,500 signatures of Dublin members of the Repeal Association.

When the document was presented, John O'Connell, dangerous fool that he was, had it flung into the gutter on Burgh Quay. That left the Young Irelanders no option but the establishment of the Irish Confederation in January, 1847.

The members of this workers' committee were Thomas Matthew Halpin, Michael Crean, Edward Hollywood, James McCormick, James Keeley and P. J. Barry. Halpin became the secretary of the Confederation, was arrested in 1848, and afterwards went to America. Crean was a Clare man, leader of a union of shop assistants, and a member of the Council of the Confederation. Hollywood was another trade union leader, a member of the Council with Crean, and a silk weaver, like Michael Mallin of the Irish Citizen Army, who was executed in 1916. He was treasurer of the Davis Confederate Club; was arrested in Wicklow along with Darcy McGee on a sedition charge that was dropped; escaped to France and returned afterwards to Dublin. McCormick was a founder of the *National Guard*, a short-lived penny, working-class organ of revolution. Crean escaped arrest and made his way to the United States where John Savage, no mean judge, counted him among the men who "deserved well of their countrymen in serving their country." Savage's "Shaun's

"He, too, had tears for all souls in trouble here and in Hell"

★ STEPHEN

RYNNE

writes on the most
tragic figure, and
the sweetest singer
of them all—

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN



JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN: This drawing by Charles Mills, in 1849, conveys a realistic impression of the pathetic, almost ghostly, figure of the tragic Mangan.

THE life of James Clarence Mangan is well documented. From his birth in Fishamble Street, Dublin, on the 1st of May, 1803, to his death in the Meath Hospital on the 20th of June, 1849, there are few of the intervening years without a record. The curious may turn up the dictionaries of biography, or encyclopædia, and there obtain dates and data of Mangan's schooling; his employment as a copyist in the scrivener's office; the quarrels with his father and his domestic unhappiness; his work in the library of Trinity College and, later, in the offices of the Ordnance Survey; the love affairs that went so badly; his ill-health and his resorts to opium and brandy; the marvellous outpouring of verse and the numerous contributions made to Irish periodicals; the somewhat morbid recourses to religion; the taking of the pledge with such passionate ardour—and the breaking of it; his association with the Young Irelanders and "The Nation"; cholera and death; the final funeral procession to Glasnevin . . .

Then there are the pen pictures—how many of them? Always that witch's hat and the short blue cloak—those are for ever cropping up. "He never appeared abroad in sunshine or storm without a large, malformed umbrella, which, when partly covered by the cloak, might easily be mistaken for a Scotch bagpipe." It was Father Meehan who gave us that thumbnail sketch. Charles Gavan Duffy added "golden hair, fine and silky as a woman's, hung in unkempt tangles." Another, rather unkindly, gives us a picture of "ill-fitting false teeth and green spectacles." Again he is "a speck out of a German romance." There are set scenes too for this eccentric figure: the bookstalls down the Quays; the office of "The Nation"; perched on a ladder in Trinity Library (I can place him there myself—right at the end of that long book-lined vista); the public wards of the hospitals. Dublin is haunted by James Clarence Mangan.

There is no lack of character descriptions: Mangan the writer was acclaimed as a genius; he was versatile, mischievous, morbid, quizzical, pessimistic about himself, sanguine about Ireland's destiny. . . . Mangan the man was shy, sensitive and reserved. He made few friends. He was generally silent, but he talked with some animation on poetry and metaphysics. Towards women he was chivalrous, to men he was distant; he had no boon companions. He was the victim of terrible hallucinations; sometimes of hmoets were irregular. Then the the poet and the drinking promoted which convulsed life. "He was Mangan time. Davenport, and also Mangan to hate. . . . (as Mr. . . .). He was a shadow

and a legend long before he joined the shades and passed into actual legend. Religion? He belonged to that category sometimes called "bad" Catholics, often so edifying to "good" Catholics: he died with the name of Mary on his lips. Love of country? It would be indeed difficult to exaggerate the intensity of Mangan's love of Ireland.

FOR the rest, there are the inevitable comparisons with other poets, writers, patriots, opium eaters and eccentrics. These parallels are not worth much. D. J. O'Donoghue (the greatest of all Mangan "fans") speaks of the influence of De Quincey and Coleridge. Another compares Mangan to the American writer Poe—macabre, thwarted, but a genius of the first order. Mangan was attracted to Oriental writings, so was Thomas Moore, so was our modern W. B. Yeats for that matter; it is as if the Irish poets cannot be doing with England and when they go afield they go east. Then there is Francis Thompson. I have never heard or read a comparison between Mangan and Thompson. They were both misfits, both celibates, both opium addicts, both Catholics. It is even more interesting to note that both these poets took liberties in translating poems from foreign origins. Thompson wrote of Mangan's ways with other men's verse: "They are outrageous, or would be outrageous were the success not so complete. But poetry is a rootedly immoral art, in which success excuses well-nigh everything. . . . A great poet may plagiarise to his heart's content, because he plagiarises well, so the truly poetical translator may reindite a foreign poem and call it a translation." How Mangan himself would have endorsed that! And is there not just the faintest similarity between "The Hound of Heaven" and "Dark Rosaleen"? No, of course, no similarity in a hundred ways—none in the theme, structure, metre, choice of words. . . . But the passion? The passion in both is the same.

John D. Sheridan tells us Mangan's prose writing "tedious and tiresome." I have barely sampled it, but I do not feel inclined to contradict this biographer. Not the prose, but the poetry counts. Of this there is a great amount (for convenience I cite the Contents of his Collected Works): "Versions (More or Less) From the Irish," "Original Poems—Relating to Ireland," "Original Poems—Personal and Miscellaneous," "Oriental Versions and Perversions," "Oversettings from the German," and "Extravaganzas." Much in this collection is poor, some downright bad and a great deal of it, though artistically good, is now, of course, very out of tune with our times. There is no use glossing over the fact

that Mangan sold his poetry for drink; he drank a great deal; he had to mass-produce verse. Very few of the poems bear the marks of polishing; they were too often just scribbled out and sent off—where another poet would have pored over them, sent them out to nurse and got them schooled. Nevertheless Mangan wrote several great poems: intimate, soul-searching poems such as "The Nameless One," poems that thunder and tinkle like Nature music, and poems that stab. Then James Clarence Mangan wrote "Dark Rosaleen."

You must not forget the tight blue cloak; you must put the opium out of your mind. Mangan, the romantic figure of the Dublin underworld—the character who still inspires books and poems and plays—may be properly forgotten. It is better to remember only that once a poor and wretched Irishman wrote out of the fullness of his heart an immortal patriotic poem:

"For there was lightning in my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Oh! there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen!"

The legend ought to have been different. I mean, we could have been spared the details about the garret poet: the weird garments, the destitution, the opium and the hallucinations. . . . All we need know is that Mangan, an obscure Irish poet translated (and made his own of) a Gaelic love poem entitled "Róisín Dúh"; made a poem which clutches at the heart strings, a patriotic poem, a song before Famine. And then this obscure man died of cholera: it was what one would nowadays call "a fitting death."

"DARK ROSALEEN" is included in Palgrave's "Golden Treasury," that repository of glittered verse. Although there is a note attached to the effect that the Dark Rosaleen is a personification of Ireland, one feels that to most English readers the poem must be double-Dutch. The cumulative sorrows of centuries of oppression, the rays of hope, the fidelity to an old and hopeless cause. . . . one needs to think very

kindly of the English to suppose that they could appreciate these sentiments. Yet one is positive they felt the fascination of the poem, for it surrounds one with a strange sense of music coming from afar, rising and falling like the lonesome notes of a bagpipes—away and hidden by mists on a mountain side. An uncanny poem.

Rouget de Lisle, an engineer in the French army, when quartered at Strassburg in 1792 wrote the "Marsellaise"—both words (which some say are just bombast) and music—"in a fit of patriotic excitement." He was heard of no more. But he added to France. Remove the "Marsellaise" and France becomes a little less France. Had Abraham Lincoln not made his Gettysburg speech, America would be less America. Ireland, too, would have been less had not Mangan given us "Dark Rosaleen" before the Famine cast its long shadow over land, time and spirits ("Woe and pain, pain and woe"). Such things are indispensable to true nations; they enkindle their own times and their afterglow never fades.

The Young Ireland Movement was a bridge between modern times and the ancient Gaelic polity. Mangan's poems and ballads, especially his "Dark Rosaleen," make a literary bridge too between the present and the past—this despite the fact that he wrote in English not in Irish. I fancy Mangan may have known that his best verse would survive no matter what linguistic vehicle he used. He was something of a seer; all real poets are seers.

"The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen!"

Politicians make statements
Presidents of Republics make pronouncements. Scientists make prophecies. But on the Last Day

when the Recording Angel is destroying his books, it may happen that he will say, "Only the poets were right."

Always frail and racked, Mangan was in no less than three hospitals within twelve months. They received him kindly in Vincent's: "A prematurely aged man, his silver-white hair, grizzled on the classic beauty of his face, the fire of green eyes burning in his lustrous blue eyes. . . ." The only remark recorded from that sojourn is prosy and pathetic: "Oh, the luxury of clean sheets!" Shortly after his release from Vincent's, an accident of some sort landed him into the Richmond Surgical Hospital. Later he got the deadly cholera. He was taken to the Meath Hospital, where he lingered only seven days.

"During this interval" (wrote John Mitchell) "he was assiduously waited on by a few friends and Mr. Meehan, a good priest—who had always appreciated him as a poet, loved him as a man, and yearned over him as a soul in the jaws of perdition—anxiously and affectionately sought to console him in his last hours. The poor patient never repined, never blamed an unjust world, constantly thanked his friends for their attentions, and apologised earnestly for the trouble he was giving. At his own request, they read him, during his last moments of life, one of the Catholic penitential hymns, and so that gentle spirit passed."

There were some scraps of poetry scribbled on paper by the bedside. The wardmaid, ever tidy and orderly, destroyed these last lines as soon as the corpse was removed. But we have "Dark Rosaleen":

"The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade. . . .
Ere you can fade."

James Clarence Mangan, Dark Rosaleen, are made of immortal stuff.

✠ The Ireland Davis Foresaw ✠

SUPPOSE Ireland independent—fancy her to have a senate of Irishmen, the choice of their native districts, sitting in our capital, occupied day after day in discussing and deciding upon Irish measures. The condition of the peasants, the demands of the manufacturers, and the projects of the merchants of Ireland would occupy them. They would have no distant colonies to distract their attention, common sense would be inclined not to forego the consideration of Irish agriculture, in order to canvass the Canadian boundary—nor leave Irish manufactures to sink or swim as our rich neighbours wished, while they scuffled for the plunder of China. The harbours of Munster—the roads of Leinster—the trade of Ulster—the fisheries of Connaught, the shipping of Derry and Cork and Galway—the looms of Belfast, Dublin—the tillage of Armagh and Wexford—the fine arts of the province, the literature, the virtue, and the honour of Ireland—would engross their labours, while a spark of good remained in any sect or class of us.

—THOMAS DAVIS.

With the Editor Jailed a Woman Took Over and— "THE NATION" WENT TO PRESS

MRS. MARGARET CALLAN, with Miss Jean Francesca Elgee, edited and wrote most of a suppressed number of the "Nation" during Charles Gavan Duffy's imprisonment in Newgate, Dublin, in 1848. When the police arrived at the "Nation" office they found Mrs. Callan in charge in the Editor's room and the paper ready for publication.

Among the articles in the suppressed number was one which was a direct incentive to insurrection, and which was used in the indictment against Gavan Duffy. It was entitled "Facta alia est" (the die is cast) and it excited extraordinary interest when it became known that it was written by a woman, namely, Miss Elgee.

Gavan Duffy has described the article as "as lofty and passionate as one of Napoleon's bulletins after a great victory." Mrs. Margaret Callan, née Hughes, who was born in Newry, was Charles Gavan Duffy's sister-in-law, and wife of Dr. John B. Callan, who practised in Dublin before going to Australia. This singularly gifted woman was among the first of the women writers to contribute to the "Nation" when it "need the fertile brain and passionate soul



MRS. MARGARET CALLAN
(Courtesy, Miss Geraldine Gavan Duffy.)

of a woman," as Gavan Duffy put it.

She was one of a family of about ten children. Their father died when she was 18 years of age, and the family came from Newry to Blackrock, where she opened a school at 74 Carysfort Avenue. Mrs. Callan died in Melbourne, Australia, about 1883.

Miss Elgee's first contribution to the "Nation" came apparently from "Mr. John Fenshaw Ellis." Gavan Duffy was so struck by the article that he invited Mr. Ellis to call at the "Nation" office. Mr. Ellis declined, but invited him to visit him in Leeson Street, Dublin.

Gavan Duffy went immediately, where he was confronted with "a tall girl, whose stately carriage and figure, flashing brown eyes, and features cast in a heroic mould, seemed fit for the genius of poetry or the spirit of revolution."

Miss Elgee contributed much virile and stirring verse to the paper under the nom-de-plume "Speranza." She also wrote daring and vehement prose articles. She married Dr. Wilde, afterwards Sir William Wilde. In addition to original verse, she has made translations from nearly every European language.

THIS "NATION" REBEL BECAME AUSTRALIA'S PRIME MINISTER

CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY—
EDITOR of the "NATION"

CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY, son of a shopkeeper, was born in Monaghan Town in April, 1816, and died at Nice in February, 1903, at the age of 87. He was the only professional journalist of the time who founded "The Nation," having worked on the Dublin "Morning Register" and later owned and edited the "Belfast Vindicator." After vigorous participation in the Repeal movement under O'Donnell, and later as one of the leaders of the Young Irelanders, during which time he was prosecuted by the Crown on ten separate occasions, he left Ireland in 1855 for Victoria, Australia, where he was elected to Parliament, and eventually rose to the Premiership of the Colony. He was married three times. (Picture by courtesy of Mr. Justice Gavan Duffy.)

TEN years after he had quitted Ireland for Australia, Charles Gavan Duffy returned home for a visit. The year was 1865. In exile he had done well. He had become a Minister in the Colony and had left the impress of his talents and his generous mind on the work of the Legislature. What he had vainly attempted for the tenant farmers of Ireland in the old days, he had been able to achieve for those of Australia. In the Antipodes there was no man whose reputation stood higher.

In Ireland there were friends—survivors of the Young Ireland Movement—to welcome him. John Blake Dillon, with whom he and Davis had planned the *Nation* newspaper twenty-three years before, was there to grasp his hand. By a curious chance, another Young Irelander, Thomas D'Arcy Magee, was also paying his first visit home after many years of exile. Magee, like Duffy, had prospered. He, too, held a post of high honour in the Government of a British Colony, and was regarded as one of the foremost statesmen in Canada.

But there the resemblance ended. Magee, in a public speech at Wexford, described his early opinions and enthusiasms as "boyish follies," many of which he had dropped by the way. There was intense anger in Ireland, and men asked why, if Magee felt that way about his own country, he had not remained in the British Colony where his new loyalties were set. His old comrade, Duffy, was angered, too, and he wrote to Magee assuring him that "if he regarded himself as a fool at twenty, and a philosopher or statesman at forty, he was much to be preferred in the former character." Dillon agreed with Duffy, which elicited from Magee a parody of the Biglow Papers:

John B.
Dillon, he
Cannot stand D'Arcy Magee.

But though Magee might treat it as a laughing matter, it was anything but that, as he was to discover tragically a year or two later.

One consequence of Gavan Duffy's visit was a new and very beautiful edition of his famous book, *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*. Originally published in 1843 by his namesake, James Duffy, in the "Library of Ireland" which Davis had projected, it had gone into no less than thirty-eight editions. For the new edition—the thirty-ninth—published in 1866, Duffy wrote

a fresh introduction. He said that he was omitting little and adding nothing and, in a characteristically modest foreword, admitted that it had been to a certain extent superseded by other and larger collections. "But," he said, "I rejoice to remember that it was the first collection, and that before it appeared the title Irish Ballad would probably have suggested to an ordinary reader something grotesque or contemptible." His claim was thoroughly justified. To Gavan Duffy, more than any man, must go the credit of rescuing Irish balladry from the taint of buffoonery and stage-Irishism.

THAT edition of 1866, published, like all its predecessors, by James Duffy, is a very charming book to handle. With its green and gold cover, its chaste ornamentation, its gilt edges and its quaint woodcuts, it is a little volume that delights the eye of the bibliophile. But it is more than a collector's piece. Its contents prove that it is an anthology compiled by a man of taste and wide knowledge who knew a good ballad when he saw one. Not only that, but it lives up to its title. What it contains is not the ballad poetry of a part of Ireland, but of all Ireland. Mangan is in it, and Edward

Walsh with his glorious translations from the Irish, and Callanan, the very voice of old Gaelic lore, and "Carroll Malone" with his "Croppie Boy" and Samuel Ferguson with his "Fair Hills of Ireland." But turn over another page and you light upon Charles Wolfe's lovely lament for Sir John Moore, or upon Colonel Blacker's rousing Orange song:

*The Power that nerved the stalwart arms of Gideon's chosen few,
The Power that led great William Boyne's reddening torrent through.*

*In His protecting aid confide, and every foe defy—
Then put your trust in God, my boys, and keep your powder dry.*

Duffy, Davis and the other Young Irelanders were men of a wide and sweeping vision. The "common name of Irishman" meant more to them than any political label. And, so when they started to gather the relics, poetical and historic, of Ireland's past, it was in no narrow or bigoted fashion. To leave the Orangeman his traditions and his ballads: to make them part of the common stock of the things that Ireland treasures—such was the unifying purpose that inspired them.

Charles Gavan Duffy, who had

sat beside Davis in the *Nation* office in the early forties, lived long enough to know Yeats and to play his part in the literary movement of sixty years later. He himself had published many books and had become the faithful historian of the Young Ireland movement. His name was honoured in two hemispheres. But his first loyalties remained unchanged and it was to him a greater source of pride that he had been the well-loved friend of Thomas Davis than that he had received a title from a British monarch. Once, in the Parliament House of Victoria, a vote of censure was directed against the administration because it numbered amongst its members the "rebel" Gavan Duffy. When Duffy rose to reply, he said: "I am challenged to justify myself for having been an Irish rebel, under penalty of your fatal censure; and I am content to reply that the recollection that when my native country was in mortal peril, I was among those who staked life for her deliverance, is a memory that I would not exchange for anything that Parliaments or Sovereigns can give or take away."

Truly, Charles Gavan Duffy was one of the "righteous" men of Davis's best-known song.

M.

DAVIS—CRUSADER OF TRINITY

TORYISM is frequently associated with Trinity College and, as a consequence, an anti-Irish Nationalist bias. The reasons for this inevitable label go back to the College allegiance to its foundress, Queen Elizabeth, and to an over-protestation of this allegiance on the part of a number of its members throughout the long period of its existence that began in 1591. How misleading this appellation really is may be seen if we go no further than look at the names of some of the outstanding figures in Irish history of the eighteenth century. Swift, Flood, Grattan, Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet—all are alumni of the University. The opposite view has been fostered by such stories as the one current concerning Mary who, at an At Home of Lady Wilde's ("Speranza" of *The Nation*) is reputed to have admitted to never having heard of Wolfe Tone. This professed ignorance on the part of this brilliant scholar was merely a manifestation of the colossal vanity of an individual who cared only to recall his intimacies with kings; a rebel could find no place in his regally eclectic mind.

In the nineteenth century it will suffice to refer to the large number of Trinity graduates and undergraduates in the Young Ireland movement in order to add overwhelming point to the contention that Trinity Nationalism is part of a tradition that belies the popular notion of the College standing outside the life and aspirations of the country in which it was born nearly 360 years ago. Among these was Thomas Davis. He was the acknowledged leader of the movement and as we are now celebrating his centenary, it seems opportune to inquire into his activities during his formative years at Trinity College. Some light might thereby be thrown on a side of his life not hitherto very closely examined.

At first it would not appear that the serious and thoughtful young man, who steeped himself so inordinately in reading that he

"I do not fear that any of you will be found among Ireland's foes.."

evoked from one of his fellow-students a description of himself as "a book in breeches," would ever develop into a national leader. He was not particularly brilliant in his studies, but in 1835, a year before taking his degree, he gained a silver medal in Ethics and Logics—a subject that must have appealed to the future partisan of reasoning applied to justice and morality. It was not until two years after graduation, at the period when he was about to be called to the Bar, that evidence is

other records, with laudable care by generations of the Society's secretaries) and find that the name of Thomas Osborne Davis appears as No. 3 in the list of the original twenty members. These were made up, with a meticulous solicitude for impartiality, of ten Liberals and ten Conservatives, so that no favour might be shown to any one political party. Davis was unanimously elected auditor for the season 1838-9, and president for 1839-40.

Details of the Society's proceedings, with particulars of the debate subjects and how members voted, are fully reported, and it might be interesting to examine briefly what emerges from a scrutiny of this hundred year old record. It is strange to find the Society voting as to whether vote

A MESSAGE TO ENGLAND

THOUGH you were to-morrow to give us the best tenures on earth—though you were to equalise Presbyterians, Catholics, and Episcopallians—though you were to give us the amplest representation in your Senate—though you were to restore our absentees, dismember us of your debt, and redress every one of our fiscal wrongs—and though, in addition to all this, you plundered the treasures of the world to lay gold at our feet, and exhausted the resources of your genius to do us worship and honour, still we tell you—we tell you in the names of liberty and country—we tell you in the name of enthusiastic hearts, thoughtful souls, and fearless spirits—we tell you, by the past, the present, and future—we would spurn your gifts, if the condition be that Ireland should remain a province. We tell you and all whom it may concern, come what may—bribery or deceit, justice, policy, or war—we tell you, in the name of Ireland, that Ireland shall be a Nation!

—THOMAS DAVIS.

forthcoming as to qualities that were to turn Davis into the stature of a leader of the people.

The College Historical Society, since its foundation by Burke in 1747, has had endless bickering with the college authorities. On occasions these quarrels led to the rustication of the Society, and made it necessary for it to seek rooms outside the university walls. Such an occasion arose in time for Davis to join with nineteen other fellow-students to re-assemble the routed members and re-form them into the Historical Society. I have examined the Minute Book of this period (preserved, like all

by ballot ought to be adopted at elections. At this debate Davis was, as you would expect, pleader in the affirmative. In another discussion he was realist enough to believe that England ought to have a standing army in time of peace. Faced with a resolution that demanded the non-introduction of present-day party politics in the debates of the Society, Davis was instrumental in having the proposer withdraw his motion. He evidently did not believe that the crusades were beneficial to Europe but, in the true spirit of his time and out of firm conviction, found that the French Revolution was beneficial

The River Of
the Irish Mind

THIS country of ours is no sand-bank thrown up by some recent caprice of earth. It is an ancient land, honoured in the archives of civilisation, traceable into antiquity by its plenty, its wars, and its sufferings. Every great European race has sent its stream to the river of Irish mind. Long were its organisations, subtle codes, beacon crimes, leading virtues, and self-slightly men were here, if we live influenced by wind, and sun, and tree, and not by the passions and deeds of the past, we are a thrifless and hopeless people.

—THOMAS DAVIS.

to France. Turkey divided into independent states seemed to the young Auditor likely to benefit that country; whilst as President he must have been forcefully persuasive, for as the sole pleader in the negative he carried his audience with him on the question whether British rule was beneficial to India. He discarded the Norman conquest as bringing any good to England and plumps for co-education some seventy years before women were admitted to degrees in his University.

For our purpose, however, the most significant passages in the Minute Book, which varies in its script from an untidy scrawl to self-conscious penmanship, are those which refer to Davis's plan for the reconstruction of the Society. He wished to expand it into what he called a Lyceum—a term rarely used now, and meaning a literary association for mutual improvement and popular instruction by means of lectures. Finally, however, the name decided on was the Dublin Institute. Its main function was to be the study of Irish history, statistics, and literature "by the formation of classes for the study of the language and for explaining and comparing the works in Irish history and by the writing of papers on the difficult and defective or disputed portions of our literature and history by which means the Society might soon have at its disposal manuscript

By
Dr. A. J. Leventhal

works of sterling value to be printed when its funds could afford it."

Here already are firm beginnings of the great education and national missionary work which later was to take material shape in those essays of his that ranged from "Our National Language" to "The Commercial History of Ireland," in the varied archaeological and national cultural lore, the patriotic poetry and the urgent political clarion calls that went to make up *The Nation* which he founded in conjunction with John Blake Dillon—his successor as President of the Historical Society—and Charles Gavan Duffy. Here, too, is the idea of the Gaelic League which, however, had to wait for its foundation by another President of the same Society, Douglas Hyde. Here, likewise, is the plan for putting books into the hands of the people which members of Young Ireland were later to carry out so that effect might be given to their exhortation: "Educate that you may be free."

When Thomas Davis delivered his Presidential Address to members of Trinity College and their friends, he declared: "I do not fear that any of you will be found among Ireland's foes. To her every energy should be consecrated." He believed that in his audience he would find friends of Ireland. And if a count were made of those who responded to his call and of those whose names are recorded on the Young Ireland roll of honour it would be found that his trust was not misplaced.

★ The Schools in the Days of Davis★

WE have spoken to pupils, may, to masters of the National Schools, who were ignorant of the physical character of every part of Ireland except their native villages—who knew not how the people lived, or died, or spoke, or fought—who had never heard of Tara, Clontarf, Limerick or Dungannon—to whom the O'Neills and Sarsfields, the Swifts and Starnes, the Giffans and Barrys, our generals, statesmen, authors, orators and artists were alike and utterly unknown! Even the hedge schools kept up something of the romance, history and music of the country.

Until the National Schools fell under national control, the people must take diligent care to procure books on the history, men, language, music and manners of Ireland for their children. These schools are very good, so far as they go, and the children should be sent to them; but they are not national, they do not use the Irish language, nor teach anything peculiarly Irish.

—THOMAS DAVIS.



Statue of Davis (by Hogan) originally erected in Mount Jerome Cemetery, now in Dublin's Municipal Art Gallery.

The Young Men of the Rising Lived his Dream

IT is an old story that of the poet of the French Revolution who saw a mob closing in on his house and, terror-stricken, fled. The mob followed him and at last he was cornered and falling on his knees he pleaded for mercy. Instead they crowned him with laurels and bore him back to his home in honour and in triumph. For he had inspired them.

That could not have happened to Thomas Davis. The sincerity which is the hall-mark of his writings was an essential part of him. Many writers have been

—writes

DAVID HOGAN

bold in words but weak in spirit like the French poet of the Revolution. Davis would have waited for the mob, a trifle contemptuously. He would never have gone on his knees to them. He would either have opposed them or have led them. He was an inspirer of men; he was a poet; he was a living flame. Had the Revolution come he would not only have been in it, he would have been at the heart of it; as wise and as tolerant as he was in his articles in the *Nation*, but as strong also, and as sure.

He was no wishful thinker. Liberty, or a long stop towards it, might be won as he half expected it to be before Clontarf, by the sheer force of a united, disciplined and determined people. But it might also have to be won in another way and from this either Davis did not shrink:

"A little foresight," he wrote, "saves much misery. If the Irish people have not patience, prudence, and courage, if they are not prepared to endure delay and persecution, to obey their leaders strictly; and finally, if they will hereafter hesitate to face suffering, danger and death itself for liberty, let them at once abandon a contest for which nature never fitted them."

Perhaps Davis had too short a public life to allow men to draw firm conclusions; but there is in his writings, as in that just quoted, a certitude, a conviction of mind which suggests that he saw clearly the road to the goal and would have trod that road turning neither to the right nor to the left. And this surety of thinking, this strength, he combined with a breadth of mind that is something unique among the leaders and writers of his day or his successors' day, except perhaps Terence MacSwiney and Erskine Childers. It is a quality deeper than patriotism and yet a part of its essence; it is a sense of the unity of human kind, of being part of the peoples' striving after beauty and truth and liberty, that striving which convulsed Europe in Davis's time. Davis lacked in the power to hate.

True, much that is passionate could be quoted from him, and much, especially in his ballads, that has hatred in it. But Davis understood his people and the need to rouse them. He knew the minds of simple men and women, and realised that the heart of the many is not touched by the wise and placid word, but by flaming anger and zealous love and hate. He gave the men and women of his day that fierce protest against wrong which scalded them into action or the desire for it.

Fully to understand Davis we must recall the manner of people whom he addressed week after week in the most influential journal of the nineteenth century. O'Connell had done mighty things for Ireland, but he was now old and the playing of a subtle game with Britain had made him overcautious in all but words. He still spoke heady words and fashioned great dreams and talked openly of war and while, with him, this was largely an eloquence, to the people it sounded like new trumpets for freedom. They responded to it; it sustained them in a dark and hungry time, a harsh and frustrated time.

It kindled in them a hope that behind a valiant leader they would win liberty valiantly, that they would soon be called to march and would answer fearlessly. Then came Clontarf and the submission: their backs to their homes went the hundreds of thousands of men, many bringing disillusion with them.

Mitchel claims that it was the

Battle Eve of the Bridge

The mess-tent is full and the glasses are set,
And the gallant Count Thomond is present yet;
The veteran arose, like an uplilt lance,
Crying: "Comrades, a health to the
monarch of France!"
With his hand on his chest they have done
as he bade,
For King Louis is loved by the Irish
Brigade.
"A health to King James," and they bent
as they quaffed,
"Here's to George the Eleventh," and
they bowed,
"Good luck to the girls we wooed long ago,
Where Shannon, and Beggrow, and Black-
water flow."
"God prosper Old Ireland!"—you'd think
So pale grew the chiefs of the Irish Brigade.
"But, surely, that light cannot come from
our lamp?"
And the noise—were they all getting drunk
in the camp?
"Murrah! boys, the morning of battle is
near!
And the general's beating on many a drum."
So they rush from the revel to join the
fight.
For the van is the right of the Irish
Brigade.
They fought as they revelled, fast, fiery,
And, though victors, they left on the field
not few dead,
And they, who survived, fought and drank
as of yore,
But the land of their hearts' hope they
never saw more!
For in far foreign fields, from Dunkirk to
Belgrade,
Lie the soldiers and chiefs of the Irish
Brigade.

A Ballad of Mitchel

(Tune: John Mitchel.)

I AM a true-born Irishman, John Mitchel is my name,
For what you are or yet may be I freely take the blame.
In the dock, at Green Street Courthouse, I made an oath for you,
And Irishmen this hundred years have made my word come true.

THE men who rose in '67 were routed in the snow,
But whether late or early, what matters is the blow.
There were men of my own company who rose in '48,
And though they'd little glory then no blow can come too late.

A GUN-BOAT in the Liffey woke me thirty years ago,
And again I saw young poets seek an Empire's overthrow.
Oh words can work a wonder but blood cries to blood,
And being dead their living words were easily understood.

I WOULD have lived in Ireland if Ireland had been free,
A prosperous Newry lawyer with a property in fee.
But what you are demanded more and I went bound in chains—
Remember John Mitchel and his word when all you seek is gained.

—DONAGH MacDONAGH

"DAVIS WOULD HAVE BEEN 'IN THE HEART OF IT'"

splendour of Irish history, in a recognition of the culture that illumined Gaelic Ireland, in a selfless devotion to a people's happiness, in the enjoyment of beauty and the arts that national freedom would make possible, in a love for the language in which thousands of years of Irish life had been lived.

Davis was of mixed stock: Welsh and Anglo-Irish. By birth he was Irish, by race he was almost wholly Celtic, by religion he was Protestant. Because he was reared in another atmosphere and was educated in the schools of the minority, he not only witnessed the weaknesses of the Anglo-Irish but, as an observer, perceived also the equally profound weaknesses of the Gaelic character.

And he spoke of what he saw when the need for speaking came. Thus in the period of disillusion that was beginning, he wrote constantly of the necessity for the people to become more manly, to abandon their intolerance of one another, to stop their empty boasting, to limit their zest for demonstrations and processions and do practical things, to mend their misty thinking, to shun intemperances. While with piercing words he stigated the feckless minority, he never allowed the majority to think that they could win freedom or world respect except by stern self-discipline and constant self-reliance. His rich mind ranged abroad for examples that would encourage and sustain his people. He cited for them what a true national education had done for Swiss, what courage had achieved for the Greeks, what industriousness had won for the Germans, what art had done for Italy and the Low Countries, what the preservation of their language had accomplished for the Welsh.

This European broadness of his mind was illustrated further in his feeling for other peoples. His sympathy for the oppressed everywhere, no matter who the oppressor might be, recalls Terence MacSwiney's "Principles of Freedom." Only in one case was Davis uncritical in his condemnations—in the case of the English. His denunciation of English policies spread itself to English things, and English manners, and even to English songs and ballads. That too is explained by the age in which he lived. It was then the fashion of not only the Anglo-Irish minority, but the social climbers among Irish to ape English behaviour and judge all things by the crudest of English standards. They spoke of their forbears' savages in order to exalt still higher their own association with the Herrenvolk; they decayed or denied their own culture in order to glorify a shoddy and borrowed culture.

Davis' very soul writhed in the presence of this servility and knowing that he must liberate the Irish mind from the thralldom of English shams he seldom cited an English example of something good if he could find a parallel in France or Spain or Ancient Greece. The harsh necessities of the condition of those to whom he spoke limited the exercise of his own deep tolerance.

When death found him he was at the height of his power. His pen had made the *Nation* the true voice of an unbeaten people. Throughout his short public life his vision constantly became fuller, deeper, richer. He worked towards an Ireland wholly free, governed righteously, experienced in chivalry; regardless of the feelings of all her citizens, inspired by

(Continued on Page 8.)

His Grave



"Long in my heart I held a pilgrim vow
To seek one grave I knew of where
was laid
A patriot's dust; years passed away,
Behold the time has come for which
I prayed
Alone I stand, where Ireland once arrayed
Her chosen sons around his early bier,
The wind sighs lonely through the laurel
shade
Where manhood's stifled grief thrilled
sadly on our ear."

(Olivia Knight, the young Castlebar girl, whose devotion to the teachings of Thomas Davis was expressed in her assumption of the penname, "Thomasine," visited the young Irishman's grave at Mount Jerome, Dublin, and wrote a poem (of which the above is part) which she called "My Mecca." She died in Queensland, and last year a plaque was placed on the house in Castlebar where she was born in 1830.)

Anyone Who Loved Ireland Could Be Sure of a Break in

"THE NATION"

TURNING over the files of "The Nation," one's first impression is a humbled surprise at its excellence. The founders (Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy and John Blake Dillon) appear to have been chiefly proud of its size. In the first numbers they boasted that it was the largest newspaper ever published in Ireland and the largest then appearing in the British Empire. Its pages were practically as large as our present dailies, but instead of a modest four to six pages, "The Nation" ran into fifteen, seventeen or twenty pages of closely-packed print. The editors, however, had still greater reason to be proud of its quality. Even to-day in Ireland there is no weekly that could rank beside it.

"The Nation's" sub-title was "A Weekly Journal of Politics, Literature and the Arts" and the editors made an extraordinarily good effort to live up to such a comprehensive description. Though strongly national in tone, nevertheless it was a complete journal for Catholics and Protestants alike, as is shown by a glance at its layout and principal features: in addition to a long leading article on current affairs and two sub-leaders, it also gave American, English and Irish General News, Local News, Naval and Military Foreign Intelligence; the work of the Repeal Association usually occupied several pages and Father Mathew's Temperance Campaign several columns; a whole page was devoted to Church News, beginning with the Catholic Church and following up with Protestant, Presbyterian, Methodist and other smaller groups. There was a paragraph or two on Court News, and perhaps half a column on the affairs of the Dublin Corporation, the Police, the Bank of England, and "Musical and Theatrical Chit-Chat." There was also a feature, "Letters from an Irishman in France." The cultural side of the

paper was admirable; a large section was devoted to Continental Literature, another to Irish Literature, another to a Poets' Corner, as well as Book Reviews, Poems and Epigrams.

There was an excellent Sporting Page and a column on Agriculture and on Gardening. The book reviews made me particularly envious: they were such trenchant and lively discussions of books and their themes compared with the dull, cold boosts to which we have grown accustomed. Everything in the paper seems to be marked with the same vigour, even the hunting notes on the Sporting Page. It was as if the editors found their work a vocation, gloried in doing it well, and then all the contributors became in-

having been founded by three men of marked literary ability who, themselves, wrote all the first numbers. Moreover, they were idealists and passionately sincere. By means of articles, historical essays, poems, archaeological enquiries, ballads, war-songs and lamenta, they revealed Ireland to the Irish. They did it with such impassioned intensity and with such beauty that their message was nothing short of a revelation. They recovered again the past that had been obliterated under a culmination of bitter defeats.

THEY were great editors in the way they recognised merit. Every spark of literary ability was applauded wherever it was discovered. Anyone who loved Ireland and could at all handle words might be sure of a "break" in "The Nation." When Richard D'Aillon Williams, then a young medical student in Dublin, submitted a poem to it, he was rewarded by an appointment on the staff! In a short while, "The Nation" had attracted to itself many like minds and its assemblage of contributors would have commanded attention anywhere: Mangan, Mitchel, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Denis Florence MacCarthy, Meagher, Doheny, John Kells Ingram, Shiel, James Fintan Lalor, Richard O'Gorman, Kevin O'Doherty, William Smith O'Brien, MacNevin, Martin, Reilly, three women: "Eva" (Eva Mary Kelly), "Mary" (Ellen Downing) and "Speranza" (Lady Wilde), and this is naming only some of those who are best known.

★
"It was the most
powerful thing
in print"—
Writes
ALICE
CURTAYNE

★
fected with the same happy and eager spirit. Even in reading the old files, one can feel the thrill of that ardour.

THE excitement that attended its publication has often been described. On the day it first appeared, it was sold out before four o'clock. News-vendors, catching on early in the day, multiplied the price by four, and still it was bought up, and hundreds were disappointed who later wrote in to the office for copies, but that is only what happened in the Dublin streets. In the country, the competition for copies was positively fierce. People were devouring each other for a read of it. It was passed continually from hand to hand in all the country towns, villages and hamlets; it was read aloud in the presbyteries, in the farmers' homes, in shops, in the village forge, at street-corners, while the school-masters in the hedge-schools made it their text. Its arrival in the country was henceforth a weekly event. What are they saying now?

Two years after publication, its circulation had risen to eleven thousand copies. This number is impressive, considering that the price was sixpence. Sixpence was literally a small fortune to millions of Irish people in 1844. An early number of "The Nation" gives the report of an investigation into living conditions in certain parts of Ireland, from which one learns that the price of an ass-load of turf (meaning two panniers' full) was then a penny, if the vendor was lucky (sometimes he got only a half-penny), and his usual purchase with the penny consisted of a candle and a salted herring. As a spiritual power in the land, it is hardly possible to exaggerate "The Nation's" effect. It awakened, transformed, and sustained the Irish people with a sudden reviving force as astonishing as the Pentecostal fire. No newspaper venture anywhere can compare with it in this way. It spoke authentically for the Irish people, hitherto inarticulate, the vast majority of whom in 1842 were tatterdemaldons, brutalised by poverty, broken in spirit, illiterate.

The paper had the advantage of



This is 67 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin, where Thomas Davis and his mother took up residence in 1830, when he was 16. It was then No. 61.

Irish writer in Ireland or out of Ireland is bound to salute it with personal gratitude. It marked not only the beginning of Anglo-Irish literature, that is, all writings by Irishmen in the English language, but of Irish literature also. Happily, when the paper ceased, the new life it had stimulated in the mind of Ireland did not die with it. It pointed the way in later years, by a natural evolution of thought, to the Gaelic League, the Celtic Renaissance, Sinn Féin, and 1916, so indestructible was its power.

Most commentators on the period are agreed that "The

Nation's" writers had the ability to produce work of classic rank if they had so desired. But that was not their aim. They were realists, determined to awaken again the soul of Ireland and they carried out their purpose: "The Nation" was a feat: an unrivalled journalistic success, accomplished by heroic hard work. It still remains the most powerful thing in print in the whole history of the national movement.

Mitchel of Ulster

Continued from page 3

of high old name—"correct; few names are higher than MacMathghamhna in Ulster,"—a man of eloquence and genius, who had sustained disputations in the college halls on questions of Theology; imagine him on the quays of Fleet, treating with the skipper of some vessel to let him work his passage. He wears tarry breeches and a tarpaulin hat, for disguise was generally needful. He flings himself on board, takes his full part in all hard work, scarce feels the cold spray and the tempest. And he knows, too, that the end of it all for him may be a row of sugar canes to hoe under the blazing sun of Barbadoes, overlooked by a broad-hatted agent of a British planter; yet he goes eagerly to meet his fate, for he carries in his hand a sacred deposit, bears in his heart a sacred message, and must deliver it or die."

A SACRED deposit and a sacred message!—how well Mitchel knew how the elder race suffered and yearned and persevered, and was faithful!

I have said nothing in this meditation on Mitchel about his chief work, his *Jail Journal*, of which a fresh impression will be published by the time these lines appear. That book is to be owned, read and studied, and enough has been written about it in the *IRISH PRESS* already without my writing more,—it was a household classic, and henceforth will be again.

Let these remarks serve, however, to call to mind the roots of Mitchel, deep in Irish Ulster, and his faultless allegiance to Irish nationhood, whereof he was, in truth, one of the supreme exemplars.

THEY LIVED HIS DREAM

Continued from page 7

her past to live nobly, an Ireland steeped in the arts, honest and able in trade, skilled in craftsmanship, accomplished in gentle living. It was an idealist's vision but Davis believed it could come to pass. At first thought one is inclined to feel that here his heart ruled his head and then doubt comes whether he was so wrong after all.

Davis began his work at a time very like the period which followed the Rising. There had been no revolution but the victories of Catholic Emancipation and the Tithe War were fresh in the people's minds. They had begun to sense their strength even against threats of force. The sweep of the Repeal movement with the magic of its orators had carried them upward. Before the fiasco of the Clontarf meeting there was a spirit abroad akin to what has come to be known to our generation as the Volunteer spirit. We see in Davis's private letters that he felt an uprising was coming and that, exultingly, he would be at the heart of it. That exaltation was on hundreds and thousands of others. Men lived unselfishly, nobly, chivalrously; the young men especially. Had O'Connell stood firm at Clontarf—or perhaps it would be fairer to say if O'Connell had not put the Repeal Movement to so

severe a test as Clontarf proved to be—those young men would have lived as the Volunteers lived in the "Four Glorious Years" when justice, tolerance, honesty, courage, clean living were the marks of the youth of Ireland.

Davis, whose public life began in a similar era, was lifted up by the universal goodness of the times to dream great dreams and by expressing them in vivid prose to communicate to others, countless others, the desire to realise them, and the conviction that they could be realised. Young Ireland could have given us a young Ireland with all the generosity of youth and its capacity for idealism and self-sacrifice.

Davis died before it all went to pieces. Yet though had he lived he would have seen them fail, his dreams were handed on by others, his old comrades, his new disciples—Rooney and Griffith the most powerful amongst them—until sixty years afterwards they began to come true again and were in fact lived by the young men and women of the year of the Rising and the years that followed it until the new Clontarf again submerged for a time the glowing Ireland of Davis's deep vision.

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