VARIOUS

DONAHOE'S MAGAZINE, VOLUME 15, NO. 4, APRIL, 1886

Various
Donahoe's Magazine, Volume 15, No. 4, April, 1886

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=25714849
Donahoe's Magazine, Volume 15, No. 4, April, 1886:

Содержание

Various
Donahoe's Magazine, Volume 15, No. 4, April, 1886

The Welcome of the Divine Guest

In a rare old Irish story,
I have read with a tear and smile,
Of a scene in a little chapel
In Erin's far-off isle;

A little rustic chapel
In a wild yet fair retreat,
Where the hardy sons of the mountains
On hallowed mornings meet.

The priest at the lighted altar
Is reading the blessèd Mass;
And the place is thronged from the chancel,
Clear out to the churchyard-grass;

All kneeling, hush'd and expectant,
Biding their chosen time,
'Till the bell of the Consecration

Rings forth its solemn chime;

When lo! as the Host is lifted,
The Chalice raised on high,
Subdued yet clear, the people
Send forth one rapturous cry:

"Welcome! A thousand welcomes!"
(While many a tear-drop starts:)
"Welcome! *Cead mille failthe!*
White Love of all our hearts!"

Oh, the passionate warmth of that whisper!
Oh, the grace of that greeting strong!
On the tide of its glowing fervor,
All hearts are borne along!

And the blaze of the Son of Justice
Lights up that dim old spot,
And kindles in every spirit
A flame that dieth not!

Ah! friends in our stately churches,
When we gaze on the gorgeous shrine
Where the Sacred Host reposes,
Like a great white Pearl divine, —

Let the voice of our faith find utt'rance
In a greeting free from guile;

Let us cry with our Irish brothers
In Erin's far-off isle:

"Welcome! a thousand welcomes!"
(What bliss *that* prayer imparts!)
"Welcome! *Cead mille failthe!*
White Love of all our hearts!"

Eleanor C. Donnelly.

John Scotus Erigena

During the ninth century there lived few more remarkable men in Western Europe than John Scotus Erigena, the celebrated Irish theologian, philosopher and poet. Little beyond mere conjecture is known of his birth and early education. Indeed, the first well-authenticated facts in connection with his life is that in the year 851 he held the offices of rector and professor of dialectics in the famous Royal School of Paris, and that he occupied at the same time apartments in the palace of Charles the Bald, son of Louis le Débonnaire, and grandson of the Emperor Charlemagne. It may, however, be interesting to see what historical critics have to say of his birth and early antecedents.

Almost all writers of weight are agreed that John Scotus Erigena was an Irishman. In fact, there is hardly any room for doubt on the subject. If all other evidences of the fact were absent his very name furnishes proof enough that John was a son of the Emerald Isle. John Scotus Erigena simply means John the Irish Scot – Erigena being a corruption of a Greek word, the translation of which is "of the sacred isle," and every school boy knows that Ireland was known at that time throughout the nations of the earth as the "*insula sanctorum et doctorum*," the "island of saints and sages."

It was in 851 that he published his famous work on

"Predestination." Long before that time, however, his name was well known in France, so that it may be safely assumed that he came to that country about the year 845. At this calculation we may place his birth somewhere about the year 820.

Prudentius, his colleague in the Scolia Palitina, or Royal School of Paris, says that he was the cleverest of all those whom Ireland sent to France. *Te solum omnium acutissimum galliæ transmisit Hibernia.* When we consider that Prudentius was so intimately connected with him as to style himself his "*quasi frater*," any doubts that might remain as to Erigena's nationality should entirely vanish.

But, it may be asked, why did this great man leave Ireland to seek shelter and patronage from a foreign king? Had he not at home a field wide and fertile enough for even his towering intellect in the numerous monasteries and schools which were at this time the pride and glory of Erin? The cause of his departure from his home and friends was probably the inroads of the Danes, who, in the year 843, under their brutal leader Turgesius, "plundered Connaught, Meath and Clonmacnoise with its oratories," and thus rendered a residence in the country anything but desirable for the holy monk and erudite scholar.

We have seen that John published his work "De Prædestinatione" about the year 851. In combating the errors of Gottschalk, he unfortunately broached new errors of his own, and thus incurred the displeasure of the Holy See.

The most precious volume in the Royal Library at Paris was a

Greek copy of the works of "Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite." Many unsuccessful attempts had been made to translate this work, and when Charles the Bald found that the erudite rector of the Royal School could translate Greek, he ordered him to furnish a translation which he did. It was published in 861, and a copy sent to Pope Nicholas I. The Sovereign Pontiff, who was not inclined to look with great favor on the author of "De Prædestinatione," did not approve of the translation, and as a consequence of some farther negotiations between Charles and the Holy See, Scotus was, in 861, dismissed from his position in the Scolia Palitina. He did not, however, just then cease to be connected with the Royal Palace. His principal works are – "De Divisione Naturæ," "Liber de Divine Prædestinatione," Translation of the Ethics of Aristotle and of the writings of "Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite," and a "Commentary on the Gospel of St. John." That John Scotus Erigena erred and erred gravely, no one can for a moment deny; but we should remember with the learned and distinguished Coadjutor Bishop of Clonfert (the Most Rev. Dr. Healy), "That he erred not in the spirit of Luther and Calvin, but of Origen and St. Cyprian."

How long he remained in Paris after his dismissal from the Royal School cannot be determined, nor do we know how he ended his days. Some assert that "he was murdered by a band of infuriated students at Oxford or Malmesbury," but this is by no means certain.

Ollave Fola

Jan. 18th, 1885.

Frau Hütt: A Legend of Tyrol

The Austro-Bavarian Alps are perhaps unsurpassed in number and average height by any group of mountains in the world. There is always more or less snow on their summits, and as they are continually attracting the clouds and causing a changeable, capricious climate in their neighborhood, they may be said, like fashionable ladies, to have a different dress for every day in the week, and to look beautiful in whichever dress they choose to wear. They are beautiful when they stand out clear and sublime in the perfect sunlight of a cloudless day. They are beautiful in the night when the moonlight grows even more silvery from its contact with the snow upon their tops, or when there is no moon and the stars are rivalled by the bonfires which merry climbers have kindled upon their well-wooded sides. They were beautiful in the only thunder-storm I have seen during my residence among them, – their tops hidden by the clouds and the lightning flashing furiously down their sides, as if the thunderer of Olympus himself were hurling his bolts into the valley, while "a million, horrible, bellowing echoes" bounded and rebounded from mountain to mountain. And they were very beautiful on the day when I first heard this little legend which I am about to put into writing. It was raining in the valley, but yet it was possible to see more or less of all the mountains, and the summit of one of them was perfectly visible above the clouds that covered its sides.

This was Frau Hütt, a peak whose shape bears a remarkable resemblance to that of a monstrous woman on horseback; and this is its legend as it was told to me by a very obliging *kellnerin* in the cosey little inn where I was sitting:

"Frau Hütt was a beautiful young maiden who lived in this very valley a great many hundreds of years ago, and one morning she determined to have her favorite palfrey saddled and take a canter up the mountain-side. It was a lovely morning and she was soon glowing with exercise and pleasure. She had passed over the lower part of the mountain, and was enjoying the merry, upward rush through the cool, fresh air, when she suddenly perceived a beggar standing in the road before her, with head uncovered and hands outstretched for alms. Now, Frau Hütt was a selfish, cold-hearted woman, and instead of checking her steed or turning him aside, she rode straight upon the helpless beggar, and in a very few seconds he was being trampled beneath her horse's feet and was spending his dying breath, not in praying for his soul, but in cursing hers.

"His curse took immediate effect. Frau Hütt was at once struck by remorse. The glow of exercise fled from her cheeks, and she began to feel chilly and faint, and to think of returning home; but she shuddered at the thought of repassing the beggar's mangled corpse. And when at last she attempted to check her steed and head him for the valley, she found with horror that the brute had acquired a will of his own and would no longer obey the bit; and when she tried to hurl herself from the saddle,

it was only to discover that she was firmly fastened to her seat and could not move from it. So horse and rider rushed upward higher and higher, upward through the frosty mountain air and over the frozen mountain snow, and all the time Frau Hütt grew colder and colder, and felt the very blood in her veins ceasing to circulate, and her muscles becoming so stiffened that she could not even shiver. And when they had reached the summit of the mountain where people in the valley might best see her and be best warned by her fate, the palfrey rested, and Frau Hütt's whole body became what her heart always was, – stone.

"And even unto this day, once every year at a certain midnight, when the air is silent except for here and there the crowing of a cock, and the continuous gurgle of our rivers rushing to the sea, a mist arises from the muddy waters of the river Inn and thickens into a cloud and floats northward; and when it approaches Frau Hütt, it slowly takes the form of a beggar with head uncovered and hands outstretched as if for alms; and then the upper part of the mountain trembles visibly, just for all the world like a mortal shuddering in the presence of some ghastly horror.

"And have I seen this myself?" repeated our kind informant. "No, indeed; and I suppose if I were to ask the same question of the person who told me the story, he would reply, after the fashion of all ghost-story tellers, that his mother's first husband knew a gentleman whose aunt's next-door neighbor was reported to have seen it often. At any rate, one cannot easily watch for the spectre, because nobody knows the date of its annual appearance.

'And how in the world could a woman and her horse ever become so monstrously large as to form the peak of that great, big mountain?' Oh, that is easily answered. They did not become so. They always were so, for it all happened in the days of the giants."

Caspar Pischl.

Charles O'Conor. – "He went to Ireland and visited the seat of his ancestors at Belanagre, in Connaught, the result of which was that upon his return he changed the orthography of his name. Before that time he and his father had spelled Conor with two n's, but he then dropped one of the n's upon discovering that the family name was anciently spelled in that way. I was once asked if I knew why he had changed the spelling of his name from two n's to one, and I answered that he was descended from the Irish kings, and found, when he visited Ireland, that they spelled the name in that way, which information Mr. Nathaniel Jarvis, the witty Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas, who was present, supplemented with the remark that he supposed that the Irish kings had always been so poor that they had never been able to make both n's meet."

Echoes from the Pines

" – , This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,
Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow,
But God alone, when first His active Hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul."

The palm, the laurel, and all the fountains of Pindus, Helicon and Parnassus, were sacred to the muses. The deep and dark pine woods of Maine, if not sacred to the muse of the author of "Echoes from the Pines," seem at times to have been a source of inspiration to her. We say "at times," and in a relative sense only, for assuredly, Margaret E. Jordan, the gifted author of the beautiful volume of poems, with the above title, sought her sources of inspiration at a higher fount than this, or any named in the pages of ancient mythology. Of her, indeed, it may be truly said, —

"His active hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul."

These poems, about fifty in number, are scattered throughout the work like wild flowers o'er mead and hill, in copse and glen. They are, to some extent, artless in composition, free and flowing in style, garnished with pure and holy thoughts, and most

of them, while stamped with the royal sign of deep religious thought, – truest source of all poetic inspiration, – are free of the namby-pambyism common to what are sometimes called "religious" poems.

Nearly all these poems are written in words of one syllable; that, at least, is a chief characteristic of them. This simple beauty of composition is oftener felt than observed. Thus, in our immortal lyrics, the Irish Melodies, Moore deals largely in this style.

Take a glance at the following: —

> "The harp that once through Tara's hall
> The soul of music shed,
> Now hangs as mute on Tara's wall,
> As if that soul were fled;
> So sleeps the pride of former days,
> So glory's thrill is o'er,
> And hearts that once beat high for praise,
> Now feel that pulse no more."

This beautiful simplicity is too often overlooked by the lovers of the Irish Bard, yet it indicates great strength of mind and a powerful pinion not only in poetry but in prose. (*Vide*, Cardinal Newman's *Apologia*).

The patriotic poems in Miss Jordan's collection are full of fervent pathos and fine feeling.

Take this stanza for example: —

"'Twas no disgrace to be Irish
In the far-famed days of old,
When the tale of our redemption
In Tara's halls was told.
When the holy feet of Saint Patrick
Blessed the land whose soil they trod,
And a pathway traced, yet never effaced,
From Ireland to God.

"'Tis no disgrace to be Irish,
Or to bear the faith to-day
That Ireland's sons have cherished
Thro' many a weary way.
What! a disgrace to be Irish!
A pride and a joy let it be!
More than fortune or fame, prize the faith and the name,
Of the Saint-hallowed isle of the sea."

In the spirited poem, "Leave their Fair Fatherland," in which the cruel process of emigration as a panacea for the sufferings of Ireland is described by the author, the opening stanza gives the tone of the whole poem: —

"Leave the fair land of their fathers,
The graves of their grandsires – for what?
Have ye not hearts in your bosoms,
Or think ye the Irish have not?
When sounded our trumpet of battle,

Were they cravens? Nay, bravest of men!
And they fought till the 'stars' rose in triumph
Never to vanish again!"

Our poet is not above giving "A Bit of Advice," and the way she gives it is this: —

"Whene'er you find a chance to wed
A noble girl, don't slight it;
And if you cannot speak your mind,
Why, just sit down and write it."

But the fellow who couldn't "pop the question" to "a noble girl," would not deserve to get her, and we think the noble girl would say the same.

The above selections are by no means the best we could have given. They are selected at random, and chiefly because they admit of selection without injuring the sense of their meaning. In other instances it would have been necessary to quote the poems entire, and this, of course, was neither desirable nor practicable in the small space at command.

The author of these poems is not unknown in Boston and throughout the New England States. It would be an encouragement to her to find that her efforts were not without promise of reward, and confident we are that those who spend a dollar in purchasing this handsome volume will not regret it. We have all a duty to discharge in the encouragement of Catholic

writers and here is an excellent chance.

The work is beautifully brought out by the spirited publishers, McGowan & Young, of Portland, Me. It is printed on the finest paper, well and handsomely bound, gold lettered and red edges. It has a dedication so brief and beautiful that we give it entire. It is a little poem in itself. Here it is: —

"To My Beloved Father and Mother."

Were it possible to reveal even a little of what this abdication means, and what it conceals, the effort of Margaret E. Jordan would reap a rich return for literary labors performed under trying circumstances. Our beautiful singer could not well refrain from writing about "Gethsemane." Her devotion and her love to our Suffering Lord must needs find its vent among the trees of Mount Olivet!

Procure a copy of "Echoes from the Pines," and the sweet music and balsamic odor will be deliciously refreshing and grateful to every sense.

P. McC.

Musings from Foreign Poets

THE PEARL AND THE SONG

From the German of Ebert

The million-tinted pearl of ocean
Lies shrined within its mortal shell,
And sails the deep in wavy motion,
Responsive to each tidal swell.

These songs of mine that shell resemble
Freighted with tears, in ebb and flow,
Like to the shell they float and tremble
On the wild ocean of my woe.

THE MODERN MUSE

From the Italian of Leopardi

While still a youth and all aflame
With fire poetic, I became
A pupil of the Muses nine;
One took my hand in kindly mood,
And led me to the inner shrine —
The secret workshop, where apart,
In silence and in solitude,
They wrought the marvels of their art.

The Muse then showed me, one by one,
And in minute detail outlined
The various tasks to each assigned;
I listened, marvelling much the while;
"Pray, Muse," I asked, "where is the file?"

She answered lightly as in scorn,
"The file is rusted and outworn,
'Tis used no more in prose or rhyme."
"But why not mend it if 'tis broken?"
Lightly again the words were spoken,
"The fact is, friend, we have no time!"

PRAYER OF THE POOR

From the French of Lamartine

O Thou who dost thine ear incline
Unto the lowly sparrow's nest,
And hear'st the sighs of flowers that pine
For dews upon the mountain's crest!

Divine Consoler of our woes!
Thou dost the hidden hand perceive
That on the poor a coin bestows
To buy the bread by which they live.

Thou givest, as Thou deemest best
To mortals, wealth or poverty,
That, springing from their union blest,
Justice might live and charity.

To know the hearts, be this Thy care,
Who thus their kindly gifts dispense,
That in the treasures they may share
Of Thy all-bounteous providence.

We know not those for whom we pray,
They are beheld of Thee alone;
Their right hand's gifts from day to day,
Are ever to their left unknown.

The plan to unite Paris and London with pneumatic tubes has been reported on favorably by French engineers, and submitted to the Government. It is proposed that two pneumatic tubes be laid, following the line of the Northern Railroad from Paris to Calais, thence across the channel to Dover, and following the line of the South-Eastern Railroad to London. Letters could thus be transmitted between the two capitals in one hour. Wagonets like those now used to transport telegrams from Paris are used, weighing ten kilograms and capable of carrying five kilograms weight of mail matter. Twenty pneumatic trains are to be started every hour.

Erin on Columbia's Shore

BRIGHT INCIDENTS OF CORRELATIVE IRISH HISTORY

That history repeats itself in many and sometimes mysterious ways, is rather interestingly illustrated in a talk with Mr. Denis McGillicuddy, of Medford. This gentleman emigrated from Ireland to America about forty years ago, and in the meantime has been a prominent builder and contractor. His works include the construction of nineteen Catholic Churches, among them in 1870-1, St. Augustine's Church of South Boston, and also the mansion of Archbishop Williams and his priests near the Cathedral in this city. His story links two countries together in its detail, though centuries and three thousand miles of ocean divide them, and the incidents he related yesterday to the writer, as follows:

"When I read the account of the truly Christian celebration of Christmas in St. Augustine's Church, South Boston, it brought to my mind an incident in connection with the building of that beautiful and elaborately finished edifice and its worthy pastor, Rev. Father O'Callaghan, which I should think might very well interest the general reader; but it certainly ought to be interesting

to those who familiarize themselves with comparisons in history. Among the artisans employed on St. Augustine's, when in process of erection, were four men bearing the historic names of O'Keefe, O'Sullivan, O'Falvey and O'Connell. Now, sir, in the Annals of Ireland, by the Four Masters, we find that Ceallachan (Callaghan), a celebrated warrior of the Erigenian race, was King of Cashel in the tenth century, and having defeated the Danes in several battles, Sitric, who was then chief of the Danes, in Dublin, made proposals of peace to the King of Munster. Ceallachan went to Dublin on that mission accompanied only by his body-guard, and one or two friends. On his arrival there, his party was treacherously attacked, and Ceallachan was taken prisoner, – the entire proceedings, on the part of the barbarians being a conspiracy to get Ceallachan, their formidable opponent, into their power. The Munster (South of Ireland) chiefs, in order to release their king from captivity, collected a powerful force, numbering over twelve thousand troops commanded by Denis O'Keefe, Prince of Fermoy, and O'Sullivan, Prince of Beara. They also organized a large naval force, consisting of one hundred and twenty ships commanded by an O'Falvey and an O'Connell.

"The army marched northwest through Connaught, and thence through Ulster to Armagh, which city was then in possession of the Danes, and whither the latter had brought Ceallachan to transport him captive to Denmark. The Irish attacked Armagh, applied scaling ladders to the walls, and the Danes under Sitric

and his brothers, Tor and Magnus, were defeated with great slaughter. The Danes fled in the night to the protection of their ships at Dundalk, and carrying Ceallachan, they embarked on board their vessels in that bay. Warrior O'Keefe followed, and from its shores sent a flag of truce demanding of Sitric that he deliver to him the person of King Ceallachan. But Sitric refused the demand unless an eric, a sum of money, was first paid for every Dane who fell in the fifteen different battles with King Ceallachan and his forces. Sitric then ordered Ceallachan to be tied to one of the masts of his ship, and he was thus exposed in full view of the whole Munster army. The Irish were terribly enraged at this outrage on their chief, but had not then any means of attacking the enemy. Shortly after, however, O'Falvey, the Irish admiral, hove in sight and drew up his ships in line for attack on the Danish fleet. A desperate engagement ensued; the Irish commanders gave orders to grapple with the enemy's vessels. O'Falvey succeeded in releasing Ceallachan, and, giving him a sword, asked him to assume command. The Irish, at seeing their king at liberty, fought with renewed valor; but the valiant O'Falvey fell pierced with many wounds. O'Connell, who was second in command, seized Sitric, the Danish chieftain, in sudden grasp and plunged overboard with him. Both were drowned. It is also related that Fingal, and many other Irish chiefs, grasped other Danish chiefs in similar fashion in their arms, and leaped with them in like manner into the sea. At length, the Danish forces were defeated, and their fleet totally

destroyed. Almost all the Irish chiefs and a great many of the men engaged in that hard contest were slain. The consternation of General O'Keefe and his army, being unable to render any assistance to their countrymen on the water, may be imagined. After the naval combat Ceallachan landed in Dundalk, where he was most joyfully received by the people, and soon after resumed in peaceful sway, the government of the Munster province."

"This great sea fight took place," said the narrator, "in the Bay of Dundalk, in the year 944. The account is given in an ancient Irish MS. with the title of '*Toruigheachd Cheallachain chaisil*,' – signifying the pursuit for the rescue of Ceallachan Cashel."

"Well what are your deductions, Mr. Mc.," queried the writer.

"The coincidence to my mind is this," said Mr. McGillicuddy, as his face brightened; "and it is a singular one I think, that here in this glorious and enlightened Republic, one thousand years later, the kinsman of this Munster prince, Rev. Denis O'Callaghan, when erecting his church, now all paid for, had in his employ the kinsmen of the four chiefs highest in command on that memorable occasion – viz: O'Keefe, O'Sullivan, O'Falvey and O'Connell, all professing the identical Christian creed their forefathers professed and practised. There are no barbarians here now, thank God, to hinder Christians from kneeling at their own shrine, and all as they chose, no matter how else they may differ on material and worldly questions. Here the kinsmen of these brave soldiers of the tenth century build temples to the Lord of Hosts, and are not called upon to defend them with their

life's blood from the fire and sword of barbaric legions. Thus let us pray that with pure Christian foundations, the beloved union of States, – the Republic – may be in the quotation of Henry Grattan, '*esto perpetua*.'

"

The Ursuline Convent of Tenos

Twenty-three years ago there started from France four Ursuline nuns with the intention of founding a convent of their order in the island of Tenos, in the Greek Archipelago. The first idea had been to found this establishment in Syra, the chief commercial town of the Cyclades; but insuperable difficulties turned their hopes to Tenos, known to the ancient Greeks as the island of Serpents. Nothing could be more picturesque and lovely than the island, nothing less civilized. These four ladies, of high courage and energy, left the shores of the most civilized country in the world with the small sum of six hundred francs, upon which they resolved to start a school of Catholic education and charity in an island which had ceased to be universally Catholic from the time of Venetian rule. Having gone over the ground and realized (only dimly) their enormous difficulties, the complete sacrifice they were compelled to make of all bodily comforts, and the unendurable conditions of existence they bravely faced, I can only compare their courage with that which formed the annals of the earliest stages of Christianity. Becalmed upon a whimsical sea, they arrived at Tenos a little before eight in the evening. Tenos was the spot selected, or rather its village, Lutra, because the bishop had consented to the erection of a convent in his diocese. To readers accustomed to the resources of civilized travelling the hour of arrival is an inconsequent detail. Not so

even to-day in Tenos. Judge, then, what it must have been twenty-three years ago! Four delicately nurtured women had to face a dark, rocky road, more of the nature of a sheer precipice than a road, late at night upon mules. I made the same journey at mid-day and felt more dead than alive after it. There is positively not a vestige of roadway up the whole steep mountain pass, nothing but large rocks and broken marbles, though the traveller in search of the picturesque is amply repaid the discomfort of the ride. But compared with the village of Lutra, which was the destination of the nuns, this wild and dangerous-looking path is a kind of preliminary paradise. No word-painting of the most realistic school could do justice to the horror of Lutra to-day – and what must it have been there before the refining influence of those nuns touched it? This dirty stone-built and tumble-down village the four nuns entered at eight o'clock, when darkness covered its ugliness, but greatly increased its dangers. The first entrance winds under an intricate line of narrow stone arches, the pavement uneven, the mingling of odors unimaginable. Through this unearthly awfulness they bravely struggled and reached their destination at last. A Father from the neighboring community had heard of their expected arrival, and was already superintending the rough and hurried details of their reception. I saw the house which stands just as it was when the Ursuline nuns first made it their residence. A mud cabin containing two rooms: kitchen and dining-room, bedroom and chapel. The roof is made of stones thrown loosely over wooden beams placed far apart, the two

rooms separated by a whitewashed arch instead of a door. There are no windows; but spaces are cut in the walls which served to let in the light and air, and at night were covered by shutters. Hail, rain, or snow, it was necessary to keep these spaces open by day in order to see, and it is not surprising that one of the nuns was soon prostrated by a dangerous fever. The beds were mattresses stuffed with something remarkably like potatoes, and laid on the mud floor at night, upon which the nuns slept a short, ascetic sleep.

Here they remained for some time, going among the villagers and soliciting that the poor would send their children to be taught. This the poor did, and gradually the children began to fill the kitchen of the mud cabin. If it rained during class umbrellas had to be put up as a protection under a nominal roof, just as the nuns had to sleep under umbrellas in wet weather. Indeed, sometimes it rained so hard that they were obliged to take up their mattresses at night, and seek a more sheltered spot elsewhere. At last the number of their charity pupils increased; and the bishop, as poor as they were almost, offered them the only asylum in his power, his own paternal home, also a mud cabin; but instead of two miserable rooms it contained four. This was an immense improvement, and the nuns felt like exchanging a cottage for a palace. But here the protection of umbrellas was still necessary, as the roof was also made of loosely set stones and beams. In time other nuns joined them from France, until they formed a community of eleven, with eighty village

school children and one boarder. It grew daily more and more necessary that something should be done to raise money to build a convent. Their couches had been slowly raised from a mud floor to tables, upon which they slept the sleep of Trappists; but a proper establishment was now indispensable to the work they had laid themselves out to do. With this object, two nuns set out on a supplicating mission round the Levant. They were less successful than they had perhaps anticipated, for they returned after their arduous task only enriched by eight thousand francs. With this sum they were enabled to build a small portion of the present establishment; but building in a Greek island is slow and costly work. Each stone has to be carried up the long mountain pass from the quarries; the way is difficult, the men unaccustomed to prompt work.

However, in due time the nuns were enabled to leave the bishop's homely roof, where their chapel was a tiny closet separated from the class and dining-room by a curtain, and the beds the tables used during the day with umbrellas for a roof.

Two nuns later made the tour of France in search of funds, and were rewarded for their unpleasant undertaking by the sum of twenty-five thousand francs, which added something more to the building already commenced, and smaller sums, together with pupils, came afterwards. Now they have between fifty and sixty pupils who are paid for, and almost as large a number of charity children and orphans who are supported at the expense of the convent. These children are all Greeks or Levantines; but as the

language of the Order is French, they speak French fluently.

So much for a general idea of the immense difficulties in the way of foundation, and for an outline of the personal sacrifices and admirable courage which has carried it through. I will now try to give an outline of what has been done. To begin with the island of Tenos, although extremely picturesque, with its marble rocks, its clear, bare hills shadowed lightly by purple thyme and gray olives and torrent beds in dry weather forming zigzag lines of pink-blossomed oleanders, fig-trees, mulberries, tall, feathery-headed reeds and orange and lemon trees, is as devoid of all the necessary adjuncts of modern existence as it is possible to imagine any place. As you approach it, it lies upon the deep, blue Mediterranean, a stretch of dimpled brown hills, curve laid inextricably upon curve, its apparent barrenness softened in the beauty of shape, as the morning sea mist, which has rested upon its base like a fine white veil, gradually lifts itself into the clouds. From an æsthetic point of view, the picture is admirable; but the least fastidious of travellers must at once recognize the almost impossibility of raising upon it anything like a comfortable European home. Yet, nevertheless, this gigantic feat is what the nuns, by a peculiar genius, patient perseverance, and severe economy, have accomplished. The two-roomed mud cabin of twenty-three years ago is now a tradition, and they have made themselves a lovely centre above the dirty village of Lutra. They have cultivated the stony, impoverished soil till their gardens are thickly foliaged by lemons, oranges, figs,

pomegranates, cactuses, oleanders, oaks, olives, apples, pears, and apricots. These fruits are consumed in the convent partly, and the surplus is sold in Syra for a mere song, which, if they could export to England would yield them a profitable interest. Their gardens are arranged with great taste, French and English flowers blooming side by side with the luxuriant growths of the country. Nothing more lovely than the site upon which their mountain home is built can be imagined. The hills roll one above the other in different colors, and the valleys, with their stains of verdure and dusky foliages upon the red soil and marble rocks, are unfolded like a perpetual panorama. If you mount the terrace or the castra higher up – once a Venetian fortress – you will see the dreamy Mediterranean, responsive to the slightest emotions of the Eastern sky, and you will be surrounded by soft, blue touches of land breaking above its waves of intenser color – the Grecian Isles, Syra, with its white town half hidden by the cloud-shadowed hills, Syphona, a misty margin of gray upon the clear horizon, ancient Delos, so dim as to appear neither wholly sky nor land; desert Delos, with darker, fuller curves of land upon a silver edge of water, and nearest Mycono, a blending of the purest blues, with the famous Naxos behind washing which, whatever its mood in general, the Mediterranean is sure to take its own distinctive color – sapphire.

The convent is built in the shape of the letter S, with the new building recently added for the pupils – a long line of class-rooms and music closets below and the dormitories above admirably

arranged so that each girl is enclosed in a kind of cell, or cabin, numbered on the door outside, with a general ceiling. It is original and much better than the old system, by which twenty or thirty girls felt themselves in a general bedroom. This building has proved the most expensive of all, and the undertaking leaves the community considerably in debt and if any of my readers feel sufficiently impressed by the endurance, courage, and self-sacrifice I have indicated in this short sketch to desire to be of any help in a most deserving cause, donations to enable the convent to pay off its debt will be very gratefully received by the superior. Their charities and hospitalities are necessarily great, and their isolated position precludes them from the enjoyment of those resources and assistances which the communities in Catholic countries may justly rely upon.

The features of the island of Tenos gather beauty with familiarity, and the inhabitants are as simple and pure and primitive as the old ideal of Arcadia without, however, the picturesque shepherd costume and crook. They have the greatest respect for the French nuns, teach their little brown-faced babies to salute them by kissing their hand, and with the untutored courtesy of their peasant race are willing and anxious to render the sisters whatever service lies within their power. They wonder greatly at the taste and artistic beauty of the convent grounds; at the perfect neatness and cleanliness of all the domestic details, and those who have come under the personal influence of the nuns are already endeavoring to beautify their own homes. A

servant man who had worked in the convent has gradually turned his pig-sty home into a charming little cottage, with a neat terrace covered with trellised vines, the poles which support it wreathed in fragrant basilica. He is quite proud when you stop in the dirty village to admire the incongruous effect of his pretty house, and tells you frankly that he owes his taste to "*la Mère Assistante*."

The influence of these ladies throughout the primitive island is remarkable, and by the simple-minded peasants who have benefited so greatly by their charity and labors, are gratefully recognized as the one oasis of civilization in their midst. Unfortunately they are not rich enough to give any more practical evidence of gratitude than sincere love and devotion.

Hannah Lynch.

It has been noticed that boiler explosions are especially frequent in the morning. Take, for example, an engine which works during the day with steam at six atmospheres. The workmen leave the factory at seven o'clock P.M., and about six o'clock the fireman reduces his fires and leaves the boiler with the gauge at four atmospheres. On returning the next morning at half-past five, he generally finds the gauge at 1.5 or two atmospheres, with a fine water level. He profits by the reserved heat, which represents a certain expenditure of fuel; as an economist he utilizes it, and drives his fires, to be ready for the return of the workmen, without suspecting the dangers concealed in the water which has been boiling all night. He does not feed his boilers, because they are at a good level. In other words, he

prepares, unconsciously, the conditions which are most favorable to superheating, and a consequent sudden and terrible explosion, which will be attributed to some mysterious and unknown cause.

Southern Sketches

XIX.FROM HAVANA TO MATANZAS – THE VALLEY OF THE YUMURI

There are two railways leading from Havana to Matanzas, one called the via Baya (Bay line) runs along the sea coast through a mountainous and romantic country. This is much shorter than the other route, which passes through the interior, affording the traveller an excellent opportunity of observing the rural tropical scenes of the island.

I decided to go the latter way by the train, which was to start from the depot near the Campo de Marte at 2.40 P.M. The fare from Havana to Matanzas either way, second-class, is $7.10 in Cuban currency. This class is well patronized by respectable travellers. Negroes, Chinese and the poorest Cubans take the third. The carriage in which I rode was built and furnished somewhat like those in the United States, except that the seats had no cushions, and the windows no glass. The train started at the appointed time, and we soon found ourselves rushing through narrow streets, past many colored buildings.

The Yanza, or Chinese quarter, presents an extremely wretched and filthy appearance, thus contrasting wonderfully

with the splendid attractions of other parts of the city. The suburbs were soon reached, and the hot and dusty town gave place to the clear, refreshing country. Hurrying past the gardens of the captain-general, with their avenues of royal and cocoa palms, their fountains, waterfalls and pyramids of flowers, we beheld ahead verdant, green hills, beautiful mansions, and here and there very ancient stone buildings, forts, cottages and gardens. All kinds of vegetables and blossoming plants were seen growing down to the railroad track. There were waving meadows through which streams of a pale blue, transparent tint, wandered gracefully, bending bamboos, slanting palms, and thousands of wild vines full of flowers grew on the banks. As the train rushed by these silent Edens, the splendid paroquets and other gorgeous birds, browsing goats, mules and cattle started at the sound, paused in wonder as we passed, and then relapsed into their previous occupations. Half-naked Chinese farm-hands carried water in buckets suspended from yokes fixed on their shoulders. We saw fields of corn and sugar-cane stretching away for miles. Here and there, out of this bright, green sea arose an odd planter's mansion, painted sky-blue with its pillars, railings, and towers of white and gold. One of these houses stood a few hundred feet from the track. It was two stories high, solid and Corinthian in its architecture, of a cream color, while its lofty colonnades were painted in delicate crimson and blue. Large, costly vases, full of flowers, decorated the entrance, and this was reached through an antique gateway that was covered with roses. Now

we swept by large banana groves whose trees were loaded with fruit. We rushed by rocks, dells and fields adorned with grasses as glossy as satin and of every color. We saw fruit trees of all kinds, stone fences covered with century plants, cacti and other flowers; enchanting vales, fields of shrubbery, and avenues of royal palms over fifty feet high, ever stately and beautiful whether in groups or alone.

The soil of the island is of a deep red color, and contrasts splendidly with the rich green of the trees. The cattle looked fat and large, and numerous queer-looking domestic fowl were seen in the fields. The "Ingenio" or sugar plantation, was readily recognized, whether rising above the cane fields or partly shaded by trees. It consisted of a group of buildings generally painted white, out of which arose a very tall furnace chimney. Negroes and Chinese were seen steering oxen with carts full of cane from the fields to the mill.

The chief agricultural industry of the island consists in the cultivation of this product. Cane fields almost boundless in extent appeared here and there in the luxuriant landscape. The railroad stations at the villages where we stopped were crowded with hogsheads of sugar and molasses, ready to be sent to Havana, and shipped from there to foreign seaports. Black and white coolies were noticed cutting the cane and often greedily devouring it, while the rich juice ran down their naked chests. This could be had for almost nothing at the depots from the dealers who also sold oranges, pineapples, tamarinds, caimetoes, cocoanuts

and other luscious fruit. I stepped out of the cars at Guines, where the train was to stop for a few minutes, and bought for a couple of cents two cocoanuts, each as large as an ordinary sized mushmelon. The rind was perfectly green, soft and easily broken, the juice fresh and delicious, and the pulp was tender and sweet, much richer in flavor than that which one eats in the North. On the journey I often noticed the tall and handsome ceiba tree, with its smooth trunk and gracefully-spreading limbs and branches full of verdant leaves. Now we passed by the house of the *montero*, or sporting peasant. It was a rather rude-looking dwelling thatched with palm leaves, and open at the sides to the mild, pure air. This *montero* usually possesses but a few acres, which yield him fruit, cane and vegetables enough to make his life easy and contented. The streams give him lots of fish, and the sunny blue skies look down with favor upon him, as he languidly reclines on the grass and eats his melting bananas. The sisal hemp fields look very attractive, and as the train rushes on, we catch glimpses of laughing children, who are playing amid a wilderness of roses. We soon reached the town of Catalina. It looked wonderfully charming, with its handsome church and houses, surrounded by groves of bananas and oranges. We saw pine apples growing in the gardens. The colored leaves of these plants were conspicuous for their variety and beauty. The motion of the train developed a steady breeze, and this, laden with the odors of millions of blossoms and fruits, afforded us the greatest delight. The eye could never tire of the beauty of these tropical

scenes. When it withdrew from immediate objects, it wandered away to rest with delight on the softly lit-up mountains, crowned with palms. How splendid those mountains looked, covered to their summits with verdure, and now as the sun was sinking, becoming enveloped in purple and crimson mists. The glory of the rosy sunset on field and wood was brought into deeper relief by the shadows of the trees and hills. On getting on the rear of the train, I was enabled to take in the receding landscape and the views to the right and left. The whole seemed a poetic reality, a region of luxurious delight. The heavens assumed most exquisite hues, forms and colors peculiar to tropical skies. Clouds lately gorgeous, passed into shapes still brighter, and their softness, delicacy and glory seemed to illumine the landscapes. The grand, royal palms which carried one's thoughts to the Holy Land and the time of our Saviour, the mountains tipped with the moving mists, the peaceful valleys where droves of fat cattle feasted, the gaps in the hills, the groves of fruit trees and the flowing streams – all rested tranquilly and brightly under the belts of gold in seas of blue and green, the tongues of fire, rivers of light, silvery hills, purple and crimson isles, castles, vases, columns and thrones that were traced in the clouds. No language can sufficiently describe the beauty of this tropical region; it must be seen to be adequately appreciated.

Night was just falling, when we arrived at Matanzas. The drive to the Hotel de St. Francis, where I determined to stay while in the city, led through a number of narrow and hilly streets,

lined on both sides by low, jail-like stone houses, painted as at Havana, in every imaginable color. In the course of about twenty minutes I arrived at the hotel which stands on the Calzada De Tirry, the principal street near the bay. The host, Signor Juan Gonzalez, with a Scotch interpreter who knew Spanish well, received me very heartily at the door. After passing several refreshment saloons and reaching the office, I requested to be shown to my room. I found that it opened, like all the others, on a courtyard, and being the best that could be had, I agreed to remain a guest at the house for $2.50 per day, in gold. Dinner being the next on the programme, I soon found myself at the head of a large table, on both sides of which a number of swarthy, black-eyed, dark-haired coolies and Spaniards were seated. Recognizing me as a *padre cure*, all bowed and ceased talking as I entered, exchanged courtesies and then resumed an exciting conversation. The meal consisted of a variety of courses. The meats were ingeniously spiced, but rather redolent of garlic. Tropical fruits and vegetables, cooked in all manners of ways, were served up in abundance, and each guest was treated to a bottle of Catalonian wine, which is a very pure and favorite claret in Cuba. This wine is imported from Spain, and a *pipe* containing one hundred and twenty-five gallons costs about fifty dollars in gold. When dinner was over I retired to my room to find it containing two windows without glass, enclosed by heavy green shutters. The plainest kind of furniture was visible in the apartment. The bed, scantily supplied with clothing, was

adorned by a large mosquito net. Anticipating colder evenings in Matanzas than I supposed were peculiar to Havana, owing to the former's situation on so many hills, I requested the waiter to bring me a blanket. This article (being rather unusually used at the Hotel de St. Francis) it took him a long time to find. At last he procured me a peculiar specimen of one, so, resolving to make a virtue of necessity, I placed myself under the protection of heaven and retired to rest. After a sound sleep I was awoke before dawn by the hopping and cooing of numerous doves, whose cots were established not far from my bedroom. The morning soon followed their waking, and eager to gaze on the city and its environs, I made haste to dress and go abroad. The view which greeted my eyes the moment I stood on the balcony outside my door, seemed to me very strange and delightful. The sun was just rising in the east, and in such a soft and lovely sky as the tropics only know. Its calm, golden light fell on the city before me, and on the emerald mountains behind, giving to the villas and gardens that sat on the hills an aspect of unearthly beauty. The doves, finding their society invaded, flocked together and flew over a grassy square, in the midst of which stood immense stores for sugar and molasses. I walked down to the courtyard, admired its fountain, gold-fish, peacock, and tame flamingo. All in the hotel were up before I rose from bed. Cubans take advantage of the early morning, as it is much cooler, and consequently pleasanter to work then than later on in the day. Each guest enjoys a cup of coffee after getting up and takes breakfast about

ten o'clock. The coffee in Cuba is well made, and has a most delicious aroma. After taking a cup I went out and saw the street alive with Chinese laborers, who were employed by the city in making extensive repairs. I sauntered towards the Church de San Carlos to hear Mass. On crossing the bridge that spans the San Juan River, which shone in the sunlight as it flowed into the sea, I observed curious-shaped boats, lighters and other craft moving on it, all occupied by queerly-dressed, bronzed, bustling men. Numerous drays and strings of packed mules, carrying heavily laden panniers, raised clouds of dust, from which I was glad to escape on entering the narrow streets near the church. Over the doors of the stores were the customary fancy signs and names. There seemed to be no end to the picturesque street-venders even at this early hour of the morning. A Chinaman, dressed in loose, blue shirt and yellow trousers, passed with a long, flat box on his head, striking it loudly with a short, thick stick, and crying out, "dulces, dulces," – "sweet meats, sweet meats." A *panadero* (baker) balanced on his cranium a big basket full of rolls, and carried on each arm also a palm-leaved bag full of bread. A tall negress turned a corner, holding a weighty basket, and shouting out at the top of her voice, "Naranges, dulces, naranges, dulces," "sweet oranges, sweet oranges." Soldiers, lottery-ticket venders, and an occasional negro *calasero* dressed in gorgeous blue jacket, fringed with gold, jack boots reaching to the hips, high silk hat and silver-plated spurs, lent variety to the scene. I soon saw the church of San Carlos, a large building of dark stone, with two

lofty towers, one of which had a splendid chime of bells. The edifice within was long and high; its gigantic pillars and great marble altar looked very imposing. When the service was over I returned to my hotel, intending to visit the priests after breakfast. When the meal was despatched, eleven o'clock found me in the presence of Father Francisco de P. Barnada, Cura Vicario Parroco Ecclesiastico, and Phro Jose Saenz, one of his assistants. Being a stranger, the pastor had some slight suspicions about my orthodoxy; but these were soon dispelled when he read my letters of introduction. I could see at once that, though strict, he was a very cheerful, hospitable gentleman. His bright and pleasing features indicated the presence of a brilliant mind and a tender heart. Father Jose Saenz was the life and soul of cheerfulness and kindness. I found myself at home immediately with these excellent priests, and we chatted together very pleasantly for about an hour, on a variety of subjects. Bits of Latin, English and Spanish were our channels of expression. The quarters of the priests were simple, but comfortable, and communicated directly with the church.

On suggesting that I would like to see the famous valley of the Yumuri, Father Barnada had me introduced to an engaging and intelligent young Cuban named Signor Joaquin Mariano, who volunteered at once to accompany me on my ramble.

The most interesting though longest way to the valley is to walk along the banks of the Yumuri River from a point a little above the beautiful bridge near that part of the town called

Versailles. Here the costly and grand church of St. Peter's can be seen rising, with its beautiful spires, above every other building. On our way to the valley we were at first obliged to pass objects not very inviting, such as city rubbish, luxuriant weeds, yelping dogs, grunting pigs, tanneries and dilapidated houses; but these soon yielded to grassy lanes, charmingly picturesque little dwellings perched on rocks in regular staircase position, and gardens full of exquisite fruit trees and flowers. The road is now perfectly clean and level, edged on one side by the bright, placid river, and on the other by steep rocks and quarries, in the cool nooks of which large, lovely ferns, air plants, and numerous wild flowers bloom. Here we noticed a handsome private residence, fronted by a stone wall crowned with cacti, and guarded at the rear by stupendous cliffs. Sago and date palms grew near the narrow road. We saw tremendous openings in the bare-ribbed mountains on the other edge of the stream. Pieces of rock overhead looked down like dead sea-lions and quarters of beef. Blossoms of every hue peeped out through the old black rocks beside us; millions of insects rushed pell-mell out of the crevices of the shining stone, and while we looked, the breeze from the rippling river shook millions of neighboring flowers, scattered their perfumes broadcast, and thus afforded us an exquisite treat away from the heat, dust, and noise of the city. Gazing up, we saw birds' nests in the limbs of trees, naked roots of large bushes and vines clinging like net-work to their rocky bed, and century plants growing in profusion where they could scarcely get an inch

of soil. These cliffs must have been two hundred feet high, and on looking up one would imagine that the almost disjointed masses of hanging rock would fall down at any moment and crush us to pieces. Turkey buzzards, with their black bodies and pink bills, were screaming overhead on the tops of big limbs, and anxiously looking out for prey. The fair blue sky above looked down on the lines of green, wild shrubs that flourished amid beds of solid rock. Sun and candelabra flowers, big as cups and orange in hue, with stalks like the bananas or Indian corn, sprung out of the cliffs to the height of twenty feet. Morning glories, rare lichens, violets, dresinas, and century plants grew by their side, while the silky Spanish moss, suspended from a higher point, threw a veil of beauty over all. A curve in the walk brought us into the valley. On the other side of the river we saw sand-hills crowned with emerald mountains and groves of palm. The plain, as far as it could be seen, was one sheet of verdure, and the stream widening at this point into a lake, was adorned with woody islands. Birds, breezes and the echoes of the hammer's sound in the quarries supplied natural music. As far as the eye could see, the valley was surrounded by mountains. The lofty, rocky wall continued to the left, exposing to our view its beautiful cream-colored layers of granite, fringed with lichens and ferns, and surrounded by weirdly-carved roots and branches of gray stone. All before us looked charming. The narrow foot-path in the long grass, the wild flowers everywhere, the old kiln, embraced by parasites, convolvulus and jasmines, the brushwood rustling with

little reptiles, the flying fish in the stream, an old negro rolling a barrow full of leaves, the Indian mounds having figures of lions and human heads carved out of the rock, the ever-royal palm with its mistletoes and berries, its blood-red tassels on the smooth, hard trunk, its long, feathery leaves, ever falling like ribbons or streamers into various situations by the force of the breeze; all, all looked beautiful. And to add to our delight the sounds of the Angelus from the tower of the church of Monserrat, at the top of the mountain at hand came down on our ears like music from heaven. The mountains around this valley of peace seemed to echo the melodies of God. The cross on the beautiful Corinthian Church, shone between the hills and the sky, reminding us of Him who died for us, and who holds all creation in His hands. All the lovely objects in this tropical vale seemed to murmur His praises. The palms reminded us of His wanderings in the desert, when a child, of His domestic life at Nazareth, and His latter years in and around Jerusalem and Galilee.

Our course now led through winding walks under waving palms, by a house in the rocks, past doves, ducks, chickens, arches, arbors, flowering thickets, wild lime, sour orange and paw-paw trees. We inhaled the most delicious fragrance at every step. On emerging from the glades into an open field, we began to climb the hill to the church of Monserrat. As we ascended, the view of the valley grew wider. Scenes, unobserved from the level, now appeared enriching the picture. We crept rather than walked up the great hill, at one time gazing upon gullies

and wells, at another, admiring big beautiful berries, but ever and anon pausing to take in the view of the vale. When the summit of the Cumbre was gained, I felt well rewarded for my toil, for never before did I see a landscape so brimful of poetry and repose. There it lay extending in every direction for miles, bounded on all sides by mountains with picturesque gaps, spurs, peaks and openings; it seemed to me more like a scene in a dream than a reality, – the character of the prospect was so ethereal, a fit retreat for celestials, – lovelier than the most delightful panorama. Still, it was a reality, and not a painting of indescribably happy combinations of contrasts in color, vegetation, lights, shadows, and forms, like the garden of Eden, and far fairer than the happy valley described in Rasselas. The Yumuri River flowed through it looking like a silver thread. Billowy fields of cane, rich pastures, clumps of feathery palms and shrubs with golden flowers adorned the vale. It is like a glimpse of Paradise to see it at sunset.

I turned with regret from this feast of nature, and walked with my companion along the extensive plateau on which the church and other buildings stood. A venerable, mild-looking old gentleman approached us. He was Migael Darna, the sexton and bell-ringer of Monserrat, living like a hermit on the top of the Cumbre. A handsome little boy with dark eyes and coal-black hair accompanied him. This was his son, of whom he seemed to be very fond. At a sign from Migael we entered the church. Its interior, like the outside, was very pretty. Behind the altar

and around the side walls of the sanctuary stood a miniature mountain of cork, on the top of which rested a statue of the Blessed Virgin resembling the image supposed to be made by St. Luke, which graces the monastery of Monserrat in Spain. Flowers and gifts of various kinds were attached to the cork by faithful doners. On our way to the tower, I could see from the clever manner in which young Darna played the organ, that on the hills his father had not neglected his musical education.

After gaining the top we beheld a prospect, which, for grandeur and extent, could scarcely be surpassed. The valley to the left looked even more mysteriously enchanting than before, owing to its greater distance and depth. On the right the glorious ocean burst upon us, its blue and green waters in some places as smooth as glass, in others worked up into angry billows. We saw the ships in the bay, the coral reefs washed by the waves – the city with its sloping streets, quaint, gaudy buildings and villas resting below us like lords looking down on the scene. In front we observed brown, grassy, shrubby hills, cliffs, precipices and vast fastnesses. Behind us flowed the San Juan River by low, rich meadows, past numerous houses till it rested in the sea. Beyond appeared a chain of mountains, whose dark-blue peaks were almost lost in the clouds. The view of the country and city from the tower of this church is certainly the finest in all Cuba, and it was with the greatest reluctance that I turned from it to follow my companions down stairs. Bidding good-by to Migael, Signor Mariano and myself descended to the city over

a grassy road, full of blue, white and yellow flowers. We noticed on one of the lowest slopes of the Cumbre one of the handsomest villas in Matanzas built in the midst of gardens, and surrounded by a pretty stone wall. Numerous statues and fountains adorned the grounds. Signor Mariano, being acquainted with the family, offered to introduce me. We were received at the door of this fine stone villa by Signora Torres who is regarded by the priests and people of Matanzas as the foremost Catholic lady in the city. The recent death of her husband and brother sorely afflicted her, but she endured this trial with Christian fortitude, and an ever-present desire to please and do good could readily be noticed even in the midst of her sorrow. As we moved through the house, I admired the lofty ceilings, handsome stained-glass windows, black and white marble floors, and splendid furniture that graced the several apartments. Coolness and shade, so desirable in the tropics, reigned here, and were rendered further agreeable by the sight of occasional rosy beams, the odor of flowers and songs of birds. The rich antique vases and fine old paintings on the the wall looked very beautiful. The most precious woods of the island were seen in the wainscoting and furniture. The chapel looked a rich and graceful little temple. All the rarest valuables seemed to be reserved for here. When the chaplain is home (as he generally is) Mass is celebrated in the villa every morning.

After saying a little prayer, we walked out on the front piazza. This had a fine tiled floor and several pretty iron seats and sofas. Its numerous vases were full of flowers. Its balustrades were

of stone, with blue and gold, porcelain finish. Rustic baskets hung around it in appropriate numbers and graceful order. It faced the city and the bay. Down in the garden were all kinds of fruits and flowers. Oranges, bananas, pomegranates, caimetoes, pineapples, oleanders, cacti, allspice trees, enormous fuchsias, canicas, kaladiums, and numerous other varieties, bloomed in abundance, each and all emitting a fragrance quite irresistible. Prince Alexis of Russia, while on his visit to Matanzas, spent a few weeks in this villa and garden. He could not have selected a more charming spot in Cuba. As time was precious, we took our leave, thanking the good Senora for her kindness, and pursued our journey down the hill. On the right and left of us were high walls of calcareous rock, over the tops of which hung thousands of brilliant, sweet-scented flowers. The Casus de Benefecentia, a long, yellow stone building, with great pillars and piers, rested on a hill a short distance away, and on the edge of the street on which we walked, stood the handsome, sky-blue dwelling of a *cure*, who was attached to a charitable institution conducted by the sisters. I visited these buildings on an after occasion, accompanied by two priests, and was greatly edified and delighted with all I saw in them. Before we came to the Church of St. Carlos, we passed through the Plaza de Armas, the most beautiful square in Matanzas. A magnificent fountain ornamented the centre of a circular row of palms. Numerous fragrant shrubs and flowers flourished near at hand, and iron seats were provided for all who wished to rest. Beautiful stores and private dwellings line the

enclosure, which is surrounded by gas lamps, sofas and wide-paved walks. The palace of the *comandant*, or governor, of the department, is situated on the east side. The Licco, or lyceum and club-house, stand on the north. The military band plays in the Plaza on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings. Thither all classes come then to hear the music, observe the fashions, form acquaintances, and chat with friends. On our arrival at the priest's house, Padre Barnada invited me to celebrate Mass, in the church, on the following morning (Ash Wednesday). I cheerfully consented, and then took my leave, intending to see more of the town. The attractions of Matanzas are greatly marred by the clouds of dust that are almost constantly drifting. As rain seldom falls the streets become very dry, and the steady passing and repassing of mules and heavy ox-carts, laden with sugar and molasses, cause the calcareous sand to rise and envelop everything. The Chinaman occupies a conspicuous place in the life scenes of Matanzas. He can be readily recognized whether attired in the long, loose, shabby shirt of the laborer, or the citizen's dress of the storekeeper. His peculiar gait, hair and countenance are very characteristic. He associates familiarly with the negro, is zealous, parsimonious, and so sensitive that he will even kill himself if he becomes incapable of revenging an insult. Most of these people in Cuba remain in a beastly state of degradation, while others of the race rise in the ranks, own elegant stores, and other establishments. A certain Chinaman in Havana owns the finest silk establishment in that city. Another

keeps a hotel in Matanzas, styled the "Flower of America." Their diet chiefly consists of rice, fruit and vegetables. They are generally vaccinated on the tip of the nose. Chinese free railroad hands receive sixty dollars per month, in currency, and street laborers get twelve reals a day.

Rev. M. W. Newman.

The Church and Modern Progress

Vaticination, if we are to believe George Eliot, is only one of the innumerable forms in which ignorance finds expression. In the olden time prophecy for the most part assumed a sombre guise, denunciatory of woe and wrath to come. In these latter days prophecy appears under the form of *taffy*, which, perhaps, is indispensable for a generation whose religious emotions find adequate musical expression in that popular hymn, "The *Sweet* Bye and Bye" – heaven being apparently a sort of candy-shop on a large scale. Artemus Ward's famous advice, "Do not prophesy until *after* the event," is scarcely applicable to modern prophets, inasmuch as the fulfilment of their predictions is not at all necessary to their character and standing, unless, of course, they should chance to be weather prophets.

The modern prophet dearly loves to take up some dominant idea of his time, of such vastness and hazy indistinctness, as will afford ample room and verge enough for his wildest speculations, and allow him to disport at will within its undefined limits. An idea of this kind is that which appertains to the progress of the species of humanity. With this for his theme, the modern prophet, whether in the guise of a popular lecturer, or masquerading as a writer in the current literature of the day, rarely forgets, while weaving his rose-colored visions of the future, to indulge in a fling at the Catholic Church as the

irreconcilable foe of progress in all its forms. Ask him what progress means, in what respect the Catholic Church is opposed to it – the answer will prove to be rather unsatisfactory. The constant cry of old Aristotle – "Define, Define," is to him the voice of one calling in the wilderness. If he ever read Cicero, it must have been in some expurgated edition, "*Pueris Virginibusque*," in which the following passage found no place: "*Omnis quæ ratione suscipitur de aliqua re institutio debet a definitione proficisi, ut intelligatur quid sit id de quo disputetur.*" *De offic.*, 1, 2. The prophet of progress has an instinctive dread of the bull-dog grip of a definition, and will not readily run the risk of being pinned to the ground, and perhaps rolled over in the dust. And yet the chief cause of controversy, of the heat with which it is carried on, and its customary lack of decisive results, lies in the fact that the disputants do not attach a definite meaning to words, and do not understand them in the same sense.

I

Progress means "motion forward." This supposes a starting-point and a definite end or goal. Without these two requisites there may be motion, but no progress. Now there is such a thing as "progress" in the life of individuals and of nations. Indeed, the magic of this word "progress," its power to sway the minds of men, goes to show that the conception rests on some underlying basis of truth. A lie pure and simple has no such power. It must

clothe itself in the garb of truth if it would win converts and adherents.

The very life that throbs within us impels to progress, for all life is but a motion and a striving towards a destined end, and implies the growth and development of all our faculties to the full perfection of their being. Death alone is a resting and a standing still.

This visible nature around us pulsates with the spirit of life and progress. The stars wheel onward in the courses marked out for them by their Creator. The interior of the earth is heaving and palpitating with a hidden life of its own, which is ever manifested in richer fulness and strength, in higher and more perfect forms. Nay, the very stone that seems so motionless, the inert metal in the bowels of the earth, comes under the influence of this universal law of life and progress. And what is this but the creative breath of God streaming through the universe, and ever shaping it into new and diverse forms of life?

But this law of progress under which the physical universe lies, affects man likewise in a manner worthy of him as the crowning masterpiece of creation. So essentially is progress a law of our being that while material things, in the process of their development, cannot overstep the limits marked out for them, man is called upon to progress even beyond the limits of his nature. God Himself, in all His greatness and Holiness, is the exalted ideal towards which all our aspirations should tend. "Be ye perfect as my Heavenly Father is perfect."

Nay, more: not alone is progress a law of man's being; it is a positive duty and command which he is obliged to fulfil. And herein lies another point of difference between the laws of progress, which are stamped into the nature of man, and those we perceive operating in the visible world around us. In nature no backward steps are possible. Every object in the physical universe, in its growth and development, moves within the fixed, unchanging limits of law which God has marked out for it. As a consequence, there is no falling back in the world of nature from a higher to a lower type of existence. The plant ever remains a plant; the mineral ever remains a mineral. But in the case of man, he cannot stand still – he can only retrograde, sink beneath his own level, if he does not continually move forward, in order, by degrees, to reach the supreme end and aim of his existence. Thus does the Catholic Church not alone recognize progress as a great law of our being; she insists upon it, as a divine duty which we are obliged to fulfil.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.