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INDUSTRY AND SELF-CULTURE

LECTURE

BY

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL MORAN

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INDUSTRY AND SELF-CULTURE.

LECTURE

DELIVERED BY

HIS EMINENCE MOST REV. PATRICK F. MORAN,
Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney,

IN THE READING ROOMS OF THE KILKENNY CATHOLIC
YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY.

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INDUSTRY AND SELF-CULTURE.

HIS EMINENCE rising said—My dear young friends of the Catholic Young Men's Society, I do not propose in my Address to you this evening to lead you into a philosophical inquiry, nor is it my intention to sketch the laws and rules which should guide you in the paths of industry and self-culture. I wish rather to pursue my subject by the way of examples, and to set before you a few instances of earnest and devoted men, who, without the advantages which wealth or rank may bring, availed of the opportunities within their reach, cultivated their talents and disciplined their mind, and thus lifting themselves up in the social scale, became ornaments of society and conferred blessings on their fellow-men.

It is unfortunately too true that many young men at the present day prefer a life of indolence to industry, and too many fritter away the years of youth and early manhood in idleness or vain pursuits. A thousand excuses are never wanting to justify them in such a course. Some will say, Oh! it is all the fault of a bad government. But they who thus speak appear to forget that it is not within the domain of government, no matter what its form or its perfection may be, to intrude itself at each one's fireside even under the pretence to cultivate our individual talents or to bring home to us the untold blessings of persevering industry and domestic peace. An old writer has well said that a government should be like the fence which the farmer constructs around his lands. It should afford needful protection, and ward off intruders, and guard from injury; but it is not the fence that can trim the flowers or

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reap the harvest, or ripen the fruit ; and on the owner himself it must depend whether the land which he has enclosed shall be a smiling garden or a desert waste.

There are some also who appear to fancy that if they were blessed with wealth, or if they held some little post of honour and emolument, their happiness would be complete. But wealth or dignity of themselves do not bring contentment and peace. Even more than poverty they stand in need of industry, energy and toil, and without noble sentiments, and self-discipline, and the training of the mind, riches and titles are oftentimes little better than a burden.

“ Can gold calm passion, or make reason shine ?

Can we dig peace or wisdom from the mine ?

Nothing is meaner than a wretch of state ;

The happy only are the truly great.”

You have probably heard of the wealthy Englishman who, in the last century, whilst enjoying a yachting tour, fell into the hands of Turkish corsairs and was led off to slavery in Algiers. He had been for a long time a martyr to gout ; but during the two years that he was kept in slavery, he was fed on bread and water, and forced to work every day making bricks under the broiling sun of Africa. When he was at length ransomed he was found to be perfectly freed from the gout, and till the day of his death he never again suffered from its attacks. Lord Bacon calls riches “ the baggage of virtue.” If an army in battle-array be intent solely on its baggage, the victory will soon be lost. So, too, unless we have industry and make good use of riches they can be but of little avail to us. There are not wanting those who make the proper use of wealth, great souls, who

“ Touch’d with warmth divine

Give gold a price, and teach its beams to shine :

All hoarded treasures they repute a load,

Nor think their wealth their own, till well bestowed.”

But others with no end of riches never enjoy a day's happiness. Take for instance the nobleman with £50,000 per year, whose death-bed scene is described by Pope :

“ In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half hung,
 The floors of plaster and the walls of dung ;
 On once a flock-bed, but repaired with straw,
 With tape-tied curtains never meant to draw ;
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red—
 Great Villiers lies.
 No wit to flatter left of all his store,
 No fool to laugh at, which he valued more,
 There victor of his health, of fortune, friends
 And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.”

But to proceed to the more immediate subject of my lecture, the first example that I will set before you is that of the illustrious Sovereign Pontiff Sixtus V.

About one hundred miles below Ancona, on a crest of the Apennines, in one of the least frequented parts of that classic land, with the blue waters of the Adriatic spread out before it, and the highest mountains of Umbria towering in the distance, stands the castellated hamlet of Grottamare. There, Felice Peretti, the future Pope, was born in 1521. His father was an humble gardener, who had to struggle all his life against the direst poverty, and his mother, in order to find bread for the children, was obliged to take service with a wealthy neighbour. The young Felice was himself for a time a swineherd on the neighbouring hills. It was only after a long and earnest appeal that the father permitted his child to go to school ; for the family, he said, stood in need of his help. Very soon, by his attention to his lessons, the youth attracted the notice of a Franciscan Friar who used often to visit the school, and who was particularly struck by his earnestness, as well as by his talents and piety. At twelve years, through the influence of this good friend, he became an inmate of the neighbouring Franciscan

monastery, at Montalto, and he brought with him to the cloister the love of discipline and the devotedness to study which had characterized his earlier years. Promoted to the priesthood, he soon ranked among the most fervent preachers of the age. It was no small tribute to his eloquence and piety that, when he preached in Rome, all that were most distinguished in its schools and religious houses gathered around his pulpit, foremost among them being St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Philip Neri, and Cardinal Chislieri, afterwards Pope, and honoured on our altars as St. Pius V. At every stage of his eventful career he was remarkable for three things ; that is for his love of books, and of the fine arts, and of building. On the 3rd day of the Conclave, after the death of Gregory XIII. Cardinal Peretti was proclaimed Pope, and took the name of Sixtus V. His Pontificate, though short, for it lasted only five years, was nevertheless one of the most brilliant that adorn the Annals of the Church. It has been truly said of him that he held in his firm hand the balance of European power. He saved religion in France, and with it saved the French monarchy. He dealt a death-blow to Lutheranism in Germany. He strove to consolidate the Kingdom of Poland as a bulwark of civilization and of Europe against the Ottoman incursions, and against the Russian power. He banished public crime from the Papal States, rooted out the lawless bands of banditti that made life and industry insecure, and reformed the whole administration of justice. The material aspect of the city of Rome was renewed with an unrivalled magnificence. The genius of Michael Angelo had devised the wondrous dome to crown the noblest church in Christendom. Twenty years had now elapsed since his death, and no one had dared to take in hand the task of erecting it. Public opinion was beginning to entertain a fixed idea that nothing short of a miracle could achieve this work. It was achieved, however, by the indomitable will of Sixtus V. He built the Vatican Library ; and one of the most distinguished Italians of the present day has not hesitated to write of this great work

that, "to it Italy owes the most splendid of her glories, and the preservation and recovery of the classic arts and culture, and not unfrequently her priority in all kinds of literature and science." Several quarters of the city were badly provided with water. He spanned the Campagna with an aqueduct, resting on tiers of arches, and extending over more than twenty miles, and brought an inexhaustible supply, which has ever since proved a blessing, especially to the poorer citizens. He erected the magnificent obelisk which adorns the piazza of St. Peter's. It had once stood in Nero's circus, but was cast down during the incursions of the Barbarians. Many times men had devised schemes for re-erecting it, but had given up their projects in despair. Even Michael Angelo declared such an undertaking to be impracticable. That was not the age of electricity and steam, yet Sixtus V. decreed that the work should be commenced. Very soon the salvos of cannon from St. Angelo's and the enthusiastic cheers of an immense concourse of people announced that the enterprise was happily accomplished. Thus every day new works were planned, streets were marked out, churches built, monuments erected. Of the Emperor Augustus it was said that he found Rome a city of brick, and that he left it a city of marble. Something similar might be repeated of this great Pope. Shortly after the death of Sixtus V., a Benedictine Abbot thus wrote from the Eternal City: "I am here after an absence of ten years, and do not recognise the city, so new does all appear to me to be: monuments, streets, piazzas, fountains, aqueducts, obelisks, and other wonders, all the work of Sixtus V. If I were a poet I would say that at the imperious sound of the trumpet of that magnanimous Pope, the wakened limbs of that half-buried and gigantic body which spreads over the Latin Campagna had been summoned to life, and that, thanks to the power of his fervent and exuberant spirit, a new Rome had arisen from the ashes of the old."

Such were the great deeds of the Sovereign Pontiff,

whose early days were spent tending swine on the coast of the Adriatic.

I will now cite the example of one whose world-wide fame has added lustre to the Cardinalitial dignity in our own days, I mean Cardinal Mezzofanti, the greatest linguist that the world has ever known. He was born in Bologna on the 17th of September, 1774. His father was a carpenter by trade. The young Mezzofanti having learned the mere rudiments, began to work in his father's shop. It is said that close by the shop there was a classical school, and the youth overhearing the lessons in Latin and Greek, and applying himself privately to study, soon began to acquire a thorough knowledge of these languages. A Priest of the Oratory in Bologna seeing his talent directed him in his studies. One day this good Priest was called away whilst giving him some lesson, and on his return looked in vain for his little pupil. There was a chest of drawers in a corner of the room, and the young Mezzofanti getting into one of the drawers and partially closing it had fallen fast asleep. In due course Mezzofanti was promoted to Holy Orders, and during the invasion of North Italy by the allied army under the Russian General Suwarrow, he gave singular proof of his linguistic powers. Among the wounded soldiers in the hospitals of Bologna there were some from Poland, and Roumania, and Finland, and almost every other province of Russia or Austria. When summoned to the bedside of these sufferers, a few days sufficed for him to acquire a knowledge of each one's language and even of the particular dialect which he spoke, so that he was able to impart to them all the consolations of religion. Lord Byron visited him in Bologna in 1820, and pronounced him to be "a walking polyglot and a monster of languages." A distinguished Hungarian astronomer, writing from Bologna in the same year, says: "The annular eclipse of the sun was one curiosity, and Mezzofanti was another." Pope Gregory XVI. invited him to Rome. His answer was characteristic: "Holy

Father, people say that I can speak a great many languages. In no one of them, nor in them all, can I find words to express how deeply I feel this mark of your Holiness's regard." The highest honours were heaped upon him at the Roman Court, and in a few years he was promoted to the Cardinalate. When I was a young student in the Irish College, Rome, he used to come to the College in Cardinalitial state on St. Patrick's Day, to say Mass in honour of our national Apostle. More than once it was my privilege, with another student, to serve his Mass on these occasions; and when, as usual, after Mass, we accompanied him from the church to the breakfast hall, he would chat with us on the way about our national literature, and cite long passages from Moore and Milton and other classical English writers. On another occasion, in 1847, I accompanied the late Archbishop of Tuam to some solemn ceremony at the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. Whilst waiting in the vestibule, Cardinal Mezzofanti happened to be passing, and stopped to speak with the Archbishop. After a few sentences in Irish, the Cardinal continued the conversation in English, expressing his regret that he had not had leisure to devote more attention to the Celtic, a language that he prized so much. When the Archbishop addressed some complementary words to him on his wonderful knowledge of so many languages, the Cardinal exclaimed: "*Vox et praeterea nihil;*" "I am a voice, and nothing more." He was then old, and the words seemed most appropriate, for he was so remarkably thin, and slight, and weak, that one would fancy the first breeze would carry him away. Two years later he died, and his remains were deposited in San Onofrio, where Tasso rests in peace.

But I must choose some instances from other walks of life. The celebrated Giotto holds a foremost place among the great restorers of painting in the 14th century. He was the son of a poor shepherd, and passed his early years tending the flocks in his native Tuscan valley of Vespignano.

Even whilst thus engaged, he endeavoured to cultivate his talent for drawing, and essayed to reproduce on some fragment of rock or slate the sheep and the trees and other forms of nature that were around him. One of his simple designs being brought under the notice of Cimabue, that great master invited him to his studio, and gave him lessons in the art of painting. Giotto soon outstripped all his compeers. There was this particular that gave perfection to his style of art, that he introduced into his paintings all that was beautiful in nature, whilst he exhibited, at the same time, an unrivalled ideal elevation, and grandeur of character. Florence, Padua, Verona, Pisa, Naples, and Rome vied with each other in their efforts to be enriched with his works. We are told that Pope Boniface VIII. sent a messenger to visit the different studios throughout Italy to procure specimens of the artists' skill, and when he came to Giotto, the famous painter, in reply to his queries, took a paper and pencil, and, resting his elbow on his side to form a sort of compass, with one turn of his hand drew a circle so perfect and exact that it was a marvel to behold. "Is this all that I am to get?" asked the courtier. "That is enough and to spare," replied Giotto, "put it with the rest and see will it be recognised." It is needless to add that it was recognised, and that some of the most remarkable of Giotto's masterpieces are those that, thanks to the Pontiff's patronage, adorn the halls of the Vatican. He was no less famed as an architect than as a painter. The matchless Campanile or Bell-tower of Florence is perhaps the greatest monument of his architectural skill. It is encrusted with many coloured marbles from the base to the summit, and no engraving or photograph can give an idea of the chaste elegance of the columns, and the tracery of the windows which give lightness to this structure, nor of the finish and soft harmony of the whole building. Ruskin avows himself enchanted with this great monument of the 14th century, and treating of the "Seven Lamps of Architecture," declares that they are all combined, "and that in their

highest possible relative degrees, only in one building of the world, the Campanile of Giotto at Florence." Such were the works of the Tuscan shepherd-boy. He was the cherished friend of all the literary men of the day, and his fame is enshrined in the writings of Dante and Petrarch. He died in the year 1336, at the age of sixty, and was interred in the Cathedral of Florence, with all the pomp and ceremony befitting the obsequies of one whom all Italy honoured and revered.

Claude of Lorraine attained pre-eminence in landscape painting. He was a native of Lorraine, and served his time as a pastry-cook. His parents dying, a relative who travelled as a lace-dealer took the young Claude to Italy, but deserted him quite penniless in Rome. He was there employed as servant by a painter, for whom he cooked and cleansed the brushes and mixed the paints. He accompanied his master when sketching the scenery of the Sabine hills, and, humble though his duties were, his observant mind neglected not a single one of the varied beauties of nature that are scattered there. The waterfall at Tivoli, with the surrounding scenery, and the Autumn sunset, seen from the slopes of Monte Catullo, left an indelible impression on his mind, and in after years he would seem to have taken them as his ideal in his greatest works. Robertson does not hesitate to say that "for purity of atmosphere, sunny serenity of sky, and all-pervading sweetness, the landscapes of Claude are still without a rival;" and Charles Blanc writes: "he is the only painter who could look in the face of the sun, who could paint atmosphere as necessary to the life of the landscape as to the respiration of man. Nicholas Poussin exaggerated nature as if she were insufficient of herself to fill his heart with grandeur; and Gaspar Poussin dramatized his landscapes by the introduction of storm and tempest; but the beautifully emotional nature of Claude lifts us into a land which is a paradise in its peace and brightness, and dream-like in its light and splendour."

He was never ashamed of his humble origin, and a little before his death one of his friends, giving a sketch of his career, added : " If ever anyone from poor beginnings or scanty learning became so skilled in painting as to fill the world with his fame this was surely our Claude, universally known by the name of his native place — Lorraine."

Canova, the founder of the modern school of sculpture in Italy, was the child of humble parents, living in a village of the Venetian territory. In childhood he displayed a taste for modelling, and was thus introduced to the patronage of a Senator of Venice, who provided for his artistic training in a sculptor's studio. In his forty-fifth year, Canova was appointed chief curator of all works of art in the Papal States. Napoleon was then at the zenith of his popularity, and Canova was called away to Paris to furnish a model for a colossal statue of the idol of the French people. Napoleon, full of admiration for the artist's genius, pressed him to remain in Paris. " I could not live away from the treasures of Rome," Canova answered. " But," said Napoleon, " I will bring to Paris everything that is worth having at Rome." " You should bring Rome itself," was Canova's reply. Napoleon, too literally, endeavoured to carry out his threat. But when the idol of French popularity was cast down, and peace restored in 1815, Canova was the person deputed by the Papal Government to proceed to Paris to recover the works of art of which Rome had been despoiled.

Our Cathedral is enriched with a beautiful statue of the Blessed Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, one of the first religious subjects that won for the artist Benzoni a distinguished place among the sculptors of the present day. In my younger years I often visited his studio, and prominent there was the cast of a noble monument which he had presented as a gift to his native town in North Italy. It represented a venerable old man who grasped with one hand a young lad in tattered garments, and lifting him up from his poor condition, pointed with the other to the

artist's chisel and various implements of art placed within his reach. And Benzoni took care to explain to the visitor that he himself was the poor lad thus rescued from poverty, and that he had executed this monument as a lasting memorial of his gratitude to his generous benefactor.

The great musical composer Haydn, was the son of a struggling wheelwright. Almost from his childhood he sang in the cathedral choir of St. Stephen's, at Vienna. In his sixteenth year, however, his voice broke, and unable to sing any longer in the choir, he began to give lessons in instrumental music, and in this manner earned a maintenance. In his twenty-eighth year, Prince Esterhazy placed him at the head of his private chapel. Whilst he held this post, the Prince formed the design of dismissing his band. Haydn, hearing of it, composed the famous symphony, which is known as "Haydn's Farewell," in which one instrument after another becomes mute, and each musician, as soon as he has ceased to play, puts out his light, rolls up his music, and departs with his instrument. Esterhazy was so struck by this admirable composition that he changed his mind and retained the band. Haydn spent the closing years of his life in the Imperial Palace at Schonbrunn, situated in the most fashionable suburbs of Vienna. Full of gratitude to his imperial benefactor, he not only every day, but many times each day, would perform on the piano, and sing, in his feeble voice, "God save the Emperor." He was in his last illness when the French armies approached Vienna in 1809. A battery was erected close to the palace where he lodged. A few days later, as life was ebbing away, he had his piano moved to his bedside, and three times he sang, as loudly as he could, "God save the Emperor,;" this was his last effort, and the great musician, a few hours later, fell into his long sleep.

The life of George Kemp, architect of the beautiful Scott monument at Edinburgh, affords another instance of the success which is sure to attend industry and ability. He

was the son of a herd, who pursued his calling on the southern slope of the Pentland hills. In his tenth year, he was sent on a message to Roslyn, and the sight of its beautiful castle and chapel, made a vivid impression on his mind. He served his time as a carpenter at Galashiels, and when travelling from place to place with his tools on his back, took occasion to visit the noble ruins of Melrose, or Dryburgh, or Jedburgh, or some of the other monuments that abound in that neighbourhood. In order to cultivate his taste for architecture, he worked his way as a carpenter over the greater part of the north of England, availing himself of every opportunity to study and make sketches of its Gothic structures. On one occasion he travelled fifty miles on foot that he might visit the magnificent cathedral of York. Anxious to study the grand mediæval monuments of France, he proceeded to the Continent. His skill as a mechanic, and especially his knowledge of mill-work, readily secured him employment wherever he went, and he usually chose for his work the neighbourhood of some fine old Gothic structure, and beneath its shadow he occupied his leisure hours. When the Committee of the National monument to be erected to Sir Walter Scott, offered a prize for the best design, some of the greatest names in classical architecture entered the lists of competition ; but the design presented by George Kemp won the prize, and was unanimously selected.

None better understood the advantages that accrue from this discipline of labour than Pugin, whose name shall ever remain identified with the revival of ecclesiastical architecture in England. Having learned in his father's office all that could be taught him there, he hired himself as a common carpenter at one of the London theatres, that he might acquire a familiarity with work, whilst at the same time he continued to cultivate his architectural taste. At times he worked a sailing ship between London and the Continental ports, making drawings of the great ecclesiastical buildings wherever he went. He also made repeated

journeys to study the mediæval cathedrals of France and Germany. Thus he indefatigably laboured, till he attained that pre-eminence which has been most justly accorded him.

I might take very many examples to illustrate my subject from the lives of our English poets. Such, for instance, was Robert Burns, the great lyric poet of Scotland. His father was a nursery gardener, who had to struggle all his life with poverty and misfortune, but who nevertheless made every exertion to keep his children at school. As a boy, Robert was dull, and was only remarkable for being very much given to athletic sports. He studied hard, however, and in his 16th year began to write some poems in the Scottish dialect. Till his 25th year he cultivated a small farm, but his labour not proving successful he resolved to quit his native land and to emigrate to Jamaica. In order to procure sufficient money to pay his passage, he published a small volume of poems. His genius was at once recognised. He very soon gave up all thoughts of Jamaica, and found himself in Edinburgh associated with all that was eminent in letters, rank, and fashion. He experienced, however, the fickleness of patronage and applause, and was only in his 37th year when, towards the close of the last century, he died in the greatest wretchedness. His poems were a precious inheritance to his country; they were the first awakening of the spirit of true poetry in Great Britain after a long slumber, and the popularity which they at once acquired has continued unabated wherever the English language is spoken.

What shall I say of Shakespeare, the chief literary glory of England? His father was a glover in the town of Stratford-on-Avon, in Warwickshire, and appears also to have held a small farm. Several losses, however, brought the family to ruin, and our poet at the early age of fourteen years was withdrawn from school, and forced to seek a livelihood as best he could. We meet with him at one time as a butcher's assistant, at another as a schoolmaster,

and again as a prompter's attendant in a London theatre. But all this time he silently cultivated his powers as a dramatist, and step by step he won his way to the very foremost rank among the writers for the stage. England is still proud of his genius, and reckons him among her greatest sons, fully endorsing the lofty eulogy pronounced by Dryden : "He was the man, who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul."

Some of these men may not have been everything that we would wish them to have been. They may have strayed away at times into the devious ways of extravagance and folly, or perhaps of vice. But it is not in their faults that we are to follow them. We must only the more particularly admire and emulate their energy in overcoming the difficulties that strewed their path, and their care and industry in cultivating the talents which nature gave them. And here I may be permitted to use the illustration of Lacordaire. We do not judge of the sea by the scum which it casts upon the strand, nor do we admire its seething foam when it is lashed to fury by the tempest. But all this does not lessen the pleasure with which we listen to the harmony of its waves, or the delight with which we look out upon its boundless expanse when its tranquil waters reflect the beauty of the firmament and mirror to the thoughtful mind the glory of the Creator.

But to return to our subject, it may interest you to have an example from one who, for a quarter of a century, was justly ranked among the leaders of the Catholic Press of France. Louis Veuillot died in Paris in the month of April of the present year. His family were humble peasants in the department of Loiret. His father, a journeyman cooper, came to Paris in search of employment when Louis was only five years old, and after a time opened a small shop. Louis, in one of his works, relates that whilst he was a child he felt indignant at the tone of insolence and superiority with which rich infidel customers used to give their orders in the poor shop of his father. "Why should

this be (he used to ask) for my father is good and brave and strong, and has never wronged anyone; whilst these insolent men are mean and dishonest and immoral? My heart," he adds, "used to leap with indignation at this sight and with longing to put down, humiliate, and crush their insolence." And, in after-life he did crush it with a vengeance. Louis was at this time ignorant of religion, and, as he grew up, ranged himself among the Socialists and infidels. In 1838, however, whilst visiting Rome, the light of truth shone upon him, and he was led to the bosom of the Catholic Church. Thenceforward, he waged an unceasing war against the infidelity and Socialism and Liberalism of his native land with a vigour and brilliancy without a parallel in the annals of journalism. Montalambert and his school would fight the adversaries of truth only with gilt rapier, or crusader's lance; but Louis Veuillot would wield the battle axe with giant force, and fell his opponent with the first weapon at hand, whatever it might be. To him and the gallant host of whom he was the leader, in defence of the Catholic truth, may be applied the words :

"Forth from its scabbard never hand
 Waved sword from stain as free;
 Nor purer soul led a braver band,
 Nor braver toiled for a brighter land,
 Nor brighter land had a cause more grand,
 Nor cause a chief like thee."

The secret of his success lay in this, that he never parleyed with error, and never compromised the principles of truth. He never bowed to injustice, never flattered the passions of the great, never flinched before tyranny; and so far as within him lay, never failed to tear the mask from hypocrisy. With all this in private life, he was affectionate and affable and genial, and he was untiring in works of piety and charity. The "Imitation of Christ" was his favourite book, and to it he refers in the opening verse of the sweet little poem which he composed :

"Let my pen be at my side,
 At my feet this book be hid;
 And the Crucifix, my pride,
 On my heart; then close the lid."

The astronomer, Copernicus, who has given his name to the scientific solar system, now accepted by the learned world, was the son of a Polish baker. He had a natural bent towards mathematics, and he cultivated this study with passion through all its branches. That he might improve his knowledge of astronomy he proceeded to Rome and taught mathematics there for several years. In recognition of his singular merit he was promoted to a rich benefice in Germany, the revenue of which supplied him with abundant means for his life-long astronomical researches. His working day he divided into three parts—one devoted to the duties of his benefice, another to giving medical advice gratuitously to the poor, and the third to study. His great work, *De revolutionibus orbium*, which has immortalized his name, was published in 1543, in his 70th year. It was only a few hours before his death that the first complete copy of this work was presented to him.

The career of Herschel, one of the most famous astronomers of the present century, was still more remarkable. He was a native of Saxony, and associating himself with a strolling German band went about from town to town in England to earn his bread. Being enrolled in the band of the Durham militia, whilst the regiment was stationed at Doncaster, he got access to some scientific works which he perused with avidity. He was subsequently organist in Bath, and applied himself during his leisure hours to the construction of telescopes. Step by step he perfected himself in the study of astronomy. After long and painful labour he completed a five-foot reflector by which he was able to observe the ring and satellites of Saturn. Not satisfied with this triumph he proceeded to make other instruments in succession, of seven, ten, and even twenty feet. As an instance of his untiring perseverance, we are told that when constructing the seven-foot reflector, he made no fewer than 200 specula before he could give to his work that perfection which he sought. Whilst gauging the heavens with his telescopes he patiently earned his

bread by performing on the violin and other instruments at the public concerts. So eager was he in his astronomical studies that he would steal away from the concert-room during an interval of the performance, give a little turn at his telescope and then contentedly return to his place in the band. At length he discovered a new planet to which he gave the name of *Georgium Sidus*, and was at once lifted up from obscurity to fame. He was appointed astronomer Royal with a salary of £400 a year ; other honours followed in quick succession, but in prosperity as in adversity he was indefatigable in his labours, till his death in 1822, at the age of 84 years.

Cuvier was a native of Wurtemberg. When a boy he was attracted to the study of natural history by the sight of a volume of Buffon which accidentally fell in his way. He read with delight the "System of Nature" of Linnæus, which he got as a prize at school. Owing to the straitened circumstances of his parents he, in his 18th year, took the situation of tutor in a family residing on the coast near Fécamp, in Normandy. Here he was brought face to face with the wonders of the sea. Strolling along the shore one day he observed a stranded cuttle-fish. This he brought home and carefully dissected, and thus began the study of the mollusks, which he pursued for several years, till it won for him an eminent place in the scientific world. He never relaxed his industry, and though a foreigner by birth he attained the honourable post of Chancellor of the University of Paris, and became a Peer of France.

No less remarkable in the pursuits of science was Faraday, whom Chambers justly styles "one of the most distinguished chemists and natural philosophers of the present century." He was particularly successful in his researches regarding electricity and magnetism, and opened the way to those practical wonderful discoveries which have marked the progress of science in our own days. And yet he was the son of a journeyman blacksmith, who lived in rooms over a coach-house near Manchester-square

in London. His education was limited to the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic, at an ordinary poor-school. At the age of thirteen he was employed as an errand boy by a fourth-rate London bookseller. In after life he used to display a special kindness for the newspaper boys, and he would say: "I once carried newspapers myself." In 1805, being fourteen years of age, he served as an apprentice to the book-binding trade, and here it would seem that there could be no escape from the poet's words being verified in his career :

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

But the youthful Faraday utilized his time, and when he had done the work allotted him, applied himself to derive information from the books which were passing through his hands. Works treating of chemistry and electricity were his delight. Whenever he could, he attended the evening lectures given by Mr. Tatum on natural philosophy, the fee of one shilling for entrance being paid by his brother who was a blacksmith. From the knowledge which he thus acquired he was enabled on the termination of his apprenticeship to secure the post of assistant in the chemical laboratory of the Royal Institution with a salary of twenty-five shillings a week, and with two rooms at the top of the house. Here, humble as his employment was, he was in constant intercourse with Sir Humphrey Davy, the greatest chemist of the day, and, to use his own words, his daily manual work was "an inexhaustible mine of knowledge and improvement." Step by step by his industry and untiring spirit of observation he advanced in the paths of science till we find him Lecturer at the Royal Academy of Woolwich, the correspondent of Humboldt and Arago, honoured by the universities and scientific academies, and with a house in Hampton Court allotted him by the Queen, receiving a pension from the State in recognition of his public services. With all that he was most disinterested and ever ready to give a helping hand

to those who were in need. The words which he made use of in one of his early lectures mark out his own course through life: "It is not he who has soared above his fellow-creatures in power, it is not he who can command most readily the pampering couch or the costly luxury; but it is he who has done most good to his fellows, he who has directed them in the weak moment, aided them in the moment of necessity, and enlightened them in their ignorance, that leads the ranks of mankind."

Here, I may remark that efforts have been made at times in England to stir up prejudice against the study of natural philosophy, on the plea that it leads to the shipwreck of Divine Faith. But, I may assure you, my young friends, that such a statement is a mere fallacy, and proceeds solely from the ignorance or the sophistry of weak and half-instructed minds. True science cannot lead away from God, for all truth must be at one. Divine Revelation has come to us from God, and it is the same Creator who has spread out the book of nature before us, to be studied by the rational soul. Like the clouds that obscure the sun, a little learning and imperfect science may for a time hide divine knowledge from us; but mature study and perfect science will be sure to lead back to God. To the irreligious soul already defiant of the Creator's wisdom, science may be a peril: but to the child of Faith, the study of nature and the pursuits of science serve only to reveal more and more the wondrous perfections of God, and full of gratitude and joy, he will repeat:

"Teach me so Thy works to read,
That my Faith, new strength accruing,
May, from world to world, proceed
Wisdom's faithful search pursuing.
Through the creatures Thou hast made
Show the brightness of Thy glory;
Be eternal truth displayed
In their substance transitory,
Till green earth, and ocean hoary,
Massy rock, and tender blade,
Tell the same unending story;
We are truth in form arrayed."

But whilst we range from country to country in search of examples to illustrate our subject, shall we cull no flowers from our native land? It would be passing strange indeed if none such were to be found among our people, so richly endowed with talents and so devoted to the paths of industry. But here the difficulty arises, not so much from the want of brilliant examples as from their variety and multitude, for it is no easy task to know which to select from the many that present themselves. I shall take only three or four, and the instances which I shall choose will have this advantage at least that they are already familiar to you all.

Eugene O'Curry was one of those earnest men who in our own time have spent their lives in laying deep and broad the foundations on which the solid structure of genuine history of Ireland may one day be raised. He was the son of Owen Mor O'Curry, a struggling farmer of Carrigaholt, in the south-west of the County Clare. Owen Mor had a thorough knowledge of the traditions of the country, and possessed several Irish MSS. which as precious heirlooms were handed down for generations in the family, and he dearly loved his native tongue. He was much respected by all his neighbours, nor was it forgotten that his father during the terrible famine of 1742, proved himself a devoted friend to the sufferers, feeding the starving poor, visiting the fever-stricken families, and when the churchyards could not contain the dead, giving up a part of his own farm that it might be consecrated as a cemetery. In better times it was his delight to gather his neighbours around the fireside on winter nights and there entertain them by readings in Irish, and by songs, and before the party broke up he always made sure to sing for them a venerable old Irish hymn to the Blessed Virgin. There was but little of the schoolmaster at Carrigaholt in the early days of our Eugene, and he appears to have learned little more than to read and to write the Irish well. The farmers' sons of the district, however, in the winter's nights, formed

among themselves a class of mutual improvement, teaching one another arithmetic, geography, and other branches useful for them. The country abounded in holy ruins, and many was the excursion which in the summer evenings young O'Curry made to Iniscattery or Holy Island, lying out in the Shannon a few miles from his native place. Our own St. Kieran had sanctified that spot, and St. Senanus had made it his hallowed home. Its chapels and its sanctuaries were endeared to the faithful people of Carrigaholt, and Eugene endeavoured as best he could to collect from the neighbours every tradition connected with its ruins. But, as he himself declared in after times, "it was not till after my father's death that I fully awoke to the passion for gathering together the old fragments of our history. I knew he was a link between our day and a time when all was broken, scattered, hidden. When I called to mind the knowledge he possessed of every old ruin, manuscript, legend, and tradition in Thomond, I was filled with consternation to think that all was for ever gone and no record left." Thenceforth every moment he could spare from his daily toil was given up to the study of the antiquities and traditions of his country. The small farm not sufficing to support the family, Eugene obtained an appointment as warder in the Limerick asylum. The resident physician there became acquainted with his passion for study, and his wonderful knowledge of the Irish language, and thus when the Ordnance Survey of Ireland was set on foot, and practical Irish scholars were sought out to translate the ancient documents and to record the traditions of the various localities, O'Curry was at once employed on this field of congenial labour. He found here full scope for his special talents, and he threw himself with all his giant energy into his task, which was indeed a labour of love for him. His merit was soon universally recognised, and from the year 1834, when he was associated to the Ordnance Survey, till his death in July, 1862, he may be said to have taken a leading part in every national movement having for its object to illustrate the

history of our country. His whole time was spent in examining the various and scattered collections of Irish MSS., translating the oldest texts, and recording the fast-fading traditions of our people. In 1853 he was employed under the Brehon Law Commission to transcribe and translate those ancient Laws. It was towards the close of that year that I was introduced to him in the little room at Trinity College, where he and O'Donovan were busily engaged making transcripts of the oldest texts of the Brehon Laws. I was a very young priest and, unfortunately quite a stranger to Irish history, whilst he was the very foremost of living Celtic scholars and palæographers. Nevertheless, he was unassuming as a child, and most kind and considerate in answering the questions which my curiosity and inexperience proposed to him. He was full of enthusiasm whilst explaining the relative value of the ancient MSS. piled up before him, but his voice became slow and mournful when he spoke of the prevalent neglect of Celtic studies and the sad indifference of so many to the genuine history of Ireland. When the Catholic University was established the chair of Irish History and Archæology was assigned to O'Curry. This gave him the prominence which was his due, and the lectures which he delivered are the most important contribution of this studious age to our early history. Partly for this reason and partly for the sterling love of religion and country, of which at all times he gave abundant proof, the name of Eugene O'Curry is perhaps the one among the modern writers on Irish History the most universally revered at home and abroad wherever the sons of Saint Patrick are to be found. The illustrious D'Arcy M'Gee in a soul-stirring poem, written far away on the American continent, thus proclaims the universal regret at his being too soon taken away from us:—

“ Who are his mourners ? By the hearth
 His presence kindled, sad they sit—
 They dwell throughout the living earth
 In homes his presence never lit ;

Where'er a Gaelic brother dwells,
 There heaven has heard for him a pray'r ;
 Where'er an Irish maiden tells
 Her votive beads, his soul has share,
 Where far or near, be it west or east,
 Glistens the Soggarth's sacred stole,
 There from the true, unprompted priest
 Shall rise a requiem for his soul.
 Such orisons like clouds shall rise
 From every realm beneath the sun,
 For where are now the shores or skies
 The Irish Soggarth has not won ?"

The same eloquent writer thus sketches the merits of O'Curry. " Ideas of greatness may and do differ. But if the highest moral purposes, sustained by the highest moral courage, constitute grounds and a standard ; if the rarest union of patient labour and sleepless enthusiasm have any claim to be so considered ; if a continuous career of recovery and discovery, in a long abandoned domain of learned inquiry, may be called proofs of greatness : then, assuredly, when Ireland counts her famous sons of this age, that indomitable academician's name will be pronounced among the very first of her magnates."

Sir John O'Shannassy, who attained the highest posts of honour in the colony of Victoria, was born in the town of Tipperary, in the year 1818. His father kept a public-house, but sent his son, who showed signs of talent and proficiency, regularly to school. Owing to the death of his father the young lad was, at an early age, thrown on his own resources, and opened a stationer's shop at Thurles. He soon, however, emigrated to Australia, and settling at Port Philip, by his industry, ability, and energy, became in a few years the foremost man in the colony. Melbourne was but a hamlet when he landed there. He lived to see it become, and in no small part through his own exertions, one of the greatest and most flourishing cities of the empire. The colony was at first but a dependency of New South Wales : he was among the most

prominent agitators for its independence. Their efforts were crowned with success in 1851, and thenceforward he was to be found in the front rank of all the changes of government that ensued. The men who fought the anti-transportation battle in Victoria, and who framed the constitution of the colony, did their task faithfully and well. They were brave and they were intelligent. They kept the colony a home for free men, and they secured for it free institutions. They could say :—

“ With aching hands and toiling feet
 We dig and heap, lay stone on stone ;
 We bear the burden and the heat
 Of the long day, and wish 'twere done :
 Not till the hours of night return
 All we have built can man discern.”

Not even his political opponents will deny to Sir John O'Shannassy a foremost place in that memorable band. When the gold rush took place and oppressive regulations were made by the government he became the advocate of the rights of the miners and secured their recognition. The land had to be unlocked, and he worked untiringly to give the people due facilities for obtaining homesteads. If railways were developed and a Local Government Act secured, it was mainly through the exertions of O'Shannassy. Three times he was prime minister, and if in his latter years this post of honour was denied him, this was due to his loyalty to the dictates of conscience, for he refused to lend the countenance of his name to any scheme, no matter how plausible, of infidel education. I had the pleasure of meeting him when he visited Ireland towards the close of 1866. He was a man of colossal strength and colossal mind. In conversation he repeatedly expressed his gratification at the progress which this country had made, whilst he was carving out his fortune in a more favoured land, and he was full of wonder and admiration at the institutions which he saw springing up on every side. In one of the Convent National Schools which he

visited he asked a little girl, very poor but very bright and intelligent, to read her lesson and she read it admirably for him. He then asked her what was her name; she replied, Mary O'Shannassy. He did not attempt to hide his emotion, and he afterwards remarked that he himself was at one time very nearly as poor as that little child. Addressing you, my young friends, I must not omit that he took a prominent part in organizing the Victorian Catholic Young Men's Society, and was a constant patron of its lectures and re-unions. He was honoured with a special mark of favour by the Sovereign Pontiff a little before his death, in the month of May of the present year. In addition to his many other merits he was disinterested. He was entitled to a pension of £25,000 from the colonial government, but never touched a penny of it. A few days after the demise of this illustrious Irishman, a political opponent sketching his long and arduous services, declared that death had removed "the striking figure of one of the strongest of the men who built up Victoria."

Charles Bianconi, though born in Italy, deserves to be mentioned, for it may be said that he spent his whole life amongst us. He was quite a young boy when he was brought to Ireland by a certain Faroni and employed hawking cheap pictures about the country. In a short notice of his early career, sketched by himself in after times, he writes: "I shall never forget the ludicrous figure I cut in going into the street with these things in my hands, saying buy! buy! to every person I met, and, when questioned as to the price, I was unable to reply except by counting on my fingers the number of pence I wanted." When his master quitted Ireland after a year and a-half's stay, young Bianconi continued his work on his own account: "I at once got a box (he says) made to contain large-framed prints. It was two feet long by one foot wide, and eighteen inches deep. This I filled with an assortment of prints from the largest to the smallest size. With this pack on my back, which weighed over one hundred pounds I have frequently walked twenty or thirty

miles in the day. I was then seventeen years old, and I knew neither discouragement nor fatigue, for I felt that I had set to work to become somebody." The great work carried out in after-life by this energetic man was the establishment of public conveyances between the towns chiefly in the south and west of Ireland. We may form an idea of the vast extent of this enterprise and the employment given, when we remember that in the year 1864, when he gave up the work to younger hands, it realized an annual income of £40,000. He was at all times kind and considerate and charitable, and was constantly doing good, such as paying for the education of orphan girls, or providing for the helpless relatives of those who died or were disabled in his service. But to the day of his death he was sharp in his accounts. Arriving at a London railway station, he secured the only cab to be found there. He gave a seat in it to the millionaire Rothschild, but on landing him at his house made him pay the fare. Before the British Association in 1857, he made the important statement which reflects such credit on our people: "My conveyances, many of them carrying very important mails, have been travelling during all hours of the day and night, often in lonely and unfrequented places: and during the long period of forty-two years that my establishment is now in existence, the slightest injury has never been done by the people to my property or that entrusted to my care."

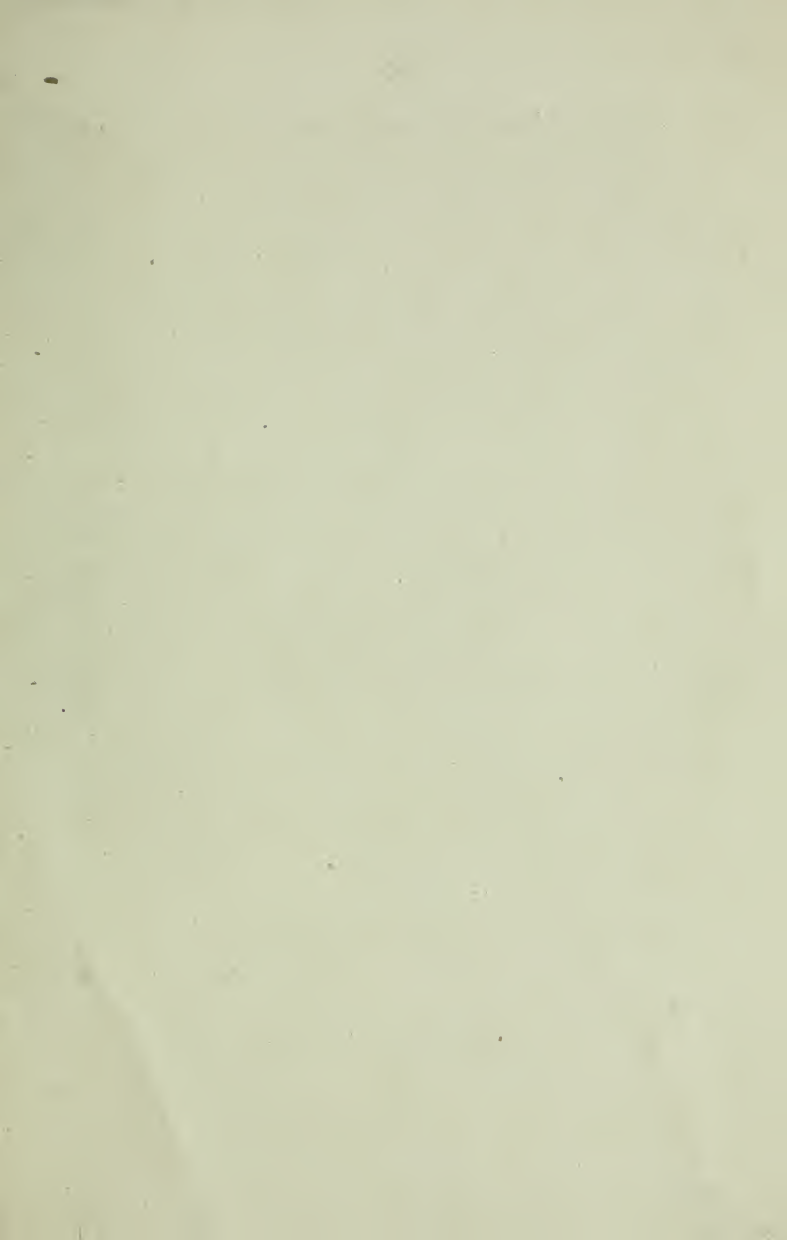
I have already, I fear, detained you too long, and yet I cannot bring this lecture to a close without recording the name of Father Thomas Burke, of the Order of St. Dominick. I need not refer to the details of his life, for they are familiar as household words to every Irishman. Eloquence was in a measure natural to him, but, nevertheless, he studied and laboured as few others could study or labour to perfect himself more and more, and make his eloquence worthy of the noble themes of charity and religion, the interests of which he was, more than any man of the day, called upon to plead. Few lives can show a more fruitful record, or were more unselfishly devoted to

the highest and noblest of causes, the building up of religion, and the succour of the widow, the orphan, and the indigent. At home and abroad he shall long be remembered as an ornament of his country, and his name shall be cherished by a grateful race. There is one thing which you, my young friends, may learn from the example of Father Burke. It is, no matter what laurels you may win, or what high post of honour you may attain, ever to love old Ireland, and to cherish fresh and unfading a true filial devotion for your native land. Hear how, on the eve of St. Patrick's Festival, far away beyond the Atlantic, after rebutting the false charges that had been made against Ireland, he apostrophizes his mother-land : "O glory of earth and heaven ! to-day thy great Apostle looks down upon thee from his high seat of bliss, and his heart rejoices. To-day the angels of God rejoice over thee, for the light of sanctity which still beams upon thee. To-day thy troops of virgin martyr saints speak thy praises in the high courts of heaven. And I, O Mother, far away from thy green bosom, hail thee from afar—as the prophet of old beholding the fair plains of the Promised Land—and proclaim this day that there is no land so fair, no spot of earth to be compared to thee, no island rising out of the wave so beautiful : that neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars of heaven shine down upon anything so lovely as thou art, O Erin !" And again, looking forward to the future of the Irish race on the American continent, he cries out : "Oh ! how grand it is, as I see it to-day, this future of my race ! Eight millions of people in America of Irish birth and eighteen of Irish blood ! In thirty years there must be fifty millions, born in this great country, spreading itself out in all things, rich beyond all other nations in minerals, rivers, harbours. Think of the magnificent element of fifty millions of Irishmen filling the public offices and guiding the destinies of this country, and all bearing the distinctive marks of Irish character, an ornament and a pride to the land that adopted them by their Catholic temperance and purity.

A power in this land will they be assuredly to guide and influence her actions, to draw the sword in the moment of danger, and to strike such blows in the cause of God and truth as have never yet rung on the shield of injustice; a power in Ireland, before which the generous heart of America will be sure to bow in homage; a power that will not prevent you from being the best American citizens, while you will not lose the vision of Ireland and of the debt you owe her. Then, and not till then, every enemy of Ireland will stand paralysed to injure her, because the great phantom of Ireland in America will cause them to recoil, and force them to respect the dear, old, venerated and beloved island."

These examples will suffice, I trust, to show how glorious are the triumphs, how fruitful the results achieved in every country and in every walk of life by persevering industry and self culture. The young men of your Society availing themselves of the opportunities within their reach may reap the same fruits. But even should their energy and toil not lead to the same material success, they shall at least have this thought to console them, that they have made the proper use of the noblest faculties with which the Creator has endowed them. Too often the talents received from nature are allowed to perish "like seeds upon the desert sand." And yet they are a sacred trust, a precious treasure placed in our hands that we may cultivate and perfect and adorn them, and we should ever bear in mind that

"as the form and pressure may be given
They wither upon earth, or ripen there for heaven."



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