

which the poet has put into the mouth of Walter, the Minnesinger of "The Golden Legend:"—

His gracious presence upon earth
Was as a fire-upon a hearth.
As pleasant songs, at morning sung,
The words that dropped from his sweet tongue
Strengthened our hearts; or, heard at night,
Made all our slumbers soft and light.

CHARLES D. BELL.

ART. III.—THE SILENT SISTER.

"SPEECH is silvern and silence is golden," has only a partial and occasional application. It would be almost as true, and only a few shades more inaccurate, to reverse the proverb, and to declare, amid the applause of Irish obstructives, and with the tacit approval of even Mr. Gladstone, that silence is silvern and speech is golden. Proverbs seldom, after all, tell more than half the truth, or paint more than one side of the shield.

The term "Silent Sister," as applied to the time-honoured College University across the Irish Channel—applied, I believe, in the first instance by the two great English Universities of Cambridge and Oxford—is a term not so much of reproach as of good-humoured badinage. Dublin was not always as famous for her literature as for her learning, if "literature" is a correct term to apply to the publication of books and tractates, as distinguished from the study and knowledge of books and tractates. The income of her Senior Fellows, and even of her Junior Fellows, increased as it is by the tutorial payments of undergraduates, and exceeding, as it so considerably does, the income of the Cambridge and Oxford Fellows and Tutors, may have had something to do with the quondam literary "silence" of the "Sister" University of Dublin. That reproach, if reproach it ever was, has now passed away entirely, as not only the scholarship but the scholarly literature of the Irish Sister has come to the front; but the not ungracefully descriptive title remains. The writer remembers having been asked many years ago, by the head of one of our great public schools of the second rank, whether "they 'do' Greek in Dublin," an inelegant question inelegantly put, by a gentleman who probably would have been offended if the head of one of our great public schools, of the first rank, had asked him whether "they" are able to "do" Greek in, let us say St. Nemo's School. That

question, certainly not asked in an underbred or uncivil way, asked with an appended "ne" for simple information, represented the utter unacquaintance of an educated man with the *tertia inter pares* rank of Dublin University scholarship and status, as compared with that of Cambridge and Oxford. The "Silent" Sister was to him, though not to his own University, one of the unknown forces in the education of the day. He had never heard of Provost Travers, the friend of Cartwright and indefatigable opponent of Hooker; had never read the life of saintly Wilson of Sodor and Man; or of Sir W. Temple, the patron of Johnson. Bishop Chandler's "Defence of Christianity" was of course unknown to this head of a great school, Goldsmith was perhaps a stranger to him, and probably his scholars did not know who wrote the "Burial of Sir John Moore." Had he ever heard of Ussher, and whence did he suppose came Ussher's Greek? Everybody is aware of the dissenting minister's query, "Did Paul know Greek, and if he could do without it why cannot I?" The dissenting minister and the schoolmaster were alike ignorant or alike forgetful, and neither the "Greek" of the apostle Paul, nor that of the University of Dublin, would be questioned by many dissenting ministers or Church schoolmasters of average information and reflection. By-and-by, and perhaps very soon, the question of Greek or no Greek will become really intelligent and interesting, and will be asked in quite another fashion. Parents seeking training of a mercantile sort for sons, impatient of mere abstract learning, will inquire, "Do they still 'do' Greek in Oxford?" But the inquiry will be couched, perhaps, in not so "raw" and crude a style, and will signify modern development rather than structural inferiority or incompleteness. The Irish University will probably be one of the foremost bodies to respond to the call of the age, inasmuch as she has never once "lost touch" with the intelligence and refinement of the cultured and culture-seeking classes of contemporary society. This is rather, however, an introductory parenthesis than a substantial argument.

The actual position of Dublin among Universities is almost unique, inasmuch as it offers to students their own option of residence or non-residence. This is, indeed, its specialty. There is another specialty, of which more anon, in that it actually has, contrary no doubt to the intent of its original foundation, only one College, and that therefore the College discipline and the University discipline of Oxford and Cambridge, which in those Universities merely overlap and interlace, become almost identical in the "University of Trinity College," as it is sometimes not quite accurately denominated by Englishmen more intelligent than the ex-headmaster of St. Nemo's, but who do not quite grasp the situation. That, however, is

rather a matter of detail than of principle. The option of non-residence is a matter of principle, and of very valuable principle.

The option in question is not, I am aware, an unmixed benefit either to the University or its students. It has, or at least it is apt to have, and is only by the genius of its executive and administrators prevented from having, a "confusing" effect upon examinations, as regards the University; and as regards the students, the *esprit de corps*, tone, manner, and perhaps even ethos of the non-resident undergraduates being as a rule not quite up to the mark which residence and the discipline of residence tends to produce, has a somewhat deteriorating effect upon the whole body. The Irish students, with whom Dublin is naturally "our University," are mostly resident, and the large admixture of English students, with whom Oxford and Cambridge are "our Universities," but who by pecuniary or other reasons are debarred from the education afforded, are mostly non-resident, on the banks of the Liffey, until at least such of them as intend to take Holy Orders reach the "Divinity Lecture" period of their undergraduate career. Then they are obliged, by the requirements of English and Irish bishops alike, to reside for the two academic years during which those Lectures continue.

This feature of optional non-residence it is which attracts so large a proportion of English students to Dublin. No doubt London University offers the same sort of advantage in a still more liberal spirit, and with fewer examinations, but then (1) the London University matriculation "exam." is probably more severe and searching, and covers a wider field than the matriculation "exam." of any other University anywhere; and (2) the social prestige of a London degree is considered, reasonably or unreasonably, farther remote from that of Oxford and Cambridge than is a degree from Dublin. There is also more connection, not necessarily but as a matter of fact, between the Church of England and Dublin University than between the Church of England and London University. The three Universities, called, in the old books of Common Prayer, "our Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin," and till recently the only recognized Church and State Universities, and the only Universities represented in the House of Commons, till Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill so properly admitted others, are still the chief sources of the supply of clergy, as the tables supplied in "Crockford's Clerical Directory" abundantly testify. Of 23,612 English clergy Cambridge furnishes 8,615, Oxford 7,682, and Dublin 1,751, to which, if the Irish clergy be added, who are nearly all Dublin graduates, it will be evident that Englishmen and Irishmen seeking Holy Orders, and being unable to

compass the residence required by Oxford and Cambridge, turn more generally if not more naturally, to Dublin than to London, which supplies only 176 of the 23,612 clergy above mentioned.

There is also in Dublin, what there is not in London, the admixture of resident and non-resident students. London provides no discipline for her alumni, and is merely an examining institution; Dublin provides the discipline, but never enforces it. It is worth while, as so many English readers are unaware of the extent of this liberally and maternally provided discretion offered by the University of Dublin to her children, to sketch out very briefly what it is, what are its limits and its liberties.

In Oxford and Cambridge, as everybody is aware, before a degree can be taken, so many terms must be kept by actual seven or eight weeks' residence per term within either a college of the University or an authorized lodging in the town. In Dublin terms are "kept" either by residence or by examination. Dublin is, in fact, both a teaching University by lectures to resident students, and an examining University to both resident and non-resident students. A non-resident student must pass nine examinations, commencing with matriculation; proceeding by one or two examinations in the first or "Junior Freshman" year; two examinations in the second or "Senior Freshman" year, if two have already been passed in the previous year, and three if only one has been passed in that first year; one or two examinations in the third or "Junior Sophister" year; and two or three in the "Senior Sophister" or last year. A resident student has to pass only half this number of examinations, but it is obligatory on him to pass the Michaelmas Term Examination of the Senior Freshman year, which may be called a University examination, the previous three, as also the matriculation, being rather "College" examinations, only binding on non-resident undergraduates. This very convenient option may well suit the sons of English clergymen in these days of disputed tithe, lowered glebe rent, and high rates and taxes. Such clergymen, often with large families as well as slender means and considerable parochial responsibility of a pecuniary kind, find the comfort and advantage of being able to send sons to Dublin, coaching them themselves, or with the help of a curate at home, and merely being put to the expense of two annual journeys to Dublin, and the tutorial fees of sixteen guineas per annum. There are no doubt various openings in Oxford and Cambridge to poor gentlemen in the way of scholarships, sizarships, servitorships, exhibitions, and Bible clerkships; but many of these presuppose exceptional abilities and attainments, local qualifications of birth or school, or some other such restrictive conditions.

The ordinary curriculum of study in Dublin does unquestionably involve quite as much work and brain-power as the ordinary curriculum at Cambridge and Oxford, and in the opinion of some of the best judges who are able to compare the three courses, that of Dublin is the most severe of all, not only in theory but in actual, practical reality. That men failing in Dublin go through Oxford or Cambridge without discredit means nothing to the point; because it is equally true that men failing at Cambridge find Oxford tolerably easy, and that others failing at Oxford pass through Cambridge without a single approach to the dreaded "plough," and even with a certain amount of credit. But it will be evident, probably, to any Oxford or Cambridge examiner carefully observing the course as prescribed in the Dublin University Calendar for an ordinary degree, that even an ordinary degree means quite as much honest reading as an ordinary English degree in any University except London, of which the degrees have more mental, intellectual, and "industrial" significance than have the *ordinary* degrees of any University. The educating power of the Dublin course is very considerable, and forms a happy combination of the Cambridge and Oxford systems of study, with judicious additions and equally judicious subtractions of its own. Any reader wishing to form his own judgment on this point, and not being in the way of consulting a Dublin University Calendar, could not do much better than expend the very moderate sum of six shillings on a book which, to the writer and to many of his friends seeking accurate and trustworthy information on educational matters, has been of much service. I allude to Messrs. Cassell's "Educational Year Book," which is really an epitomized Calendar of every University, as well as an almost exhaustive description of every important school, and a sketch of nearly every other school, in the United Kingdom.

The special courses of professional study, such as Divinity, Engineering, Medicine, Law, Music, branch off, like the seven Champions of Christendom, after going on together for a time in the earlier part of the "Arts" course. Even for the degree of Bachelor of Arts a student has his option, after a time, of "taking up" either Classics, Language, Experimental Physics, or Natural Science, in addition to the always indispensable Mathematical Physics, Logics, and English Composition. Divinity students are compelled to begin residence a year before they graduate, and to continue it a year after, when they obtain a Divinity Testimonium which, on the testimony of English and Irish bishops alike, is one of the most reliable and valuable certificates produced by ordination candidates, as having not merely mechanically attended a certain number of Lectures of Archbishop King's Lecturer and of the Regius Professor, but

as also having been examined on, and tested in, the subject of such Lectures. Dublin graduates ordained, as is sometimes the case, without their Divinity Testimonium and the two years' residence which it implies, find it much harder work to satisfy the examining chaplains of the present day.

After all, a University should not aim at being a mere training school for any one or for any seven or more professions, and especially not for the vocation of clergyman, whether in a country where Church and State remain connected, or in another where they have been permanently separated. Mr. John Stuart Mill's definition of the functions and ends of Universities is, especially in such a country as ours, somewhat visionary and unpractical. "To keep alive philosophy," he says, "is the end above all others for which endowed Universities exist or ought to exist." "To rear up minds with aspirations and faculties above the herd, capable of leading on their countrymen to greater achievements in virtue, intelligence, and social well-being; to do this, and likewise so to educate the leisured classes of the community generally, that they may participate as far as possible in the qualities of these superior spirits, and be prepared to appreciate them, and follow in their steps." This is surely mere philosophical "tall talk," sailing in the Socratic and Academical balloon far over the heads of those on whose behalf national Universities were projected, founded, and endowed. Universities were never intended to be mere academies, but educational guardians of the national life, stimulating its progress and development, and placing themselves in the van of its intellectual and philosophical achievements, and not, it is true, degenerating into the professional, still less the mechanically industrial, schools of Professor Goldwin Smith's ideal, but laying the foundation of professional, artistic, and by-and-by, perhaps, the higher sorts of mechanical training. Mr. Mill, somewhat inconsistently, but very sensibly and practically, brings this out in an "Inaugural Address" where, being face to face with a body of students other than "leisured classes" and eclectically "superior spirits," he no doubt felt that the mere critical and reviewing faculty had better be subordinated to the practical good sense which elsewhere he had seemed to disconnect from Universities, as an element of their studies, objects, and pursuits. "Universities are not intended to teach the knowledge required to fit men for some special mode of gaining their livelihood." Insert some such word as "primarily," "mainly," or "principally," after the word "intended," and few would dispute Mr. Mill's assertion, however dogmatically put forth. "Their object is not to make skilful lawyers, or physicians, or engineers, but capable and cultivated human beings." Surely because their object is to make men capable and culti-

vated, therefore that object is to make more conscientious lawyers, more skilful physicians, more erudite and careful engineers, more learned divines, more candid reviewers and critics, more cultured and widely travelled architects, by-and-by more highly educated artisans and mechanics.

But, leaving this more extended though not altogether inapt or "non-gremial" subject, caused by the perusal of a review of Professor Sedgwick's Discourse on the Studies of the University of Cambridge, with the single remark that the course of education prescribed in Dublin tends very decidedly and very considerably not only "to make capable and cultivated human beings," but intelligent clergy, doctors, lawyers, engineers, and other professional men, it is time to remember that this paper is upon one University in particular, and not upon Universities in general.

Trinity College was in contemplation, and even in embryo, many years before the reign of Queen Elizabeth; but it was undoubtedly that far-sighted and shrewd-minded sovereign who actually, on March 3, 1591, founded it, not as a University but as *Mater Universitatis*, the mother or first and parental college of a University, after the pattern of Oxford and Cambridge, and not at all of the Scottish Universities, not then popularly known in England or Ireland. The actual style was *Mater Universitatis, pro educatione, institutione, et instructione juvenum et studentium in artibus et facultatibus, perpetuis futuris temporibus duraturum, et quod erit et vocabitur Collegium Sanctæ et Individuæ Trinitatis, juxta Dublin*; showing that its foundress was of a more practical and less philosophical turn of mind than Mr. Mill, or, at least, contemplated a more practical and less philosophical University than the ideal University of that eminent writer. A religious and a Protestant University, and, doubtless, a Church of England University, was also thus founded; and it must occasion the Unitarian gentlemen who graduate in Dublin, even more than it occasions Presbyterians and Nonconformists, some stirrings of heart, when, after declining the "catechetical examinations" on "Secker," &c., they claim a degree from "Queen Elizabeth's" Church of England College of the "Holy and Undivided Trinity!"

"Juxta" Dublin! It was only "near" Dublin then; it is in the very heart of Dublin now, and is loyal to the core, "silently" but not less unflinchingly true to England and the Union. It has educated the Irish nobility, gentry, and large sections of the middle class into cultivated, capable, and loyal human beings for several centuries, training them less into being "superior spirits" than into doing their duty in the station of life to which it has pleased God to call them. And a University which does that is not far off from fulfilling its functions and discharging

its responsibilities to its endowment, the nation, and the world at large.

Like Oxford and Cambridge, setting in this respect an unhappy example which London has creditably refused to follow, Dublin gives her M.A. for money without examination. That eminently becoming dark-blue hood, which the Queen's or Royal University has had the questionable taste to adopt as also *her* badge of M.A., ought to mean something more and better than so many pounds sterling. It is, of course, true that M.A. implies B.A. and the examinations which precede B.A., but the higher degree ought undoubtedly to imply the higher examination. If men have not the leisure to prepare for it, or the brains to pass it, they should be able to do without it. London tells them this, and so enlarges the knowledge and raises the intellectual culture of others than "superior spirits" and "leisured classes" very appreciably.

It is pleasant to note that even the more able and cultivated portion of the Parnellite press of Ireland appreciate and are proud of the great Irish University. The *Freeman's Journal* gave utterance last June to some graceful and discriminating sentiments, which were worthy of the better days of that once truly national and respected organ of intelligent public opinion in the sister island. Dublin University "hath charms to soothe" even the *Freeman*.¹

¹ The Honorary Degrees conferred at the Dublin University Commencements yesterday were fairly and discerningly distributed through the various fields of literary and scientific eminence. Cambridge was well and worthily represented in the persons of Archbishop Trench and Mr. Munro; Oxford was represented by Mr. Ellis, Astronomy by Professor Bruunow, Electricity by Mr. Siemens, and Biology by Mr. Wallace. It was a capable, comprehensive, and sympathetic selection; and the University derives its own share of honour from the honours which it appreciatively conferred. The most attractive feature in these comitia for some years past has been supplied by the Latin speeches of the public orator, Dr. Webb, and probably he never spoke more classical Latin than he spoke yesterday. Some of his allusions and tropes were, perhaps, somewhat strained, and pitched into too high a key, and it was a bold rhetoric that undertook to introduce Lucretius in bodily presence for a T. C. D. degree. Dr. Webb, however, speaking out of his own classical culture, said of Mr. Munro, as Lucretius Redivivus, no more than what every classical scholar in the three Universities will endorse. Mr. Webb made a sort of graceful apology for the University's long delay in conferring its degree on Archbishop Trench, and we must add that the delay has always seemed to us unaccountable. Dr. Trench, English by education, is Irish by descent; and it is no false flattery to say that his writings have honoured both his birthplace and his education place. What the University, speaking through its eloquent public orator, has discovered now, the whole republic of letters knew more than thirty years ago: and how Trinity College happened to be so late in the discovery we cannot pretend to explain. Late it is, but better late than

The number of degrees conferred at this Commencement, which is only one out of five in the year, was seventy-two B.A.'s, fifty-three Bachelors of other Faculties, including two Bachelors of Engineering, most ingeniously rendered by the authorities as *Ars Ingeniaria*, on the "canting" heraldic style, or simply punning ordinary style; one Licentiate in Medicine; one Master in *Arte Obstetricia*; forty-two Masters of Arts; one Doctor of Music; six Doctors of Medicine; nine Doctors of Law; and seven Doctors of Divinity; making a total at this one Commencement of 192, besides the six *Honoris Causâ* degrees. In addition to these honorary degrees, the University grants *stipendiis condonatis* degrees to men less widely known who have done good work, more valuable than obtrusive, for God and man in various fields of missionary and other labour. English Universities might well follow so noble an example.

The Silent Sister has also trained many of her *alumni* in the "silvern" arts of parliamentary and preaching oratory, as will readily be admitted in memory of such names as Burke, Sheil, Cairns, Magee (Bishop of Peterborough), McNeile, and a hundred others who, out of no disrespect to their *Alma Mater*, the quondam "silent one," have made parliament houses, platforms, and pulpits ring with their "speech." It has been reserved for a graduate and professor of the University of Dublin to turn a deaf ear to all this pulpit eloquence, and to write about the "Decay of Preaching." Surely Professor Mahaffy, forgetful also of parliamentary glories, might with equal inaptitude write of the "Decay of Oratory;" or others, ignoring the Professor's musical and historical knowledge, which the world at large is so willing to acknowledge, might write of the "Decay of Historical Lectureship," but that the shade of Kingsley would frown; or of the "Diminution of Musical Taste," but that such an essay would seem to savour too much of "words, words." And all graduates of Dublin should, in writing papers and articles, especially beware of mere "words, words," and make even an abrupt conclusion rather than yield to any temptation to indulge in them.

S. B. JAMES.

never. Dr. Trench was born, the "Peerage" says, in 1807, and we suppose we may venture the conjecture that he is the oldest man that ever received either an ordinary or an honorary degree from the University of the "Holy and Undivided Trinity near Dublin."—*Freeman's Journal*, June 30.