

and the mornings are all clear yet wanton in beauty. No wonder nearly all the painters and writers have been excited by this season. Yet, we are so foolish that we cannot enjoy young Summer without remembering that Autumn will come.

So, unseasonably and chillily, I offer you: 'Resolutions For When I Come To Be Old.'

'Not to marry a young woman. Not to keep young company, unless they really desire it. Not to be peevish, or morose, or suspicious. Not to scorn present ways, or wits, or fashions, or men, etc. Not to be fond of children, or let them come near me hardly. Not to tell the same story over and over to the same people. Not to be covetous. Not to neglect decency

or cleanliness, for fear of falling into nastiness. Not to be over severe with young people, but give allowance for their youthful follies and weaknesses. Not to be influenced by, or give ear to knavish, tattling servants, or others. Not to be too free of advice, nor trouble any but those that desire it. To desire some good friends to inform me which of these resolutions I break or neglect, and wherein; and reform accordingly. Not to talk much of myself. Not to boast of my former beauty, or strength, or favour with the ladies, etc. Not to be too particular about keeping all of these resolutions lest I fail to keep any of them.'

Are these Gulliver's resolutions? No, they are those of a young man of some centuries ago—Jonathan Swift.

TAKE TIME

BY THE FORELOCK

..... is a wise adage—it is doubly wise in the matter of making provision for the future and for those depending on you. Look at the advantages of having a "New Ireland" Life and Endowment Policy, guaranteeing a capital sum at the end of a number of years, or at death, and secured by monthly, quarterly, or other agreed payments. May we send you fuller information?

NEW IRELAND ASSURANCE

COMPANY, LTD. 12 DAWSON STREET, DUBLIN

M. W. O'Reilly, P.C., F.C.I.I., Managing Director

Leabharlanna Poblaithe
CATHAC AGA CLAR

THE BELL

EDITED BY PEADAR O'DONNELL

VOL. XII. No. 3.

June, 1946.

CONTENTS

	<i>page</i>
THIS MYTH OF IRISH FASCISM	<i>The Editor</i> 185
TWO POEMS OF LANDSCAPE	<i>Geoffrey Taylor</i> 191
A PLEA FROM THE COUNTRY	<i>Hubert Butler</i> 192
DEAR EDITOR	<i>Domhnall O'Conaill</i> 202
'THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD ...'	D 83222 208
SEVEN MEN IN AN INN	<i>Patrick Purcell</i> 217
THE SHOEMAKER WHO LAUGHED AT THE MOON	<i>J. F. Reynolds</i> 230
TOWARDS AN IRISH FILM INDUSTRY	<i>Rex MacGall</i> 234
ASPECTS OF POETRY TO-DAY	<i>Valentin Iremonger</i> 242
DUBLIN THEATRE	<i>Roger McHugh</i> 251
PUBLIC OPINION	<i>Frank Harvey</i> 257
BOOK SECTION	<i>Edited by Sean O'Faolain</i> 258
THE OPEN WINDOW	<i>Gulliver</i> 269

THE BELL is published monthly. Subscription rate, 18s. a year, postage 1s 6d. extra. Prose contributions should be sent to the Editor (Verse to: Louis MacNiece, The Poetry Editor), THE BELL, 2 Lower O'Connell St., Dublin, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope for return if unsuitable. Business address: 2 Lower O'Connell St., Dublin. Tel. 22246. No communications to the Editor's private address.

THE IRISH ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

AND

THE INDUSTRIAL & LIFE ASSURANCE AMALGAMATION COMPANY LIMITED

FIGURES FROM THE COMBINED ACCOUNTS FOR 1945

Income in 1945	£2,443,579
Total Assets	£8,488,767
Claims Paid since 1939	£5,952,804
Total Assurances In Force	£38,596,051

Chief Office: Hammam Buildings, Upper O'Connell Street, Dublin, C.8.

THIS MYTH OF IRISH FASCISM

By THE EDITOR

THE ease with which Ireland has moved in among the nations, and especially the outspoken friendliness in lands that have suffered severely from Nazi aggression, has made this country news again to foreign journals. One meets observers collecting feature articles for magazines, even busy on commissions for books, and they confess that Dublin is a bewildering experience. Those leaning left start off from the views voiced by Mr. Gilbert Lynch at the World Trade Union Congress, which they took to mean that Fascist forms had established themselves here. They give body to their story by reciting the Stand-Still Wage Order, the Trade Union Act, government by decree and opposition speeches on them. Correspondents unconcerned in that field move in on the brilliant island of opinion which would have had Ireland, body and sleeves, into the war and saw in neutrality hostility to Britain and thus a thoroughly Fascist administration. The stories the censor killed are ready-made material for this series of articles.

A trouble arises, however. Dublin is pretty well sprinkled with men and women home on leave from the British forces, and it spoils the picture to find that the fighting men believed in the freedom to volunteer under which they acted and, given that freedom, endorsed neutrality and, basing themselves on the friendliness of everybody on their spells of leave, declare the sentiment of the country to have been anti-Fascist. At that stage the inquirer feels

THE MEMBER FOR CARLOW*

THE Archbishop of Pelusium is to be congratulated alike on his choice of subject and on the courage and skill with which he has discharged his task. For Lord Acton is *prima facie* a somewhat risky subject for an episcopal biographer. True, he was a Catholic to the marrow, but he was also gravely lacking in the characteristics of a model Catholic layman—at least as these are defined in Ireland. He was no respecter of persons, even when they occupied high ecclesiastical positions; and he distinguished between the man and the office with a sharpness which (although it has the authority of some great saints behind it) would be branded here as *piis auribus offensum*. Communion with the Apostolic See was, he said, 'dearer to me than life'; yet there was no more unbending critic of Popes, past and contemporary. Did he not even take a scholarly Anglican Bishop to task for reluctance to pass judgment on the seamy side of the mediaeval Papacy?

The truth is that Acton's Catholicism was proof against all his differences with Bishops and Cardinals: it was as natural to him as the air he breathed. He could no more have renounced the Church than he could have renounced his own mother. But the independent—and at times censorious—attitude which, in contrast to most of his co-religionists in Britain and Ireland, he maintained towards questions of ecclesiastical history and policy is rightly ascribed by Dr. Mathew to the 'regalian' tradition which he had inherited from his forebears of Bourbon Naples and Southern Germany. Perhaps the most fascinating chapters of this fascinating book are those in which Dr. Mathew paints in the background of aristocratic, semi-feudal Catholicism from which John Emerich Dalberg Acton emerged. With urbanity and discreet humour

*Acton: *the Formative Years*. By David Mathew. (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 10s. 6d.)

Dr. Mathew introduces us successively to the Actons of the Palazzo Acton alla Chiaja: 'The lackeys foamed about them; the lights burned in their domestic chapels; the lawyers sat at their desks by the barred windows. They were accustomed to the bending hierarchies.' Next to the Dalbergs, the historian's maternal kin; 'The last representatives of a great Rhineland family, they were cosmopolitan in effect if not in intention. . . . In the background was the square *Schloss* at Herrnsheim; the chapel overcrowded with silver lamps and candlesticks, a rather messy ecclesiasticism; out on the lower walls of the castle terrace the black figs ripening.' Lastly to the general cosmopolitan *haut monde* to which 'so many of John Acton's friends and relations' belonged:

Catholicism had been an inextricable part of their family tradition now for many centuries; it was always available for them to reach towards. At the same time it was not conceivable that one from this *milieu* should avow himself a *libre penseur*, a term which carried with itself conscious middle-class associations. To men of lineage Catholicism as a part of the furniture of a carefree and a neglecting mind was in the climate of their long inheritance.

It is, as Dr. Mathew shrewdly remarks, a far cry from the child of privilege to the historian of liberty. But is it not a still farther cry to the Member for Carlow?

Yet only eighty-seven years have passed since Sir John Acton was elected for the borough of Carlow, and elected without difficulty, by Irish Catholic votes. A sobering thought for our latter-day Gaels. Indeed it was by mere chance that he missed being selected for the Taoiseach's present constituency, where he would doubtless also have received a handsome majority. At the time of his election he had never seen Ireland, and he had not the slightest sympathy with the political nationalism which the Catholic 'natives' had at last assimilated from the descendants of the colonists. It was not until many years later that, under Gladstone's influence, he accepted the policy of

Home Rule. But his ingrained distrust of political nationalism and his preference for the multi-national type of State made him a very lukewarm supporter. All things considered, perhaps he was wiser than he knew when, writing to a friend in 1857, he expressed the fear that 'my opinions and character are not such as to ensure the support of the Irish Catholics.'

Although the present volume deals only with 'the formative years' of the historian's life, leaving him at the age of twenty-eight on the threshold of his greatest achievements, it is none the less brimful of interest. The account of his schooling at Oscott under Dr. Wiseman is admirable. Even better is the story of his years at the University of Munich under the aegis of Döllinger, by whom he was so deeply influenced. Dr. Mathew's treatment of this great controversial figure is informed by the serene tolerance and charity which we have come to regard as characteristic of him. Whether Acton's exclusively Germanic training in historical research was an unmixed blessing to him is more than doubtful. True, he learned much that he would have sought in vain at Cambridge had one of the three colleges to which he applied for admission as an undergraduate proved less bigoted. But a couple of years at the Sorbonne would surely have helped to add grace to his solidity and sparkle to his wisdom. Even in his best work there is something ponderous and desiccated which one associates with German *Wissenschaft*. Except for his gift of aphorism he might have been a German scholar who wrote remarkably good English.

This was not the only point which differentiated him from his countrymen in general and his co-religionists in particular. As squire of Aldenham he was a fish out of water. A wide gulf separated him from his Catholic neighbours, the fox-hunting Tory squires. What a vivid picture Dr. Mathew has painted of these old English Catholic families! With all their limitations they were a great breed, and their uncomfortable reaction to the new forces in English Catholicism—the mass of Irish proletarian

immigrants on the one hand, and the enthusiastic 'intellectuals' of the Oxford Movement on the other—evokes sympathy as well as amusement. 'A little stiff and with a solidity of thought and diction the old Catholics moved on into the Victorian Age maintaining their own observances; loyal; assured; wholly incurious. . . . The more aggressive members of the episcopate aroused in them a strong distaste which was only partially masked by their good breeding.' Even on the last point Acton did not quite agree with them: he did not believe in masking his distaste at all.

It is more difficult to account for his equal lack of sympathy with the converts. Some of these at least were men of the highest intellect who, like him, were eager to mould English Catholic opinion on generous and progressive lines. Yet after a comparatively brief period of collaboration—the years of his editorship of the *Rambler* and the *Home and Foreign Review*—he washed his hands of them decisively. What caused the breach? To some extent, I imagine, the natural difference between the born Catholic and the convert. He probably thought them too eager, too enthusiastic, too uncritical; from his more detached standpoint they were afflicted with *trop de zèle*. Again, the proud 'regalian' tradition in his blood made him impatient with their deferential attitude towards higher ecclesiastical authority. A suggestion that he should edit the *Dublin Review* he dismissed curtly in a letter to Newman: 'The adulatory and undignified tone of the *Review* has alienated a good many subscribers.' At least it had alienated Sir John Acton. How could he, so sure of himself and his position in the Church, understand the hesitations of a Newman tremulously groping his way in this imposing and unfamiliar labyrinth? To Acton all this was just 'timidity,' or—worse still—'diplomacy,' and the poor opinion he had formed of his collaborator in the *Rambler* is vigorously expressed in more than one of his letters.

That their collaboration should have been so brief,

that it should subsequently have been dismissed almost contemptuously by the younger man as a thing of no importance, reveals an unsympathetic streak in Acton's character: that desiccated inhuman quality which we also find in his writings. | One can understand—and to some extent sympathize with—his rejection of men like Ward and Manning. But how did he remain so impervious to that fragile and sometimes tortured wit, the Oriel simplicity, so egalitarian and reticent, and the familiar spirit of that rain-swept charm? And he not only underestimated Newman's personality: he failed to recognize the significance of his message. Allowing for all superficial differences, the two men had the same purpose, the same goal. Liberal Catholicism the world over claims John Henry Newman among its prophets; and the main difference between it and the aristocratic theory of liberty whose history John Dalberg Acton preferred to write is that it has proved more lasting.

We can only hope that Dr. Mathew's new duties as Apostolic Delegate in Africa will not prevent him from completing the work he has so promisingly begun. In this age of political and scientific totalitarianism, when the freedom of the individual is at a discount, every witness to the spirit of liberty is precious. And Acton was not content to be the mere historian of liberty: in his own life, in all his dealings with the leaders of Church and State, he practised what he preached.

D. A. BINCHY.

CHECK LIST

CITIES, PLAINS AND PEOPLE. By LAWRENCE DURRELL. (*Faber, 6s.*) THE VOYAGE. By EDWIN MUIR. (*Faber, 6s.*) THE ISLES OF SCILLY. By GEOFFREY GRIGSON. (*Routledge, 5s.*) A MAP OF VERONA. By HENRY REED. (*Cape, 3s. 6d.*)

After the acrobatics and posturings of the New Romantic poets in England during the last few years, these books come as a welcome relief. None of these poets is committed to any school, which means that their experiences may be interpreted by them without any preconceived notions as to the significance that must be extracted from them or the slant which their imagery must take. Furthermore, their work is distinguished by a fundamental brainwork (an all-too-rare thing in contemporary verse) and a general acknowledgment that a poem is an intellectual structure, that 'prayer and fasting,' so to speak, are essentials for the poet.

Mr. Durrell, one of the Cairo exiles to whom I have referred in another part of this issue, is perhaps the most uncompromisingly intellectual of the quartet; yet in his later poems (those about people) his work achieves a deep and profound insight:

Before me now lies Byron and behind,

AN SÚM



To those who like a good historical novel, well-told, thoroughly entertaining and moderately priced, we recommend the following selection from our list:

FILÉAD NA BARRIOGHA

Séamus Ó Grianna's outstanding translation of Canon Sheehan's intensely interesting story of the French Revolution—*The Queen's Fillet*. The Irish is as rich and expressive as "Máire" ever penned.

Price, 3/6

AN CROTA GLAS

A stirring tale of Belfast and Antrim in the '98 period by one of the most popular Irish historical novelists, Mrs. M. T. Pender. A best-seller in the original version, it has proved equally popular in Irish. Translated by Pádraig Mac Seagháin.

Price, 3/6

AN FUAĐÁC

Robert Louis Stevenson's famous novel, *Kidnapped*. The adventures of David Balfour are as thrilling in this fine Irish version as they are in English. Translated by León Ó Broin.

Price, 2/-

Obtainable through any Bookseller or direct from

FÓILSEACÁN RIÁLTAIS

3-4 SAIRÍO AN COLÁISTE, DÉ CLUIC

Belonging to the Gods,
Another Byron of the feeling
Shown in this barbered hairless
man.

His imagery, particularly in his earlier poems, is very striking and very violent; yet he can, at his best, achieve a moving simplicity.

Mr. Muir, who is also one of the best novel-critics, has built up his reputation far more slowly than any other contemporary poet. Completely independent of fashions in poetry, his work has an unobtrusive originality which may yet establish him as one of the most significant poets of these years. His work, intellectual and somewhat rigid in outline, is yet varied in rhythm and rich in suggestiveness, as in his poem on the return of the Greek soldiers from the siege of Troy:

Their eyes knew every stone
In the huge heartbreaking wall
Year after year, grown
Till there was nothing at all
But an alley steep and small,
Trampled earth and towering
st. ne.

Two of the poems in this volume of Geoffrey Grigson's have appeared in an international number of *THE BELL*. He is less ambitious than most other poets and consequently perhaps achieves more; he is, maybe, a sort of Gilbert White whose natural observations are shot through with the poet's insight.

Henry Reed's is one of the

GAIETY Nightly 7.30 Sat. Mat. 2.30

June 3rd

DUBLIN MUSICAL
SOCIETY present

● **VIKTORIA AND HER
HUSSAR**

June 10th

LONGFORD
PRODUCTIONS present

● **THE TIME OF YOUR
LIFE**

BY WILLIAM SAROYAN

June 17th

A SHORT SEASON OF
PLAYS

which will include:—

● **RED ROSES FOR ME**

BY SEAN O'CASEY

● **THE GOOD HOPE**

BY

HERMANN HEYJERMANN

Coming on July 8th for
three weeks' season

● **BALLETS JOOSS**

Booking Office open daily 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Programme subject to alteration

most impressive first volumes I have seen for some time. His shorter lyrics (with the exception of 'The Wall') are not very distinguished but there are four long poems in the volume which are really first-rate achievements.

The poems on two characters from Sophocles, *Chrysothemis* and *Philoctetes* show an intuitive understanding of experiences that are among the commonest known.

V.I.

SPANISH PORTRAIT. By
ELIZABETH LAKE. (*The Pilot
Press, 8s. 6d.*)

A novel that may be recommended to those who can discriminate between the effectively quiet and the ineffectually dull. Little happens, much is felt. It concerns a platonic friendship between a young English girl in Spain and a young Spanish painter. They keep on converging, meet indeed in warm friendship but do not come to love. When, in some exasperation, Maria finally compels a declaration Alonso explains gently that in Spain young men either marry or amuse themselves in what some literary Frenchman has called *maisons d'illusion*—casual 'affairs' they do not approve—and unfortunately he does not feel that he wishes to marry Maria. It is a theme which a Henry James or a Proust might have woven with intellectual passion. Miss Lake is modestly content to

British Militarism as I Have Known It

by

Hanna Sheehy
Skeffington

Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington's account of the murder of Francis Sheehy Skeffington in 1916, and the subsequent efforts of the British military and political machines to shield the culprits and suppress the facts.

Included are a hitherto unpublished letter from the late Major Sir Francis Vane, and a full-page portrait of Francis Sheehy Skeffington.

From all booksellers

The Kerryman 6d.

CHECK LIST

266

tell the story with a most appealing restraint—a form of feminine Hemingwayism. One reads on and on, intrigued by this odd relationship, but more interested in the Spanish types than in the English miss whose character is not developed or complex enough to hold centre-stage. One looks forward to Miss Lake's next novel with keen interest: she is obviously a real novelist.

S.O.F.

TOMORROW'S HOUSES.

Edited by JOHN MADGE.
(Pilot Press, 18s.)

John Madge has done something which needed to be done for a long time; he has collected together in one book the wisdom of a group of well-known technical research workers in housing subjects. His book is a valuable appreciation of the housing situation in England. Each section deals with a different aspect of the technical problem, and tells of the enormous advances made before and during the war in heating, lighting, sound insulation, prefabrication, plastics, aluminium alloys, steel, concrete, timber.

In view of the recent controversy in this country on the subject, it is interesting to note that prefabrication occupies a very large part of the book, and many excellent drawings and photographs illustrate recent experiments in building prefabricated houses in England.

EVERYMAN'S
BRILLIANTINE

HAIR CREAM A KENROSA PRODUCT

THE PERFECT HAIRDRESS-
ING, NEVER FLAKES,
PRESERVES, STRENGTHENS
AND CONTROLS THE
HAIR

MANUFACTURERS
FOR 30 YEARS OF
PASHANA, FOUGERE
LOTIONS, TONFREYS
DRY SHAMPOO, ETC.

TRADE ENQUIRIES:
BELMONT DISTRIBUTORS
LIMITED
9 EDEN QUAY, DUBLIN

Phone: 73371.

267

The slums in our Irish cities are among the worst in the world. We know that many problems must be solved before our slum-dwellers can be moved from their filth and misery into clean comfortable homes. This book adds tremendous weight to the assertion that the *technical* solution to the housing problem is at hand. Let us hope that our housing authorities have the wit to realise it. *Tomorrow's Houses* is a mine of information and will be especially valuable to the young architect and builder.

NOEL MOFFET.

THE SHADOW FACTORY.

By ANNE RIDLER. (Faber, 6s.)

Mrs. Ridler's is the third in the series of *New Plays* by Poets which Mr. Martin Browne is now producing at the London Mercury Theatre. It is also the most satisfying of them. Dealing with the managerial society forecast by Burnham, it opposes to the Director the human individual, symbolised by The Artist, who comes to paint murals in the factory canteen and in doing so throws a spanner in the inhuman too-well-oiled scientific idealism of the Director. As one would expect from Mrs. Ridler, the verse is sinewy and the imagery striking without being ostentatiously so.

R.D.

much has been said on the subject of drink.

some have praised it and some have wanted to pour it all down the sink.

but the latter would never have retained their puritanical univocal hue.

had their unschooled palates been once but discreetly graced by aristocratic tullamore dew.

★ ★

d. e. williams,
limited, tullamore.

BOXES

for

VOLUMES 11 & 12

Now Ready

Also for past vols.

Neatly turned out in brilliant
RED shade

3/- each post. free

Send P.O. to:

Manager THE BELL,
43 Parkgate Street, Dublin.