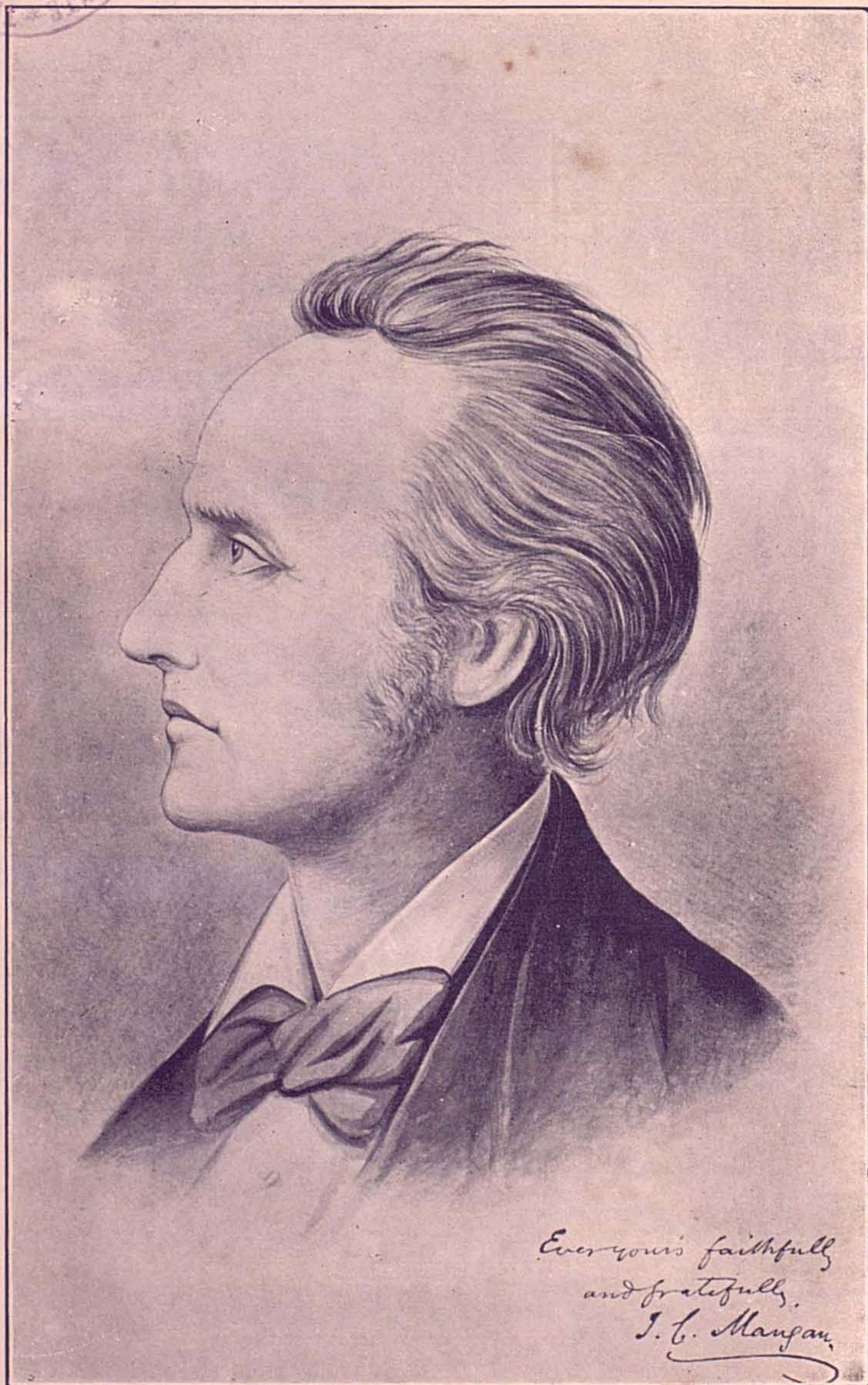


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THE LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF  
JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN





Ever yours faithfully  
and gratefully,  
J. C. Mangan.



# The Life and Writings

OF

## James Clarence Mangan

BY

D. J. O'Donoghue *d. June 27. 1917.*

AUTHOR OF

"The Life of William Carleton"

etc., etc.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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## PREFACE.

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IN sending forth this volume, perhaps a word or two of explanation, by way of preface, of some of its features, will not be superfluous. And first, as to the portraits used. Strictly speaking, there is no authentic likeness of Mangan. Various sketches are in existence, but they are all deductions, distant enough for the most part, of Burton's fine drawing of the poet as he lay in death. The one which has been used as frontispiece to this volume is, perhaps, remote from the truth, but it is extremely difficult to make a portrait of Mangan, as he was in life, from Burton's idealistic sketch of the dead face. The cast of Mangan's features, taken for Dr. Stokes, seems to have disappeared altogether.

A word or two may be also given to the letters quoted in this work. They are few, but they are exceedingly representative. It would not be easy to give a wider selection from Mangan's letters without producing considerable monotony. They are nearly all, as far as I have been able to discover, to the same effect, and the greatest of writers could not always interest upon the eternal theme of pecuniary want. Moreover, as pointed out in due order, Mangan wrote comparatively few letters. Many biographies are mere packets of letters,



strung together anyhow, a large proportion of the epistles being of the baldest or least interesting kind. An attempt has been made in the present volume to weave such extracts as have been made from letters and autobiographical pieces into the narrative, so that the whole work might have a smoothness and consecutiveness hard to obtain where letters are given in disconnected batches, with all their superscriptions, formalities, and repetitions. In the case of Mangan, the absence or non-existence of many letters is less to be regretted, in view of the most interesting personal touches so constantly introduced into his published, but generally unknown, articles and other writings—charming confidences, which have been fully availed of here. If it should be thought that too free a use has been made of that part of Mangan's work which is personally illustrative, it may be urged that in reality, when the enormous fertility of Mangan is concerned, only an infinitesimal portion has been laid under contribution. With regard to the very few quotations from Mangan's *well-known* verse, I am content to shelter myself behind Macaulay, who has said: "When I praise an author, I love to give a sample or two of his wares." In general, however, only the pieces which throw some light upon the poet's character or life have been reproduced.

I cannot conclude without a feeling of regret that the effort was not made, a generation or so ago, to collect information from the then surviving friends of Mangan as to many obscure points in his life. Nearly all who looked upon him are now dead, and the task of collect-



ing material for this book has been rendered especially laborious by necessarily extensive searches in old and forgotten periodicals for writings by Mangan—searches only occasionally rewarded by success. Though the labour of collecting material was really begun less than a couple of years ago, the idea of writing a biography of Mangan has been in my mind for four or five years—since the time, in fact, when the necessity of consulting the sources of information for an account of the poet's life, which I had been requested to write for the *Dictionary of National Biography*, convinced me that no Irishman of genius had been so strangely neglected by the biographer, and that no subject was better worth the attention of an Irish writer. Such as it is, my effort is here commended to the reader.

D. J. O'DONOGHUE.

*P.S.*—I am indebted to the *Freeman's Journal* Co., Limited, for permission to use the portrait given as frontispiece, and to Mr. Dorey for the receipt in Mangan's handwriting here reproduced.











## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE ... ..	v-vii
CONTENTS ... ..	ix-xiii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ... ..	xiv
INTRODUCTION ... ..	xv-xxiv

### CHAPTER I.

JAMES MANGAN THE ELDER—BIRTH OF THE POET—HIS FATHER'S TEMPERAMENT—MANGAN'S EARLY RECOLLECTIONS—THE ELDER MANGAN'S FAILURE—SCHOOLDAYS OF THE POET— A CHILDISH EXPERIENCE—THE SCRIVENER'S OFFICE—HIS ASSOCIATES ... ..	I-II
--	------

### CHAPTER II.

THE MANGANS IN CHANCERY LANE—THE POET'S FANCIES— "GENIUS," A FRAGMENT—THE KENRICKS—THE TWO ARCH- BISHOPS—JAMES TIGHE—HIS ADDRESS TO MANGAN—THE ALMANACKS—MANGAN'S LOVE OF MYSTERY—HIS STRANGE STORY OF THE LEPER—THE ATTORNEYS' OFFICES ... ..	12-21
--	-------

### CHAPTER III.

STUDIES IN GERMAN LITERATURE—LOVE OF BOOKS—PERSONAL APPEARANCE—A GLIMPSE OF MATURIN—MANGAN'S DESCRIP- TION OF HIS LIFE AT THE ATTORNEY'S—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS —THE COMET CLUB—ITS MEMBERS—"THE PARSON'S HORN- BOOK," &c.—JOHN SHEEHAN ... ..	22-31
--	-------



## CHAPTER IV.

MANGAN'S FIRST CONTRIBUTION TO THE "COMET"—"THE DYING ENTHUSIAST"—MANGAN ADOPTS THE PEN-NAME OF "CLARENCE"—THE "DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL"—POEMS BY MANGAN—DR. PETRIE AND JOHN O'DONOVAN—MANGAN'S PERSONAL SKETCHES OF THEM—THE HAYES FAMILY—"VERSES ON THE DEATH OF A BELOVED FRIEND" ... 32-42

## CHAPTER V.

AN ADVENTURE IN "THE SHADES"—INFLUENCE OF DE QUINCEY—DR. MAGINN'S CONVIVIAL HABITS—MANGAN'S PERSONAL QUALITIES—SHEEHAN'S BAD TASTE—"A FAST KEEPER"—MANGAN ON POETS—"BROKEN HEARTED LAYS"—"LIFE IS THE DESERT AND THE SOLITUDE"—MANGAN'S LAST POEM IN THE "COMET"—HIS OPINION OF THE EDITORS ... 43-55

## CHAPTER VI.

OPIUM-EATING—DE QUINCEY—JAMES PRICE'S TESTIMONY—EDGAR ALLAN POE—MANGAN'S LOVE AFFAIR—MITCHEL'S ACCOUNT—"MY TRANSFORMATION"—MANGAN'S DISAPPOINTMENT—HIS OWN STORY—LINES "TO LAURA" ... 56-70

## CHAPTER VII.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE "DUBLIN SATIRIST"—POPULARITY OF GERMAN POETRY—IRISH TRANSLATORS—MANGAN ON GOETHE, SCHILLER, AND OTHER GERMAN POETS—"THE DYING FATHER"—THE "DUBLIN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE"—MANGAN GIVES UP SCRIVENERY WORK—SONNETS BY HIM—HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE—ENTERS THE ORDNANCE SURVEY OFFICE ... 71-83

## CHAPTER VIII.

MANGAN'S WIT—MASTERY OVER METRE AND RHYME—INVENTED POETS—ORIENTAL EXCURSIONS—MARSH'S LIBRARY—ORD-



	PAGE
NANCE SURVEY WORK—W. F. WAKEMAN ON MANGAN— ECCENTRICITIES OF THE POET—"TAR-WATER"—MANGAN'S RECIPE                   ...                   ...                   ...                   ...                   ...	84-93

## CHAPTER IX.

"LITERÆ ORIENTALES"—TURKISH DELIGHTS—"THE TIME OF THE ROSES"—"THE HUNDRED-LEAFED ROSE"—MANGAN ON LUCIDITY—"THE THIRTY FLASKS"—"THE MAN IN THE CLOAK"—MANGAN DESCRIBED BY JAMES PRICE—HIS PHRENO- LOGICAL STUDIES—EXAMINATION OF HIS "BUMPS"                   ...	94-105
---	--------

## CHAPTER X.

THE "WEEKLY REGISTER"—MANGAN'S PESSIMISM ONLY PAR- TIAL—HIS FEEBLENESS OF WILL—DESCRIPTIONS OF HIM BY MITCHEL AND O'DALY—HIS FASCINATING TALK— HIS TAVERN HAUNTS—HIS YEARNINGS—HIS PRACTICAL SIDE—HIS PROTEAN SHAPES—"THE TIME OF THE BAR- MECIDES"—DR. NEDLEY—MANGAN'S DISLIKE TO NEW ACQUAINTANCES—HIS WIT—DR. MAGINN                   ...                   ...	106-115
---	---------

## CHAPTER XI.

MANGAN ON GHOSTS—HIS GHOSTLY VISITANTS—"TWENTY GOLDEN YEARS AGO"—"IRISH PENNY JOURNAL"—"THE WOMAN OF THREE COWS"—"LAMENT FOR THE PRINCES OF TYRONE AND TYRCONNELL"—"KATHLEEN NY HOULAHAN"— "O'HUSSEY'S ODE TO THE MAGUIRE"—"BELFAST VINDI- CATOR"—MANGAN'S PHYSICAL DETERIORATION—W. F. WAKEMAN'S DESCRIPTION—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS                   ...	116-128
--	---------

## CHAPTER XII.

THE FOUNDING OF THE "NATION"—MANGAN A CONTRIBUTOR— "THE 'NATION'S' FIRST NUMBER"—HIS POLITICAL VIEWS— "GONE IN THE WIND"—THE THREE HALF-CROWNS—MARTIN MACDERMOTT—"WHERE'S MY MONEY?"—"PATHETIC HYPA- THETICS"—"THE COMING EVENT"—MORE TURKISH POETRY— TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY—"ANTHOLOGIA GERMANICA"                   ...	129-142
---	---------



## CHAPTER XIII.

MANGAN IN TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY—MITCHEL'S FIRST SIGHT OF HIM—DR. JOHN KELLS INGRAM—MANGAN'S EXTENSIVE READING—HIS VERSATILITY—FATHER MEEHAN AND MANGAN—A NIGHT WITH MANGAN—THE GROWING EVIL—MANGAN'S IRREGULARITIES—LETTERS TO M'GLASHAN ...	... 143-156
--	-------------

## CHAPTER XIV.

THE "NATION" AGAIN—"NIGHTMARES" AND "MARES' NESTS"—THE FAMINE YEAR—"THE PEAL OF ANOTHER TRUMPET"—"THE WARNING VOICE"—"THE RYE MILL"—"THE SAW MILL"—MANGAN'S DESIRE FOR DEATH—HIS GROWING SELF-ABANDONMENT—NERVOUS AFFECTIONS—LETTERS TO M'GLASHAN—MANGAN AND JOHN O'DALY—ANGLESEA STREET BOOKSELLERS—"THE ANNALS OF THE FOUR MASTERS"—"POETS AND POETRY OF MUNSTER"—JOHN KEEGAN'S DESCRIPTION OF O'DALY ...	... 157-170
---	-------------

## CHAPTER XV.

MANGAN AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE—"SIBERIA"—"TO THE INGLEEZE KHAFIR"—"THE DREAM OF JOHN M'DONNELL"—"MY THREE TORMENTORS"—JOHN KEEGAN AND EDWARD WALSH—CONTEMPORARY OPINION OF MANGAN—"DARK ROSALEEN"—"VISION OF CONNAUGHT"—LETTERS TO DUFFY	171-183
---	---------

## CHAPTER XVI.

MANGAN'S ADVICE TO HIS COUNTRYMEN—HIS PATRIOTIC FEELING—"A CRY FOR IRELAND"—"THE IRISH CATHOLIC MAGAZINE"—"ANTHOLOGIA HIBERNICA"—MANGAN'S DESPAIR—IN SOCIETY—CARLETON AND THE POET—MANGAN'S CHANGES OF RESIDENCE—THE MACDERMOTTS—DR. ANSTER—FATHER MEEHAN—EXCUSES TO M'GLASHAN—THE FAMINE ...	184-198
---	---------



CHAPTER XVII.

A TRIBUTE TO MANGAN'S RHYMING POWERS—THE NATIONAL FEELING OF MANGAN—THE "UNITED IRISHMAN"—LETTER TO MITCHEL—THE "IRISH TRIBUNE"—JOHN SAVAGE—JOSEPH BRENAN ON MANGAN—MANGAN IN DAYLIGHT—MANGAN'S APPEALS TO ANSTER, DUFFY, AND JAMES HAUGHTON—HIS PROMISES—ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL—R. D. WILLIAMS—THE "IRISHMAN"—O'DONOVAN ON MANGAN—POEMS IN THE "IRISHMAN"—JOSEPH BRENAN TO MANGAN—MANGAN'S REPLY—BRENAN'S DESCRIPTION OF CLARENCE	... 199-212
--	-------------

CHAPTER XVIII.

"A VOICE OF ENCOURAGEMENT"—MANGAN'S LAST POEMS AND SKETCHES—LAST LETTER TO ANSTER—"THE TRIBES OF IRELAND"—MANGAN ATTACKED BY CHOLERA—THE MEATH HOSPITAL—HERCULES ELLIS, JAMES PRICE, AND FATHER MEEHAN ON MANGAN'S LAST DAYS—ERRONEOUS ACCOUNTS—DR. STOKES—DEATH—AFTER DEATH—BURTON'S PORTRAIT—BURIAL—THE "IRISHMAN"—THE "NATION'S" COMMENTS—POEMS BY JAMES TIGHE, R. D. WILLIAMS, AND JOSEPH BRENAN—MANGAN'S CHARACTER—HIS OWN VINDICATION	... 213-227
---	-------------

CHAPTER XIX.

1849—MANGAN ON ECCENTRICITY—HIS ISOLATION—NEGLECT BY HIS COUNTRYMEN—LORD CARNARVON AND SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN—THE "SPECTATOR" ON MANGAN—HIS POSITION IN IRISH POETRY—MANGAN AND MOORE—HIS CULTURE—POE AND MANGAN—GILBERTIAN FLAVOUR OF MANGAN'S LIGHTER VERSE—CONCLUSION	... .. 228-236
--	----------------

APPENDIX	... .. 237-250
----------	----------------





## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

---

PORTRAIT AND AUTOGRAPH	...	...	...	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
BIRTHPLACE OF MANGAN	...	...	...	<i>facing page</i> I
NO. 6 YORK STREET	...	...	...	„ 16
ORDNANCE SURVEY OFFICE	...	...	...	„ 91
RECEIPT IN MANGAN'S HANDWRITING	...	...	...	„ 206
PORTRAIT OF MANGAN AFTER DEATH	...	...	...	„ 221





## INTRODUCTION.

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“Pity me not. Oh, no !  
The heart laid waste by grief or scorn,  
Which inly knoweth  
Its own deep woe,  
Is the only Desert. *There* no spring is born  
Amid the sands—In *that* no shady palm-tree groweth !”  
—MANGAN.

---

To write a life of Mangan is one of the most difficult tasks a biographer could possibly undertake. Of no man of equal gifts and fame belonging to this nineteenth century is there so little recorded, and there is hardly another poet known in literature about whom so much mystery has been made. Apart from its difficulties, or perhaps because of them, the writing of such a biography has a strong fascination for one who is fond of research and is at the same time impressed with the greatness of the subject. But there is a painful side to the undertaking, for surely there can never have been in the lives of the poets a more mournful life-history than that of Mangan. So melancholy are many of its details that it is hardly surprising if some, knowing them well, have shrunk from what, if the poet had been stronger-willed, might have been a very pleasant duty. His genius is so remarkable, however, that it is imperative to tell the story of his life as completely as may be, and with the fullest sympathy. “That desolate spirit,” says Mr. Justin Huntly M’Carthy in one of his pleasant “Hours with Great Irishmen,”  
“had no companions. He walked the dark way of his life alone. His comrades were strange shadows, the bodyless creations where-



in his ecstasy was most cunning. Phantoms trooped to him from the twilight land, lured, as Ulysses lured the ghosts of Hades. . . . We seem to see him hurrying on his life, most melancholy journey, as they saw him gliding through the Dublin streets like the embodiment of the weird fancies of Hoffman, a new student Anselmus, haunted by the eyes of a visionary Veronica, or buried among books, as Mitchel first found him, his brain, like a pure flame refining all he read and transmuting it to something rich and strange. . . . Of his real life, the existence burning itself fiercely out behind that ghastly mask, few knew anything, none knew much. . . . Poe's career was dark enough, but it was not all unhappy. He had loved and been loved; there were moments in his wasted existence, even long intervals, of calm and peace. But Mangan's life is one of unmitigated gloom. . . . Life was to Mangan one long interval. 'No one wish of his heart,' says Mitchel, 'was ever fulfilled; no aspiration satisfied.' . . . If he could have faced the denials of destiny with an austere renunciation, if he could have opposed a monastic fortitude to the buffets of the world, his might have been a serener if not a happier story. But a passionate longing after the ideal drove him to those deadly essences which fed for a time the hot flame of his genius at the price of his health, his reason, and his life. Genius and misery have been bed-fellows and board-brothers often enough, but they have seldom indeed been yoked together under conditions as tragic as those which make Mangan's story a record of despair."

Without sympathy and kindly feeling towards the author of so many imperishable poems, this record would be indeed a cruelty. In his admirable essay on the poet, Mitchel asks:—

"What would Mangan think and feel now, if he could know that a man was going to write his life? Would he not rise up from his low grave in Glasnevin to forbid?"

He proceeds with a declaration with which the present writer may associate himself:—

"Be still, poor ghost. Gently and reverently, and with shoes from my feet, I will tread that sacred ground."



He adds, truly enough, that

“for his whole biography documents are wanting; the man having never for one moment imagined that his poor life could interest any surviving human being, and having never, accordingly, collected his biographical assets, and appointed a literary executor to take care of his posthumous fame.”

But Mitchel is mistaken when he goes on to assert that Mangan never

“acquired the habit, common enough among literary men, of dwelling upon his early trials, struggles and triumphs;”

as it will be seen that a not inconsiderable portion of this biography is mainly derived from his own allusions, veiled and otherwise, to the leading incidents of a career upon some incidents in which he frequently dilated.

The purpose of the present work is not merely to do something to make the poet better known—or to clear up the more apparent than real mystery of his life—the writer’s aim is to also attempt a survey of Mangan’s wonderful genius—to point out its ramifications, to show all its heights and depths. It is now possible not only to narrate his life more fully than has ever been done—a not very difficult matter, seeing that so far he has been commemorated only in short sketches—but to present as full a biography as is ever likely of accomplishment. The materials for this moving history have been collected in many quarters, and from all those who were in a position to give important information. Even were the data for his daily movements more meagre than they are, the materials for a history of his mind and soul are ample, as will be observed in the course of this work. To those—the few—who think that his frailties



should be concealed from public view, it is a sufficient answer to say that it would be quite futile; the only need that can be recognised is that of a *sympathetic* record. At the same time, some discretion is essential in the making of a biography. The position of those who contend that the lives of erring poets should never be told can be understood—it is logical enough from one point of view; but to give an untrue, a false picture of a poet, with all his faults glossed over, or unrecorded, or transformed into virtues, is a literary crime. Who thinks now of concealing the manifest sins of a Byron, a Burns, or a Shelley? No sensible person dreams of holding up Coleridge or Poe as models, of obliterating all allusions to their notorious self-indulgence. Nor is there any sufficient reason shown for screening from view the faults, the weaknesses of Mangan—weaknesses which made his life wretched in the extreme. One of the pressing needs of Irish literature is a fair and impartial account of the almost forgotten or never recorded lives of its most notable writers. As that of probably the greatest poet Ireland has ever produced, the life of Mangan is especially deserving of a faithful chronicle. His own opinion as to the need of an account of his life is ascertainable, for in the curious autobiographical fragment written by him for Father Meehan, he says:—

“At a very early period of my life I became impressed by the conviction that it is the imperative duty of every man who has deeply sinned and deeply suffered to place upon record some memorial of his wretched experience for the benefit of his fellow-creatures, and by way of a beacon to them to avoid, in their voyage of existence, the rocks and shoals upon which his own peace of soul has undergone shipwreck.”

The present writer has too keen an admiration for Mangan to do him an injustice. His object is to impress upon the ever-increasing numbers of the poet's admirers



the greatness of the genius of one of whom Mitchel uses words which are not less applicable now than when they were uttered:—

“I have not yet met,” he says, “a cultivated Irishman or woman of genuine Irish nature who did not prize Clarence Mangan above all the poets that their island of song ever nursed.”

No doubt other Irish poets are more universally known, but one of the strongest reasons for writing his life is to show that Mangan's work is not half as familiar to his countrymen as it should be, from causes which may appear as this work proceeds. Were the full extent of his genius as palpable as it will be one day, (when all his finer work is disinterred from its present almost inaccessible position in corners of dead and forgotten periodicals,) he would unquestionably occupy by the general acclamation of critics the proudest position in our literature. It is not just to Mangan to judge him by the collections of his verse which have been made. They are all grossly inadequate. Much labour has been expended in exhuming his minor translations—many of them unworthy of his genius—that could have been more profitably given to the task of collecting his many fine original pieces. Mangan wrote more than eight hundred poems—of which perhaps a fourth are original—but one would imagine (from the collections in question) that his poetical work consisted of a couple of hundred translations, and perhaps a score of his own conceptions. Mangan's true importance can never be established till a careful edition of his best poems—unmixed with his rhyming exercises and word-spinnings—has been placed before the world.\* His

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\* Since this was written Miss Louise Guiney, a highly accomplished American critic, has published a charming and fairly large selection.



was the most dazzling light in the constellation of genius which flashed over Ireland during the period between 1830 and 1850. The better one's acquaintance with his poems the more certain is the belief in the permanence of his fame. Even in England his reputation is growing steadily. In a characteristic sentence Mitchel gives us what is, perhaps, the real reason that Mangan is not already accounted one of the chief glories of the Victorian age, as English journalists and critics love to call the decades since 1837. As it is the fashion in English critical circles to think that what is written purely for Irish readers is necessarily provincial and local, it is not surprising to find Mangan, until recently, absolutely missing from the poetic returns of Mr. W. M. Rossetti and the others who have compiled lists of the poets of the century. But Mitchel's sentence remains unquoted:—

“Mangan was not only an Irishman—not only an Irish Papist, not only an Irish Papist rebel, but throughout his whole literary life he never deigned to attorn to English criticism, never published a line in any English periodical, or through any English bookseller, and never seemed to be aware that there was an English public to please.”

As already hinted, during the fifty years which have passed since Mangan was taken to his grave in Glasnevin, little has been done for his memory by his countrymen. A wretched headstone marks his grave, but there is no tablet in the house in which he was born—no public memorial of any kind in the Dublin he never left—and but for the exertions of Father Meehan and Mr. John M'Call nothing but a few newspaper articles would have been devoted to Mangan's genius. Mitchel's edition of some of the poems—inadequate as it is—has nevertheless been of splendid service, and Sir Charles Gavan Duffy has



done something by the few scattered references in *Young Ireland* and *Four Years of Irish History* to make known in England the poet whose name, more than any other, will keep the memory of the *Nation* green in Irish literary history. But Father Meehan is most to be thanked for his endeavours to perpetuate the fame of his companion and friend. Without his admirable introductions to the volume of *Munster Poets*, to the *German Anthology*, and to the useful little collection of Mangan's minor work called *Essays in Prose and Verse*, the Irish people would know little about the poet's literary activities! even now, they know nothing at all of the inner history of his mind. Mr. John M'Call, in his very creditable little *brochure* on Mangan's life, has told us something not previously known of the early writings of Mangan, and this is the proper place to acknowledge the kindness with which he has assisted in the preparation of this biography. Most of the information relative to the youthful career of Mangan has been obtained either from or through him, and I am indebted to him for copies of some of the curious and characteristic contributions to the *Comet* and *Satirist* which have been made use of here. I have also to acknowledge with thanks the help afforded me by Sir Frederick Burton, whose drawing of Mangan's features after death is so well known; Mr. W. F. Wakeman, the antiquarian and artist; Dr. Nedley, Dr. Sigerson, Mr. M. W. Rooney, Mr. Martin MacDermott, Mr. J. Casimir O'Meagher, Miss C. Anster, Mr. John O'Leary, Very Rev. Canon O'Hanlon, Dr. John Kells Ingram, and, lastly, Lady Ferguson and the late Miss Jane Carleton, for reminiscences or other matter concerning the poet. I am obliged to my friends Messrs. David Comyn, P. J. M'Call, William Boyle and Frank MacDonagh for useful references, the loan of printed matter about Mangan and other help. The lack of personal letters by Mangan will be remarked,



and may be explained in two ways. Few are extant, as Mangan was not given to letter-writing—except when desperately in need of a loan—and as all his friends resided near him (his acquaintance being restricted to Dublin), it rarely happened that he was obliged to write. That he did not write from the pleasure of the thing seems pretty clear from the fact that some of those who knew him well for years never had a letter from him. Those letters which are quoted will be found very interesting and very Manganesque. Of course all known published references to Mangan have been consulted and made use of, and a good many interesting and unpublished reminiscences of him by contemporaries are woven into the narrative. Several unknown autobiographical fragments by Mangan himself have also been incorporated, and a good many very serviceable discoveries which have been made by the present writer help to fill up the gaps left by other writers. It will be found that Mangan's own confessions (and implications) are not always reliable in the strictest sense of the word; but it must be said that his wonted exaggeration is not evident in the powerful poem entitled "The Nameless One," a painful autobiography, which may be quoted here with the statement that the biography which follows is mainly a corroborative running commentary of an extensive kind on this terrible summary of a ruined life. It is doubtful whether in all literature despair and fatalism have ever spoken in such mournful, pitiable accents as in this poem, which serves as an impressive prologue to the tragedy to be unfolded in these pages:—

"Roll forth, my song, like the rushing river,  
That sweeps along to the mighty sea;  
God will inspire me while I deliver  
My soul of thee.



Tell thou the world, when my bones lie whitening  
Amid the last homes of youth and eld,  
That there was once one whose veins ran lightning  
No eye beheld.

Tell how his boyhood was one drear night hour,  
How shone for him, through his grief and gloom,  
No star of all Heaven sends to light our  
Path to the tomb.

Roll on, my song, and to after ages  
Tell how, disdaining all earth can give,  
He would have taught men, from wisdom's pages,  
The way to live.

And tell how, trampled, derided, hated,  
And worn by weakness, disease and wrong,  
He fled for shelter to God, who mated  
His soul with song—

With song which always, sublime or vapid,  
Flowed like a rill in the morning beam;  
Perchance not deep, but intense and rapid—  
A mountain stream.

Tell how this Nameless, condemned for years long  
To herd with demons from hell beneath,  
Saw things that made him, with groans and tears, long  
For even death.

Go on and tell how, with genius wasted,  
Betrayed in friendship, befooled in love,  
With spirit shipwrecked and young hopes blasted,  
He still, still strove.

Till spent with toil, dreeing death for others,  
And some whose hands should have wrought for him  
(If children live not for sires and mothers),  
His mind grew dim.



And he fell far through that pit abysmal,  
The gulf and grave of Maginn and Burns,  
And pawned his soul for the devil's dismal  
Stock of returns—

But yet redeemed it in days of darkness,  
And shapes and signs of the final wrath,  
When death, in hideous and ghastly starkness,  
Stood on his path.

And tell how now, amid wreck and sorrow,  
And want and sickness, and houseless nights,  
He bides in calmness the silent morrow  
That no ray lights.

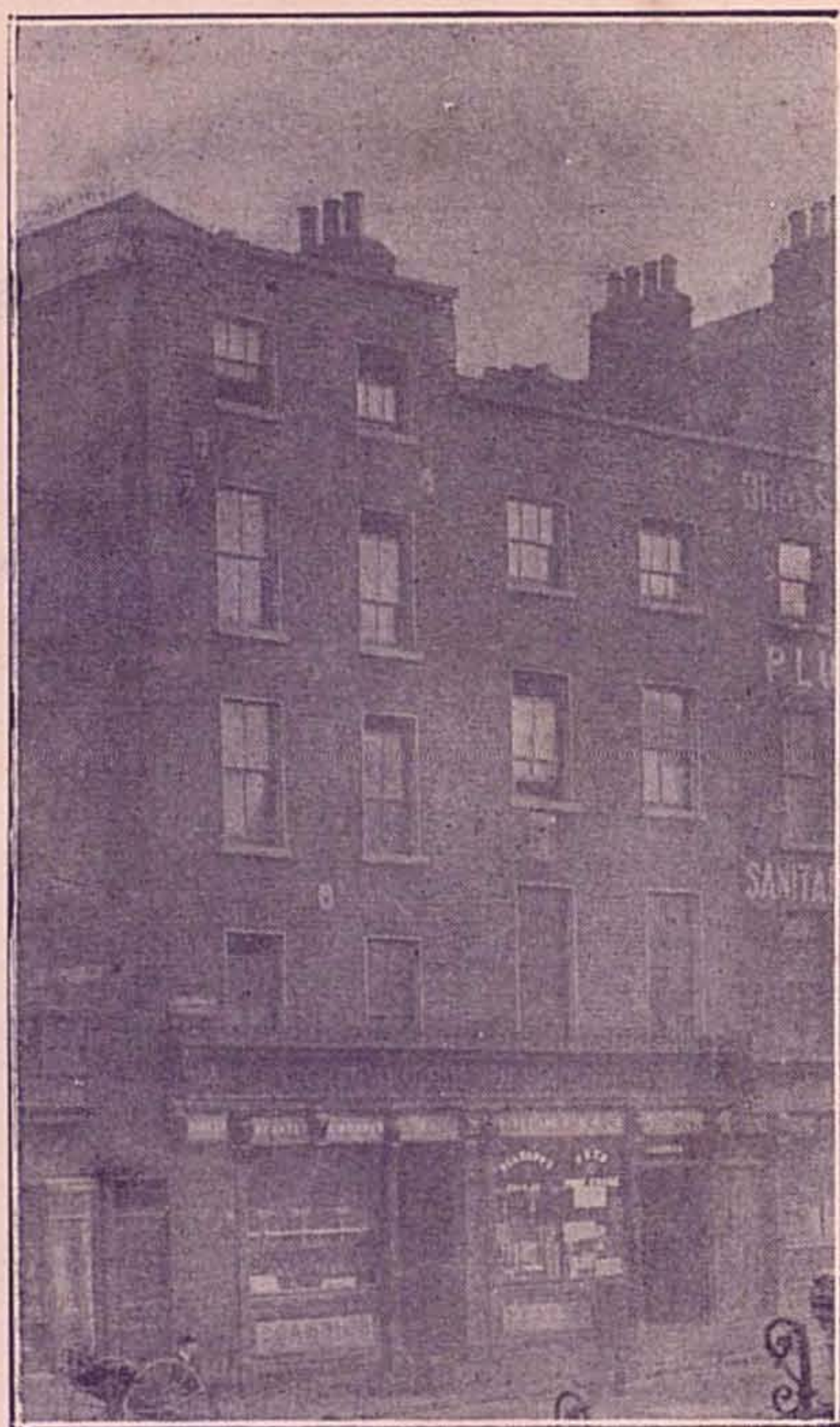
And lives he still, then? Yes, old and hoary  
At thirty-nine, from despair and woe,  
He lives enduring what future story  
Will never know.

Him grant a grave to, ye pitying noble,  
Deep in your bosoms. There let him dwell!  
He, too, had pity for all souls in trouble,  
Here and in hell!"









BIRTHPLACE OF MANGAN





# THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

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## CHAPTER I.

JAMES MANGAN THE ELDER—BIRTH OF THE POET—HIS FATHER'S TEMPERAMENT—MANGAN'S EARLY RECOLLECTIONS—THE ELDER MANGAN'S FAILURE—SCHOOLDAYS OF THE POET—A CHILDISH EXPERIENCE—THE SCRIVENER'S OFFICE—HIS ASSOCIATES.

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“Man, companioned by care, has incessantly trod  
His dark way to the grave down this Valley of Tears.”—MANGAN.

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ONE of the most interesting streets in Dublin, by reason of its numerous historical associations, is that portion of old Fishamble Street which is now, for some inexplicable reason, called Lord Edward Street. The City Fathers were doubtless inspired by the best of motives, but it seems strange that they were not content with naming the new thoroughfare to the Cathedral after the ill-fated Fitzgerald, but must needs carry the name right round a corner, in order to include the few houses towards the south side, among which is that one made memorable by Mangan's birth therein.\* It was in the old Fishamble Street Music Hall that Handel's “Messiah” was first performed, and in after days the street was notable by its theatre, to which, according to the legend, “ladies and gentlemen” without shoes or stockings were not admitted.

Some distinguished families were residents in this street

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\* They have made some amends by calling one of the new squares in the Liberties after the poet.



in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and No. 3, the actual house in which Mangan was born (one is tempted to say ushered into the world) was owned by the old family of Ussher, who lived here for several generations, and whose arms may be seen just under the window of the second floor. The famous Archbishop Ussher was of this family, which retained the house until about the opening of the eighteenth century, when it passed into other hands. Towards the end of the century it came into the possession of a grocer named Farrell, who married a lady named Mary Smith\* of Kiltale, near Dunsany, Co. Meath. When Farrell died, his business was continued by his widow. Having no children, she sent to Kiltale for her niece, Miss Catherine Smith, to assist her in the management of the house, and, on her death, left the property to her. At this time, which we may fix at about the time of the Rebellion, one James Mangan, a teacher from Shanagolden, Co. Limerick,† was pursuing his calling in Dublin, and became acquainted with the proprietress of No. 3. The acquaintance culminated in their marriage in 1801, and their first child, born on May 1st, 1803, was the subject of this biography. He was christened James Mangan, in the old chapel of Rosemary Lane, on the following day.

The elder Mangan was a man of some education and refinement, but events proved that he was not altogether fitted to succeed in business. His name does not appear in the Dublin Directory as tenant of the house until 1806, and it drops out after 1811, the business being carried on from 1812 to 1822 by his brother-in-law, Patrick Smith, whom he had induced to come from London for that purpose.‡ James Mangan and his wife had four children—James, already mentioned; John, born in 1804; William, born in 1808; and a sister who is said to have died in early youth from the effects of a scald. Of his father, the poet gives conflicting accounts. In one of the biographical sketches of eminent Irishmen, which he wrote in his last days,

\* *Vide* Mr. John M'Call's sketch of Mangan's life.

† The name Mangan (pronounced Mang'-an, not Man'-gan), was originally O'Mongan, and the tribe belonged to Clare.

‡ The story told by several writers, that Francis Higgins, the notorious "Sham Squire," began his career as a potboy with one Smith, the paternal grandfather of the poet, in this street, is a very improbable one. There was a grocer named Smith at No. 6, but at a date which would not at all fit the story alluded to.



Mangan introduces a casual reference to him. Speaking of Limerick people, whom he praises highly, he remarks :—

“I say not this, because my own excellent, though unfortunate father came from Shanagolden, but because of my personal and intimate acquaintance with multitudes of his friends and townsmen.”

Yet, in other places he seems to refer to him with some bitterness, and in his last years, as in his earlier years, attributed his own misfortunes to his father's neglect. In one of his autobiographical fragments, he says :—

“ I share, with an illustrious townsman of my own,\* the honour or the disreputability, as it may be considered, of having been born the son of a grocer. My father, however, unlike his, never exhibited the qualities of guardian towards his children. His temper was not merely quick and irascible, but it also embodied much of that calm, concentrated spirit of Milesian fierceness, a picture of which I have endeavoured to paint in my Italian story of ‘ Gasparo Bandollo.’† His nature was truly noble ; to quote a phrase of my friend O'Donovan (in the *Annals of the Four Masters*), ‘ he never knew what it was to refuse the countenance of living man ;’ but in neglecting his own interests—and not the most selfish misanthrope could accuse him of attending closely to those—he unfortunately forgot the injuries that he inflicted upon the interests of others. He was of an ardent and forward-bounding disposition, and though deeply religious by nature, he hated the restraints of social life, and seemed to think that all feelings with regard to family connections and the obligations imposed by them were totally beneath his notice. Me, my two brothers, and my sister, he treated habitually as a huntsman would treat refractory hounds. It was his boast, uttered in pure glee of heart, ‘ That we would run into a mouse-hole ’ to shun him. While my mother lived he made her miserable ; he led my only sister such a life that she was obliged to leave our house ; he kept up a succession of continued hostilities with my brothers ; and, if he spared me more than others, it was, perhaps, because I displayed a greater contempt of life and everything con-

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\* Thomas Moore.

† The reference is to a powerful dramatic poem by Mangan, which tells of an outlaw, who, seeking refuge in a peasant's hut, is betrayed by the peasant's son. The son meets with no mercy from his father, Gasparo, who slays him. Here is a fragment of the poem :—

“ The eye is dark, the cheek is hollow,  
To-night of Gasparo Bandollo,  
And his high brow shows worn and pale—  
Slight signs all of the inward strife  
Of the soul's lightning, swift to strike  
And sure to slay, but flashing never.  
For Man and Earth and Heaven alike  
Seem for him voiceful of a tale  
That robs him of all rest for ever,  
And leaves his own right hand to sever  
The last link binding him to Life.”



nected with it than he thought was shown by the rest of the family. . . . May God assoil his great and eternal soul, and grant him eternal peace and forgiveness. But I have an inward feeling, that to him I owe all my misfortunes."

In another sketch of his own early career, Mangan tells us that his father "had a princely soul but no prudence," and he elaborates this conclusion in the account he wrote for Father Meehan, where he declares that his father's

"grand worldly fault was *improvidence*. To everyone who applied to him for money he uniformly gave double or treble the sum requested of him. He parted with his money, he gave away the best part of his worldly property, and in the end he even suffered his own judgment and discretion to become the spoil of strangers. In plainer words, he permitted cold-blooded and crafty men to persuade him that he was wasting his energies by following the grocery business, and that by re-commencing life as a vintner he would soon be able not only to retrieve all his losses but realise an ample fortune. And thus it happened, reader, that I, James Clarence Mangan, came into the world surrounded, if I may so express myself, by an atmosphere of curses and intemperance, of cruelty, infidelity, and blasphemy, and of both secret and open hatred towards the moral government of God."

He tells practically the same tale in an impersonal way in a notice of himself (which, with characteristic quaintness, he intended for a series of articles on "Distinguished Irishmen," signing it with the initials of Edward Walsh). It was not published, however, during his lifetime—

"He was born amidst scenes of blasphemy and riot, . . . his father had embarked in an unholy business—one too common and patent in every city—and he was robbed by those around him."

Without accepting as true everything that Mangan says of his father—concerning whom he was admittedly subject to hallucinations at the time he wrote the above—there is evidence that the elder Mangan was one of those not uncommon men who can be extremely pleasant and even generous to all outside their own household. With a rigorous conception of the awe and respect due to himself as head of the family, he seems to have combined considerable trustfulness in others, and a dependence upon the words and goodwill of mere acquaintances which was almost childlike. Mainly, it appears, from a disinclination to trust his own mind, and a profound belief in the disinterestedness of others, he embarked upon several speculations which turned out to be so many disasters. In fact, if his son is to be completely believed, everything went wrong



with him once he was persuaded to give up the business in which, apparently *malgre lui*, he was prospering.

"From the fatal hour," says the poet, "which saw my father enter upon his new business\* the hand of retributive Providence was visibly manifested in the change that ensued in his affairs. Year after year his property melted away. Debts accumulated on him, and his creditors, knowing the sort of man they had to deal with, always proved merciless. Step by step he sank, until, as he himself expressed it, only 'the desert of perdition' lay before him. Disasters of all kinds thickened around him; disappointment and calamity were sown broadcast in his path. No man whom he trusted proved faithful. 'The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.' And his family? They were neglected—forgotten—left to themselves."

There is some truth in Mangan's account of his unlucky parent, but it is not a wholly accurate impression. Had the elder Mangan been less extravagant and ostentatious in his manner of living, even his business reverses would not have ruined him utterly. But the Irish love of display completed what bad investments had begun. At one time James Mangan had actually retired from business with a fair competence, and his brother-in-law, Patrick Smith, managed the Fishamble Street house, in Mangan's interest, at least for some time; but the latter's inordinate love of open hospitality speedily made heavy inroads into his capital, and he resorted to more and more risky enterprises. He was accustomed, in the days of his prosperity, to give expensive parties, and when, as occasionally happened, his own house was too small for the invited guests, he would engage a hotel for the purpose of accommodating them. Pic-nics in the counties of Dublin and Wicklow were a frequent form of entertainment indulged in by the too lavish host.

"My father's circumstances," says Mangan, "at length grew desperate; within the lapse of a very limited period he had failed in eight successive establishments in different parts of Dublin,† until finally nothing remained for him to do but sit down and fold his arms in despair. Ruin and beggary stared him in the face; his spirit was broken."

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\* That of a Vintner.

† In the Dublin Directories of the time we find several Mangans, who may not improbably have been his relatives. Thus, Darby Mangan, grocer, occupied No. 11 East Arran Street from 1807 to 1810, when Edward Mangan replaced him. He, corn factor as well as grocer, is in his turn replaced by James Mangan in 1817. In 1839 Edward Mangan again entered into possession of the house.



It is believed that some unfortunate building speculations gave the finishing blow to his hopes of retrieval, and Michael Smith, another of his wife's brothers, who was in a good way of business as a bacon-curer and provision merchant, was finally obliged to take charge of the education of the eldest son.

Previous to this eventuality, the future poet had been placed in a famous school in Saul's Court,\* off Fishamble Street (which was founded in 1760 by the distinguished Jesuit, Father John Austin, who had educated O'Keeffe, the dramatist). Mangan was seven years old at the time. His earliest instructor seems to have been Michael Courtney, † who was employed at the academy, and who afterwards had a school of his own, ~~first in Derby Square, which Mangan attended, and finally in Aungier Street.~~ From Courtney he learnt little more than the rudiments of education. After a short period he was entrusted to the personal tuition of Father Graham, a very learned priest in the establishment, who had, Father Meehan says, "just returned from Salamanca and Palermo." Under this admirable scholar, who replaced Courtney (whose Aungier Street school was opened in 1812), Mangan obtained the groundwork of his subsequent very creditable knowledge of the Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish languages. Naturally studious, Mangan pored over his books with delighted assiduity. He tells us that when at home he

"sought refuge in books and solitude, and days would pass during which my father seemed neither to know nor care whether I was living or dead. My brothers and sister fared better; they indulged in habits of active exercise, and strengthened their constitutions morally and physically to a degree that even enabled them to present a

\* Demolished in the making of Lord Edward Street. It received its name from a wealthy Catholic distiller of the last century, who had been persecuted for sheltering a person whose relatives endeavoured to force her to conform to the State Church. Father Austin's first school was in Cook Street. With Saul's Court many eminent persons are connected. One of the interesting points about it is that it was the *locale* of the Gaelic Society of 1800, whose leading members were Patrick Lynch, author of several works relating to the language; Edward O'Reilly, compiler of the Irish Dictionary; William Halliday, author of the Grammar and translator of Keating; Rev. Denis Taaffe, author of a "History of Ireland"; Theophilus O'Flanagan, an active Gaelic scholar; Rev. Paul O'Brien, author of an Irish Grammar; and others of less note.

† Courtney was a Newry man, and a contributor to the almanacs and diaries of his time. John O'Daly says Mangan stayed at the school in Derby Square until he was fifteen, and implies that he was never at any other. Mangan himself only mentions the school in Derby Square.

1809 / On Dec 20, 21, 22, 1808, public meeting held at Saul's Court School - The school is then described as "Directed by Mr Courtney" - 15 years in business & August, 1809 Courtney opened at 17 Aungier St.



successful front of opposition to the tyranny exercised over them. But I shut myself up in a close room. I isolated myself in such a manner from my own nearest relations that with one voice they proclaimed me 'mad.' Perhaps I was : this much, at least, is certain, that it was precisely at that period (from my tenth to my fourteenth year) that the seeds of moral insanity were developed within me, which afterwards grew up into a tree of giant altitude."

He also says that even at this early age he had a kind of intuition that he was foredoomed to misery. Referring to this in the impersonal autobiographical fragment already alluded to, he says:—

"I am not a believer in what is popularly called predestination, but I think that there does appear to be a destiny about Mangan. . . . If the sins of the fathers be still visited upon the children, here assuredly is a case in point. His childhood was neglected. . . . He had no companions. . . . He never mingled in the amusements of other boys. His childhood was dark and joyless. Of a strongly marked nervous temperament by nature, his nerves even then were irretrievably shattered."

And he proceeds to narrate a curious incident which, he avers, "happened to him in his early boyhood" :—

"A hare-brained girl who lodged in his father's house, sent him out one day to buy a ballad ; he had no covering on his head, and there was a tremendous shower of rain : but she told him the rain would make him grow. He believed her, went out, strayed through many streets and bye-places now abolished, found, at length, his way homeward, and for eight years afterwards, from his fifth year to his thirteenth, remained almost blind. In the twilight alone could he attempt to open his eyes, and then he—read."

He is more explicit about the fatalistic tendency that grew upon him in the sketch of his early life which he wrote for Father Meehan :—

"In my boyhood," he says, "I was haunted by an indescribable feeling of something terrible. It was as though I strove in the vicinity of some tremendous danger, to which my apprehensions could give neither form nor outline. What it was I knew not ; but it seemed to include many kinds of pain and bitterness—baffled hopes and memories full of remorse. It rose on my imagination like one of those dreadful ideas, which are said by some German writers of romance to infest the soul of a man apparently foredoomed to the commission of murder. I say apparently, for I may here, in the outset, state that I have no faith in the theory of predestination, and that I believe every individual to be the architect of his own happiness or misery ; but I did feel that a period would arrive when I should look back upon the past with horror, and should say to myself : ' Now the great tree of my existence is blasted, and will never more put forth fruit or blossom.' And it was (if I may so speak) one of the nightmare loads lying most heavily on



my spirit that I could not reconcile my feelings of impending calamity with the dictates of that reason which told me that nothing can irreparably destroy a man except his proper criminality; and that the verdict of conscience on our own actions, if favourable, should always be sufficient to secure to us an amount of contentment beyond the powers of accident to effect, like Bonnet, whose life was embittered by the strange notion that he saw *an honest man* continually robbing his house. I suffered as much from my inability to harmonise my thoughts and feelings as from the very evil itself that I dreaded. Such was my condition from my sixth to my sixteenth year."

When his father's estate became seriously embarrassed, Mangan was withdrawn from the more expensive academy in Saul's Court and sent to Courtney's, in Derby Square. This school, like that in Saul's Court, is no longer in existence, and few even of those who know Dublin well could point out Derby Square itself. Mitchel thus refers to it—

"Very few of the wealthier and more fashionable inhabitants of Dublin know the existence of this dreary quadrangle. The houses are high and dingy; many of the windows are patched with paper; clothes-lines extend from window to window, and on the whole the place has an air of having seen better days."

It is now boarded up and deserted, but it is a picturesque little place, the entrance portico of which can be seen in Werburgh Street, nearly opposite the church in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald is buried, and within sight of Mangan's birthplace. With the exception of a brief stay at the academy kept by William Browne in Chancery Lane, the poet appears to have had no other schooling. He was largely self-taught, and the wonderful proofs of wide reading in several literatures which in later years he was able to exhibit were the result of many years of close and unhealthy confinement and absorption in books. His sight would have been injured while he was in his teens by this close study alone—without any such common experience as that of the errand in the rain which he has described.

Of his stay at Derby Square, Mangan tells an incident which is worth reproducing:—

"My schooling during those early days stood me in good stead. Yet I attended little to the mere technical instruction given to me in school. I rather tried to derive information from general study than from dry rules and special statements. One anecdote I may be permitted to give here, which will somewhat illustrate the peculiar condition of my moral and intellectual being at this period. . . . It was the first evening of my entrance. Twenty boys were arranged in a class, and to me, as the latest comer, was allotted the lowest place—



a place with which I was perfectly contented. The question propounded by the schoolmaster was, 'What is a parenthesis?' But in vain did he test their philological capacities; one alone attempted some blundering explanation from the grammar; and finally to me, as the forlorn hope that might possibly save the credit of the school, was the query referred. 'Sir,' said I, 'I have only come into the school to-day, and have not had time to look into the grammar; but I should suppose a parenthesis to be something included in a sentence but which might be omitted from the sentence without injury to the meaning of the sentence.' 'Go up, sir,' exclaimed the master, 'to the head of the class.' With an emotion of boyish pride I assumed the place allotted to me: but the next minute found me once more in my original position. 'Why do you go down again, sir?' asked the worthy pedagogue. 'Because, sir,' cried I boldly, 'I have not deserved the head place. Give it to this boy'—and I pointed to the lad who had all but succeeded—'he merits it better; because, at least he has tried to study his task.' The schoolmaster smiled; he and the usher whispered together, and I was remanded to a seat apart. On the following day no fewer than three Roman Catholic clergymen, who visited the academy, condescended to enter into conversation with me, and I very well recollect that one of them, after having heard me read Blair on 'The Death of Christ,' from Scott's 'Lessons,' clapped me on the back, with the exclamation, 'You'll be a rattling fine fellow, my boy; but see and take care of yourself.' In connection with this anecdote I may be permitted to mention a singular fact, namely, that in my earlier years I was passionately fond of declaiming, not for my auditors, but for myself. I loved to indulge in solitary rhapsodies, and, if intruded upon on these occasions, I was made very unhappy. Yet I had none of the ordinary shyness of boyhood. I merely felt or fancied that between me and those who approached me no species of sympathy could exist; and I shrank from communion with them as from somewhat alien from my nature. This feeling continued to acquire strength daily, until in after years it became one of the grand and terrible miseries of my existence. It was a morbid product of pride and presumption which, almost hidden from myself, constituted even from my childhood governing traits in my character, and have so often rendered me repulsive in the eyes of others."

He was roused from his studies and soliloquies to the imperative necessity of earning the livelihood of himself and the rest of the family. His father, reduced to almost absolute want (according to Mangan), recognised that some member of the family should become its bread-winner, and feeling himself unequal to the task, decided that his eldest son should be apprenticed to scrivenerly, at that time an important profession. This decision caused Mangan intense mortification and grief. He had fondly hoped that he would have been left to his studies, and he knew himself well enough to appreciate the fact that his was not a nature fitted to battle in the world. The struggle for existence which was thus to begin for him found him totally unpre-



pared and thoroughly dismayed. The love of solitude and books, the tendency to dream, the dread of an uncongenial life which had already become marked characteristics in him, were intensified by his enforced contact with a world which he feared. To the end of his days he never spoke of his experiences as a scrivener but with deep loathing and all the bitterness of which he was capable. His description of those experiences, however, is undoubtedly exaggerated, and he makes far too much of the petty annoyances and worries he was subjected to, which, after years of brooding, assumed terrible proportions to his mind.

He was fifteen years of age when he was called upon to earn the bread of the family. He thus refers to it:—

As a last resource he (his father) looked to the wretched members of his family for that help which he should have rather been able to extend to them. I was fifteen years old; could I not even begin to exert myself for the behoof of my kindred? If my excellent mother thought so she said nothing; but my father undertook the solution of the question, and I was apprenticed to a scrivener. Taken from my books, obliged to relinquish my solitary rambles, and compelled, for the miserable pittance of a few shillings weekly, to herd with the coarsest of associates, and suffer at their hands every sort of rudeness and indignity which their uncultivated and semi-savage natures prompted them to inflict on me. 'Thus bad began, but worse remained behind.'"

In the impersonal narrative he remarks:—

"Upon poor Clarence at the age of fifteen devolved the task of supporting him and his mother, even while they were yet in the prime of life. With ruined health and a wandering mind, that knew not where to find a goal, he undertook the accomplishment of what he conceived to be his duty. Eleven\* other years passed away, during which he was compelled to be the daily associate of some of the most infernally heartless ruffians on this side of hell."

Again, in one of his letters, he returns to the charge against his fellow employees—

"For ten long years I toiled and moiled—all for my parents, my sister, and my two brothers. I was obliged to work for seven years of the ten from five in the morning, winter and summer, to eleven at night, and during the three remaining years nothing but a special Providence could have saved me from suicide. For the seven years I was in a scrivener's office, during the three in an attorney's. They talk of factory slavery, I solemnly declare to you, my dear sir, and I

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\* Mangan's specific statements of this kind are rarely to be relied upon.



have read with great interest all the papers by Mr. Oastler, as well as the reports of the Commissioners, I solemnly declare to you that the factory would have been a paradise to me in comparison with my office. The misery of my mind ; my natural tendency to loneliness, poetry and self-analysis ; the disgusting obscenities and horrible blasphemies of those associated with me ; the persecutions I was compelled to undergo, and which I never avenged but by acts of kindness (which acts were always taken as evidence of weakness on my part, and only provoked further aggressions)—added to these, the close air of the room, and the perpetual smoke of the chimney—all these destroyed my constitution. No, I am wrong ; it was not even all these that destroyed me. In seeking to escape from this misery I laid the foundation of the evil habit which has since proved so ruinous to me. I feel my heart getting sick and my breath growing faint as I recount these details to you."

To return again to the impersonal autobiography already quoted, he continues—

"Yet he somehow battled against what seemed destiny itself. Very despair lent him an energy. All day at an attorney's desk, amid thick smoke, sulphur, blasphemies, and obscenities worse than blasphemies, so passed poor Mangan his years at his period. His father and mother never spoke to him, nor could he exchange his ideas with them. He had gold and they had copper."





## CHAPTER II.

THE MANGANS IN CHANCERY LANE—THE POET'S FANCIES—  
 "GENIUS," A FRAGMENT—THE KENRICKS—THE TWO ARCH-  
 BISHOPS—JAMES TIGHE—HIS ADDRESS TO MANGAN—THE  
 ALMANACKS—MANGAN'S LOVE OF MYSTERY—HIS STRANGE  
 STORY OF THE LEPER—THE ATTORNEYS' OFFICES.

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"And ever lonelier and silenter  
 Grew the dark images of Life's poor dream,  
 Till scarcely o'er the dusky scenery there  
 The Lamp of Hope itself could cast a gleam."—MANGAN.

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UPON leaving Fishamble Street the family seems to have gone to Charlemont Street, where it is said they kept one servant, and thence to Chancery Lane, a very interesting thoroughfare, running from Bride Street to Golden Lane, and still in the immediate locality of Mangan's birthplace. This street is now a very humble one; only the very poorest people live in it; but it was a very "respectable" place, indeed, in Mangan's early days. Among its residents were Patrick Lynch, the Gaelic scholar, who was secretary of the Gaelic Society previously mentioned, and author of some useful works bearing upon the ancient tongue; William Browne, who was, like Lynch, a teacher, and Mr. Kenrick, the scrivener, with whom Mangan served his apprenticeship. It has an ancient appearance, and contains houses which, though half-ruined, give evidence of their former importance. In the description which follows, Mangan let his fancy wander at will, and did not attend to accuracy. It is practically impossible that such a house (or part of a house) could have existed in the place at the time Mangan lived in it. Father Meehan saw the improbability of this account, and questioned its truth, and the poet replied that he dreamed it. It must be remembered that this fragment of autobiography, like the others, was written only a little before his death, and, therefore, many years after the events described. But Mangan, who claims to be speaking truthfully throughout, may be considered to be so in the



sense that he really believed what he stated, having persuaded himself of its truth. He gives, however, in a sketch of Dr. Petrie, a very quaint and amusing account of how he usually came to his conclusions :—

“My mode of forming an opinion suiteth myself and scandaliseth nobody. I take a few facts, not caring to be overwhelmed by too many proofs that they are facts ; with them I mix up a dish of the marvellous—perhaps an old wife’s tale—perhaps a half-remembered dream or mesmeric experience of my own—and the business is done. My conclusion is reached, and shelved, and must not thenceforward be disturbed. I would as soon think at any time afterwards of questioning its truth as of doubting the veritable existence of the Barber’s five brothers in the *Arabian Nights*, or the power of Keyn Alasnam, King of the Genii. There it is, and an opponent may battle with me anent it, if he pleases. I manage to hold my ground by the help of digressions and analogies.”

Here is his description of the Chancery Lane abode :—

“At this time we—that is, my father, my mother, my brothers, my sister, and myself—tenanted one of the dismalest domiciles, perhaps, to be met with in the most forlorn recesses of any city in Europe. It consisted of two wretched rooms, or rather holes, at the rear of a tottering old fragment of a house, or, if the reader please, hovel, in Chancery Lane. These dens, one of which was above the other, were mutually connected by means of a steep and almost perpendicular ladder, down which it was my fortune to receive many a tumble from time to time upon the sloppy earthen floor beneath. Door or window there was none to the lower chamber ; the place of the latter, in particular, being supplied, not very elegantly, by a huge chasm in the bare and broken wall. In the upper apartment, which served as our sleeping room, the spiders and beetles had established an almost undisputed right of occupancy, while the winds and rains blew in on all sides and whistled and howled through the winter nights like the voices of unquiet spirits. It was to this dreary abode, without, I believe, a parallel for desolateness, that I was accustomed to return from my employer’s office each night between eleven and twelve through three long years. I scarcely regarded my own sufferings when I reflected on those of my relations—my mother especially, whose fortitude was admirable—and yet I did suffer, and dreadfully. I was a slave of the most miserable order. Coerced to remain for the most part bound to one spot from early morning till near midnight, tied down to the dull drudgery of the desk’s dead wood unceasingly, without sympathy or companionship, my heart felt as if it were gradually growing into the inanimate material I wrote on. I scarcely seemed like a thing of life, and yet at intervals the spirit within me would struggle to vindicate itself, and the more poetical part of my disposition would seek to burst into imperfect existence. Some lines which I produced about this time may serve to give my readers a notion of the sentiments which even amid want and bitter pain, and loneliness of soul, may sometimes agitate the breast of a boy of sixteen :—



"O Genius! Genius! all thou dost endure,  
 First from thyself, and finally from those  
 The earth-bound and the blind, who cannot feel  
 That there be souls with purposes as pure  
 And lofty as the mountain snows, and zeal  
 All quenchless as the spirit whence it flows.  
 In whom that fire, struck like the spark from steel,  
 In other bosoms ever lives and glows.  
 Of such, thrice blessed are they whom ere mature  
 Life generate woes which God alone can heal,  
 His mercy calls to a loftier sphere than this—  
 For the mind's conflicts are the worst of woes;  
 And fathomless and fearful yawns the Abyss  
 Of Darkness thenceforth under all who inherit  
 That melancholy changeless hue of heart  
 Which flings its pale gloom o'er the years of youth,  
 Those most—or least—illumined by the spirit  
 Of the eternal archetype of Truth.  
 For such as these there is no peace within  
 Either in action or in contemplation,  
 From first to last—but even as they begin,  
 They close the dim night of their tribulation;  
 Worn by the torture of the untiring breast,  
 Which, scorning all, and shunned of all, by turns,  
 Upheld in solitary strength begot  
 By its own unshared shroudedness of lot,  
 Through years and years of crushed hopes, throbs, and burns.  
 And burns and throbs, and will not be at rest,  
 Searching a desolate Earth for that it findeth not."

As will be seen later, Mangan has given us what must be described as an unreliable picture of his experiences in the scrivener's office. He may have suffered some annoyances and heard many blasphemies in the attorneys' offices in which he was employed after leaving the scrivener's, but hardly in the latter. But before mentioning the real facts of the case it will be better to let Mangan finish his allusions to this period.

"My apprenticeship terminated; but so did nothing else in my unhappy position. The burden of an entire family lay upon me, and the down-dragging weight on my spirit grew heavier from day to day. I was now obliged to seek employment wheresoever I could find it, and thankful was I when even my father and mother were enabled to reap the fruits of my labour. But my exasperated mind (made half mad through long disease) would frequently inquire, though I scarcely acknowledge the inquiry to myself, how or why it was that I should be called on to sacrifice the Immortal for the Mortal; to give away irrecoverably the Promethean fire within me for the cooking of a beef-steak; to destroy and damn my own soul that I might preserve for a few miserable months or years the bodies of others. Often would I wander out into the fields and groan to GOD for help. *De profundis clamavi* was my continual cry. And in truth, although my narrative scarcely appears at a glance to justify me, my circumstances, taken



and 1832. 267 Rathmines  
7 Peter Richard Kenrick went to  
America in Sept. 1833 - His brother  
Patrick was then Bp of Philadelphia.<sup>15</sup>

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

altogether, were amply sufficient to warrant the exclamation. A ruined soul in a wasted frame; the very ideal of perfection of moral and physical evil combined in one individual."

Such is Mangan's account of his life in the scrivener's office. The facts that are now known of this period of his career, however, are rather against his statements. He must have confounded the offices of the attorneys by whom he was afterwards employed with that in which he served his apprenticeship. In this he did an unconscious injustice to very worthy people and a very respectable firm. The office was situated in York Street, Stephen's Green; and in 1818, when Mangan entered it, it was being carried on by the Rev. Richard Kenrick for the benefit of the widow and children of his brother, Thomas Kenrick, who had died in the previous year.

1818/ One of the sons of the latter had just left the office in order to study for the priesthood, and his brother was still employed there during Mangan's apprenticeship. It is a remarkable fact that both these brothers became Catholic archbishops, and were respectively the late Most Rev. Francis Patrick and Peter Richard Kenrick, Archbishops of Baltimore and St. Louis, U.S.A. A business carried on by a priest like Father Kenrick\* with the aid of such assistants as the two future prelates, cannot have been such a place as Mangan described. That Mangan's own conduct was unexceptionable at this time we have the testimony of the late Archbishop P. R. Kenrick, who wrote as follows from St. Louis on October 19th, 1887, to Mr. John M'Call, Dublin:—

Peter Rich.  
He entered  
May 1827

"I knew James Mangan for several years very intimately, and highly esteemed him for his talents and virtue. My brother, the late Archbishop of Baltimore, never had any knowledge of him. After my father's death, in 1817, his office was continued for some years in which both Mangan and myself were engaged. The office was in York Street."

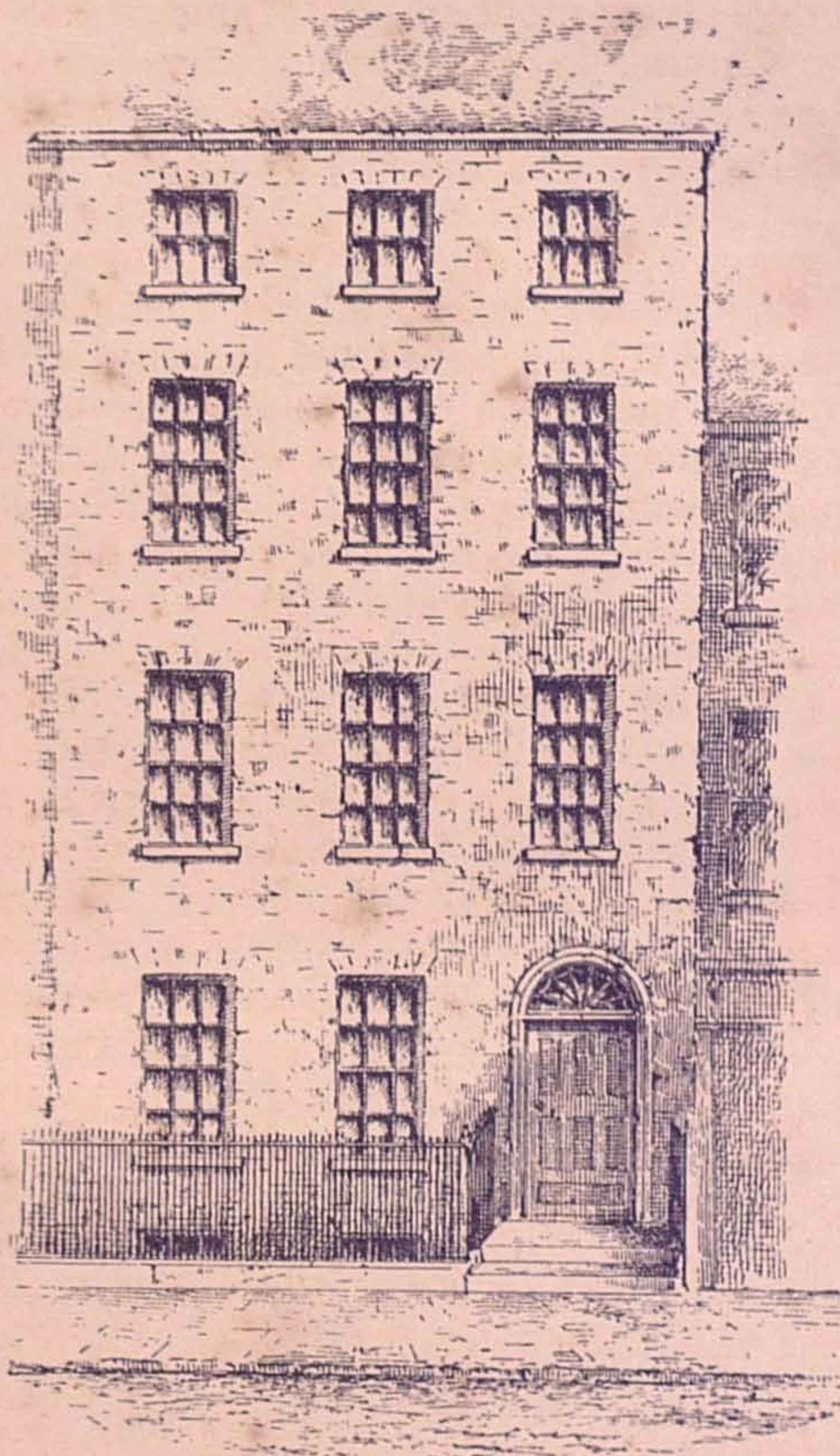
The hours which Mangan declares he worked at the scrivener's are impossible. At that time, as we learn from a very interesting letter, signed "D. C." in the *Nation* of October 13th, 1849, no scrivener could have kept his office open so many hours, and besides, there were more than

\* Father Kenrick was first curate and afterwards parish priest of St. Nicholas, Francis Street, where there is a tablet to his memory. He died in 1827, two years after the scrivener's business was given up. The Kenricks, as already stated, lived in Chancery Lane.









No. 6 YORK STREET

*To face p. 16*







“ On fine-strung nerves that witch can play  
 Sic dirgefu’ notes by night and day,  
 Till fancy sees a dread array  
     O’ clouds and gloom,  
 Arching a dark and dismal way  
     Down to the tomb.

Some canna thole the mental pain  
 That racks a nerve-disordered brain,  
 Hence deadly dives and draughts are ta’en  
     To smooth the way,  
 An’ some prefer the sharp, wee *skian*  
     Like Castlereagh.

Och, Jamie, shake away the dole  
 That hath too long o’ercast thy soul—  
 I’ll no’ commend the reekin’ bowl,  
     Or gillhouse fun;  
 But just a morn an’ evening stroll,  
     An’ loup an’ run.”

Even at this period Mangan was subject to those fits of melancholy which he sometimes endeavoured to conceal under a mask of enforced merriment. The opinion which has been expressed by some that it was a love disappointment which changed a happy, contented, gentle Mangan into a wretched, hopeless outcast is an entirely erroneous one. His first poems are as much saturated with mournful feeling as his last.

When he left Kenrick’s he entered the office of a Mr. Franks in Merrion Square, and thence proceeded to another office, kept by a Mr. Leland, in Fitzwilliam Square. With this gentleman, who paid him about thirty shillings a week, and his successor, Mr. Murphy, he seems to have remained till 1836, when he finally abandoned the regular pursuit of a scrivener, merely accepting occasional work of that kind when compelled by stern necessity. It was in 1818 that his earliest poems appeared. There were then hardly any literary periodicals in Ireland, and the Dublin and Belfast almanacs were the recognized receptacles in Ireland for the abundant poetical output of rhymesters all over the country. Michael Courtney was a frequent contributor, and may have been the first to induce Mangan to write for them; but James Tighe was perhaps, a more likely instigator. Mangan took very readily to the recreation, and to the close of his life was fond of perpetrating such trifles as would fittingly occupy a place in the “poetical” department of the



almanacs. It may be conjectured that the love of mystification, which was an abiding characteristic of the poet, was first suggested and finally implanted in his mind by the mania, very prevalent then, for puzzles of all kinds, charades, acrostics, rebuses, and the like. It need hardly be said that Mangan soon became one of the most popular of the puzzlers. In one of his later articles in the *Dublin University Magazine*, he says—

“Man would appear to be an animal that puzzles and is puzzled. He talks enigmas, he hears enigmas, he sees enigmas, he dreams enigmas, he meets enigmas, he enacts enigmas, and last, not least, he sits down and writes, or else translates, enigmas.”

He rather deliberately cultivated the gift of writing the ephemerides so much relished by the readers of the almanacs. The chief contributors were mostly teachers “of the mathematics” and hedge-schoolmasters, but not a few nurslings of genius were reared by these caterers for the intellectual gymnasts of those days. The amusement almost became a necessity with many of the “diarists,” who spent all their leisure in propounding mathematical cruces, or in concocting the various forms of rebus and charade. Naturally, Mangan excelled in the pastime—the enigmatical side of his character was at once attracted, and he took pleasure in disguising himself under various pseudonyms. Only three contributions by one writer were allowed in any one number of *Grant's* and the *New Ladies'* almanacs, and it may have been with the object of obtaining insertion for more than the allowable number that Mangan appears as “Peter Puff, Secundus,” “James Tynan,” “M. E.,” “P. V. McGuffin” and other individualities as well as under his own name of “James Mangan.” He admits his fondness of mystification in the impersonal autobiographical sketch which has been quoted from, but he ascribes it to diffidence :—

“Like the man, who, some years back, published an enormous volume in Germany and fathered it upon Sanconiatho (pity he did not add ‘Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus’)\* my poor friend Clarence has perpetrated a great number of singular literary sins, which, taken together, as a quaint and sententious friend of mine remarks, would appear to be ‘the antithesis of plagiarism.’ It is a strange fault, no doubt, and one that I cannot understand, that Mangan

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\* Mangan evidently had in his mind, when he wrote this, the reference in Chapter XIV. of the *Vicar of Wakefield*.



should entertain a deep diffidence of his own capacity to amuse or attract others to anything emanating from himself. But it is the fact. I do not comprehend it, but he has mentioned it to me times without number . . . . People have called him a singular man, but he is rather a plural one—a Proteus . . . . He has been much addicted to the practice of fathering upon other writers the offspring of his own brain . . . . I cannot commend it. A man may have a right to offer his property to others, but nothing can justify him in forcing it upon them. I once asked Mangan why he did not prefix his own name to his anti-plagiaristic productions, and his reply was characteristic of the man—"that would be no go—no how you fixed it." I must write in a variety of styles!"

Hence all the pretended translations in more mature times from Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and other Eastern tongues.

Very few of his lucubrations in the almanacs are worth quoting; as puzzles they may be good enough, but they never rank as poetry. It must be said, however, that if they are doggerel, the doggerel is deliberate, not unconscious. Many of them are, of course, serio-comic. Here is portion of a piece addressed to his friend Tighe, not uncharacteristic (in one sense) of a later time:—

"What shall I say to thee, thou son of song?

What *can* I say, I mean—

Oh! for a crutch whereon to lean

And help my gout-struck muse along!

Powers of genius! whither have ye sped,

That still ye answer not my cry?

Do you disdain to *throw* me a reply?

Or are ye so employed with peerless Ned\*

Ye have not time to heed such one as I?

No matter which; I claim the pity

Of all, from him who pens the deathless rebus

Down to the man who writes an epic ditty,

To earn the title of 'A Child of Phoebus.'

Give me your pity, then, ye bards sublime,

And let it flow in copious streams of rhyme;

Weep in each line as I shall weep myself;

Lo! down my cheek the tear to gallop tries—

Moll, hand me that old apron from the shelf

That I may wipe mine eyes."

Between 1818 and 1826 Mangan wrote very frequently for the almanacs, but there is no need to dwell upon these youthful whimsicalities. They may have helped to form his genius, but it is impossible to deny that they also vitiated it to a considerable extent. His fondness for exercising his powers of rhyme, his delight in the mechan-

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\* "Ned Numberless" (James Tighe).



ical difficulties of verse, and his inordinate display of his mastery over them, are traceable to his feats of literary agility in the almanacs. An enormous proportion of his subsequent literary work is characterised by visibly painful efforts to appear gay and festive at a time when his mind and heart were overwhelmed by woe. In the slightly altered words of one of his Irish versions, he did little but—

“ . . . jest and keep grinning,  
While his thoughts were all guileful and gloomy ! ”

That Mangan was rendered wretched in mind and body by almost chronic ill-health and nervous disturbances there is sufficient evidence to believe. Occasionally, when his condition was unbearable, he was obliged to absent himself from his office, his brother John, who was also employed as a scrivener, acting as his substitute. It must have been for the purpose of deadening pain or of forgetting his troubles that he, like De Quincey, began to take opium. He never, of course, took the extraordinary quantities that the English opium eater did, but there can be no longer any doubt that somewhat early in his career he took the drug to alleviate his pain. The evidence on this point is quite conclusive. He himself denied (in one place) that he was an opium eater, but in other writings he clearly admits it. He tells a wild story, in the strangest of his personal confessions, of a terrible experience which, he says, happened to him in a hospital. It is, of course, a purely imaginary affair :—

“ My physical and moral torments, my endurances from cold, heat, hunger, and fatigue, and that isolation of mind which was perhaps worse than all, in the end flung me into a fever, and I was transmitted to an hospital. This incident I should hardly deem worthy of chronicling if it had not proved the occasion of introducing into my blood the seeds of a more virulent disease than any I had yet known—an incurable hypochondriasis. There was a poor child in the convalescent ward of the institution who was afflicted from head to foot with an actual leprosy, and there being no vacant bed to be had I was compelled to share that of this miserable being, which, such was my ignorance of the nature of contagion, I did without the slightest suspicion of the inevitable result. But in a few days after my dismissal from the hospital this result but too plainly showed itself on my person in the form of a malady nearly as hideous and loathsome as that of the wretched boy himself ; and though all external traces of it have long since disappeared, its moral effects remain incorporated with my mental constitution to this hour, and will probably continue with me through life. It was woe on woe,



and 'within the lowest deep a lower deep,' Yet, will it be credited? my kindred scarcely seemed to take notice of this new and terrible mark so set upon me. Privation and despair had rendered them almost indifferent to everything; and, for me, sullen, self-enrapt, diseased within and without, I cared not to call their attention to it. 'My heart had grown hard, and I hurt my hand when I struck it.'\*

Very slowly, and only when a kind acquaintance (for I was not yet utterly deserted) came forward to rescue me from the grave by his medical skill, did I in some degree conquer the malignity of this ghastly complaint. Another disease, however, and another succeeded, until all who knew me began to regard me as one appointed to a lingering, living martyrdom. And for myself, I scarcely knew what to think of my own condition, though I have since learned to consider it as the mode and instrument which an all-wise Providence made use of to curb the outbreakings of that rebellious and gloomy spirit that smouldered like a volcano within me. My dominant passion, though I guessed it not, was pride; and this was to be overcome by pain of every description and the continual sense of self-helplessness. Humiliation is what I required, and that bitterest moral drug was dealt out to me in lavish abundance. Nay, as if Pelion were to be piled upon Ossa for the purpose of contributing to my mortification, I was compelled to perform my very penances—those enjoined me by spiritual directors—in darkness and subterranean places, wheresoever I could bury myself from the face of mortal man. And they were all merciful dispensations these, to lift me out of the hell of my own nature, compared with those which the Almighty afterwards adopted for my deliverance."

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\* Shakespeare.



10026.



## CHAPTER III.

STUDIES IN GERMAN LITERATURE—LOVE OF BOOKS—PERSONAL APPEARANCE—A GLIMPSE OF MATURIN—MANGAN'S DESCRIPTION OF HIS LIFE AT THE ATTORNEY'S—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS.—THE COMET CLUB—ITS MEMBERS—"THE PARSON'S HORN-BOOK," &c.—JOHN SHEEHAN.

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"Tell how trampled, derided, hated,  
And worn by weakness, disease, and wrong,  
He fled for shelter to God, who mated  
His soul with song."—MANGAN.

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THE period between 1826 and 1831 seems to have been a barren one for Mangan, as far as literary work is concerned. He wrote little, and published nothing. During this time he perfected his knowledge of the several languages of which Father Graham had taught him the rudiments. German literature proved more fascinating to him than any other. He does not appear to have cared for the more materialistic French writers; he loved to dwell among German dreamers, and even when they snored, he preferred them to their livelier neighbours. He saturated himself with German thought, which unquestionably exercised a great influence upon him and his future literary work. In the words of the couplet, which occurs in one of his Irish paraphrases, he was—

"What you might term an  
O'erwhelmer in German."

His knowledge of English literature was remarkably extensive. His favourite authors, like Shakespeare and Byron, he was fond of declaiming; he knew their writings so well that he could almost repeat everything of theirs by heart. Old out-of-the-way books, more particularly curious mediæval ones, he was always studying. Anything quaint in black letter was sure to extract from him whatever spare cash he possessed. He was a constant frequenter of the book-shops and book-stands, especially those outside



the Four Courts, and along the railings of Trinity College on the College Street side. His appearance at this time was not unattractive. He had a very handsome profile, but serious ill-health had reduced him almost to a shadow, and his once golden hair had become so grey that he wore a wig. He appears to have taken more pains to look "a character" than Father Meehan allows. It is hardly a matter admitting of doubt, that he was possessed by the desire of causing attention and remark when he was in the street. This he acknowledges in one of his "anthological" papers.

"I should far and away prefer being a great necromancer to being a great writer or even a great fighter. My natural propensities lead me rather to seek out modes of astonishing mankind than of edifying them. Herein I and my propensities are clearly wrong; but somehow, I find that almost everything that is natural in me is wrong also."

Mangan had a decided objection to letting his real age be known, and he is constantly misstating it. To one of his friends, a little while before he died, he wrote:—

"I suppose, *en passant*, that you imagine me an old man. I am 36 years of age in point of time, but twice the number in soul; and, strange to say, I feel within me a power of mind that sets Time at defiance."

He looked considerably older than his years, and the following description of him by Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, who did not know him till about 1836, is very curious. It seems to suit the Mangan of 1825 rather than the Mangan of the former year. The "golden hair" became a golden wig before Mangan had reached his sixth lustrum.

"When he emerged into daylight he was dressed in a blue cloak, midsummer or midwinter, and a hat of fantastic shape, under which golden hair, as fine and silky as a woman's, hung in unkempt tangles, and deep blue eyes lighted a face as colourless as parchment. He looked like the spectre of some German romance rather than a living creature."

Add to this that he was slim and of middle height and you have a fairly correct idea of Mangan as he was in the twenties and part of the thirties.

He was working at No. 6 York Street when the famous author of *Bertram* and *Melmoth the Wanderer*, who lived at No. 41, died.\* Maturin was a very familiar figure in Dublin streets, and one of the most eccentric as well as

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\* On October 30th, 1824.



eloquent of preachers. Towards the close of his life Mangan put on record his impressions of this remarkable writer, in whom Scott and Byron so thoroughly believed that the first offered to edit his works after his death, and the latter used all his influence successfully to get a hearing for his plays. Numerous stories are related of him. His genius was of the untamed, uncultivated kind. His works are those of a madman, glowing with burning eloquence and deep feeling, but full of absurdities and inconsistencies. His Irish tales, such as *The Wild Irish Boy*, and *The Milesian Chief*, are made almost unreadable by a vicious and ranting style. Whenever Maturin was engaged in literary work, he used to place a wafer on his forehead, to let those who entered his study know that he was not to be disturbed. Mangan had more than the prevailing admiration for the grotesqueness of Maturin's romances; their terrible and awe-inspiring nature impressed him profoundly. He felt a kind of fascination for this lonely man of genius, whom at one period he might have called in his own words,

"The Only, the Lonely, the Earth's Companionless One."

He opens his sketch, which is very characteristic of his style, with the humorous rhyme:—

"Maturin, Maturin, what a strange hat you're in?"

"I saw Maturin but on three occasions, and on all these within two months of his death. I was then a mere boy; and when I assure the reader that I was strongly imbued with a belief in those doctrines of my Church which seem (and only seem) to savour of what is theologically called 'exclusiveness,' he will appreciate the force of the impulse which urged me one morning to follow the author of *Melmoth* into the porch of St. Peter's Church in Aungier Street, and hear him read the Burial Service. Maturin, however, did not read, he simply repeated; but with a grandeur of emphasis and an impressive power of manner that chained me to the spot. His eyes, while he spoke, continually wandered from side to side, and at length rested on me, who reddened up to the roots of my hair at being even noticed by a man that ranked far higher in my estimation than Napoleon Bonaparte. I observed that, after having concluded the service, he whispered something to the clerk at his side, and then again looked steadfastly at me. If I had been the master of sceptres—of worlds—I would have given them all that moment to have been put in possession of his remark.

The second time I saw Maturin he had been just officiating, as on the former occasion, at a funeral. He stalked along York Street with an abstracted, or rather distracted air, the white scarf and hat-band which he had received remaining still wreathed round his beautifully-shaped person, and exhibiting to the gaze of the amused and amazed



pedestrians whom he almost literally *encountered* in his path, a boot upon one foot and a shoe on the other. His long pale, melancholy, Don Quixote, out-of-the-world face would have inclined you to believe that Dante, Bajazet, and the Cid had risen together from their sepulchres, and clubbed their features for the production of an effect. But Maturin's mind was only fractionally portrayed, so to speak, in his countenance. The great Irishman, like Hamlet, had that within him which passed show, and escaped far and away beyond the possibility of expression by the clay lineament. He bore the 'thunder-scars' about him, but they were graven, not on his brow, but on his heart.

The third and last time that I beheld this marvellous man I remember well. It was some time before his death, on a balmy autumn evening, in 1824. <sup>d</sup> He slowly descended the steps of his own <sup>Oct 30. '24</sup> house, which, perhaps, some future Transatlantic biographer may thank me for informing him was at No. \* 42 York Street, and took his way in the direction of Whitefriar Street, into Castle Street, and passed the Royal Exchange into Dame Street, every second person staring at him and the extraordinary double-belted and treble-caped rug of an old garment—neither coat nor cloak—which enveloped his person. But here it was that I, who had tracked the footsteps of the man as his shadow, discovered that the feeling to which some individuals, rather over sharp and shrewd, had been pleased to ascribe this 'affectation of singularity,' had no existence in Maturin. For, instead of passing along Dame Street, where he would have been 'the observed of all observers,' he wended his way along the dark and forlorn locality of Dame Lane, and having reached the end of this not very classical thoroughfare, crossed over to Anglesea Street, where I lost sight of him. Perhaps he went into one of those bibliopolitan establishments wherewith that Paternoster Row of Dublin then abounded. I never saw him afterwards . . . An inhabitant of one of the stars dropped upon our planet could hardly feel more bewildered than Maturin habitually felt in his consociation with the beings around him. He had no friend, companion, brother: he and the 'Lonely Man of Shiraz' might have shaken hands and then—parted. He—in his own dark way—understood many people; but nobody understood him in any way."

Mangan's account of the time spent in the offices of the attorneys for whom he worked is worth transcribing. In his morbid way he speaks of the miserable condition of his health and spirits, and his recital of the experiences he met with and of the isolation and contempt which were his lot may be quoted without comment:—

"Within about nine months of the termination of my apprenticeship a situation was offered me in a solicitor's office, the salary derivable from which, though humble enough, was sufficient to elevate us in some degree above the depths of our former poverty; and this situation I accepted—not gladly, for a foreboding of what was to come haunted me with more intense force than ever—but resignedly, and in

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\* 41 is generally given as the number.



the full belief that I was fulfilling a destiny which I could not oppose and which I had no right to arraign.

I weary the reader by calling on him for ever to listen to a tale of unmitigated calamity. But, as I am bound to adhere to strict truth in this autobiography, he will kindly forgive as well the monotony of general reflection as of particular detail which he here encounters. By and by I may invite his attention to more cheerful and consolatory matter. At present the scroll which I am compelled to unroll before him is, like that of the prophet, 'written within and without with mourning, lamentation, and woe.' And perhaps those who are more desirous of understanding the motives than of listening to a cold recital of the actions of another may find some interest in perusing a record which, I willingly admit, embodies hardly a sentence upon which the mere worldling would care to expend a moment's reflection.

I had not been long installed in my new situation before all the old maladies under which I had laboured returned with double force. The total want of exercise to which I was subjected was in itself sufficient to tell with ruinous effect upon a frame whose long-continued state of exhaustion had only received a temporary relief from the four months' change of life to which I have adverted. But other agencies also combined to overwhelm and prostrate me. The coarse ribaldry, the vile and vulgar oaths, and the brutal indifference to all that is true and beautiful and good in the universe, of my office companions, affected me in a manner difficult to conceive. My nervous and hypochondriacal feelings almost verged upon insanity. I seemed to myself to be shut up in a cavern with serpents, and scorpions, and all hideous and monstrous things, which writhed and hissed around me, and discharged their slime and venom upon my person.\* These hallucinations were considerably aided and aggravated by the pestiferous atmosphere of the office, the chimney of which smoked continually, and for some hours before the close of the day emitted a sulphurous exhalation that at times literally caused me to gasp for breath. In a word, I felt utterly and thoroughly miserable. The wretched depression of my spirits could not escape the notice of my mother, but she passed no remark on it, and left me in the evenings altogether to myself and my books; for, unfortunately, instead of endeavouring somewhat to fortify my constitution by appropriating my spare hours to exercise, I consumed these in unhealthy reading. My morbid sensibilities thus daily increasing and gaining ground, while my bodily powers declined in the same proportion, the result was just such as might have been anticipated. For the second time of my life nature succumbed under the intolerable burden imposed upon her; and an attack of illness removed me for a season from the sphere of my irksome and melancholy duties. My place in the office was assumed by my younger brother, John, a stout and healthy lad of nineteen,† who had already acquired some slight experiences in the mysteries of scrivenery and attorneyship, and I returned home.

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\* "Those who knew him in after years," says Mitchel, "can remember with what a shuddering and loathing horror he spoke, when at rare intervals he would be inclined to speak at all, of his labours with the scrivener and the attorney."

† This would fix the date as 1823, but Mangan's data are unreliable. It was later than that.



My confinement to bed on this occasion was not of long duration, but, though after a lapse of a few days able to crawl about once more, I was far indeed from being recovered. A settled melancholy took possession of my being. A sort of torpor and weariness of life succeeded to my former over-excited sensibilities. Books no longer interested me as before : and my own unshared thoughts were a burden and a torment unto me. Again I essayed the effect of active exercise, but was soon compelled to give over from sheer weakness and want of animal spirits. I indulged, however, occasionally in long walks into the country around Dublin, and the sight of hills, fields, and streams, to which I had long been unaccustomed, produced in me a certain placidity of mind, with which, had I understood my own true interests for time and eternity, I ought to have remained contented. But contented I did not, and would not, remain, I desired to be aroused, excited, shocked even. My grand moral malady—for physical ailments I also had, and singular of their kind—was an impatience of life and its commonplace pursuits. I wanted to penetrate the great enigma of human destiny and my own, to know ‘the be-all and the end-all,’ the worst that could happen here or hereafter, the final *denouement* of a drama that so strangely united the two extremes of broad farce and thrilling tragedy, and wherein mankind played at once the parts of actors and spectators.

If I perused any books with a feeling of pleasure, they were such as treated of the wonderful and terrible in art, nature, and society. Descriptions of battles and histories of revolutions, accounts of earthquakes, inundations, and tempests, and narrations of moving accidents by flood and field, possessed a charm for me which I could neither resist nor explain. It was some time before this feeling merged into another, the sentiment of religion and its ineffable mysteries. To the religious duties enjoined by my Church I had always been attentive, but I now became deeply devotional, and studied the lives of the saints with the profoundest admiration of their grand and extraordinary virtues. If my mind had been of a larger and sterner order all this had been well enough, and I should doubtless have reaped nothing but unmixed advantage from my labours. But, constituted as I was, the effect of these upon me was rather injurious than beneficial. I gradually became disquieted by doubts, not of the great truths of faith, for these I never questioned, but of my own capacity, so to speak, for salvation.

Taking a retrospective view of all the events of my foregone years, reflecting on what I had been and then was, and meditating on what it was probable that I should live to be, I began to think, with Buffon, that it is not impossible that some beings may have been created expressly for unhappiness ; and I knew that Cowper had lived, and perhaps died, in the dreadful belief that he himself was a cast-away and a ‘vessel of wrath fitted for destruction.’

Scruples of conscience also multiplied upon me in such numbers in the intervals between each of my confessions that my mind became a chaos of horrors, and all the fires of Pandemonium seemed to burn in my brain. I consulted several clergymen with regard to what I should do in this extremity. Most recommended me to mix in cheerful and gay society. One alone, I remember, counselled me to pray. And pray I did, for I had so held myself aloof from the companionship of others that I knew of no society with which I could mix. But I



derived no consolation from praying. I felt none of that confidence in God then, which, thanks to His almighty power and grace, I have so frequently known. The gates of heaven seemed barred against me; its floors and walls of brass and triple adamant repelled my cries; and I appeared to myself to be sending a voice of agony into some interminable chasm. This deplorable interior state, one which worlds and diadems should not bribe me into experiencing again, continued for about a twelve-month, after which it gradually disappeared, not through progress of time, not through any process of reasoning, or, indeed, any effort of my own, but, remarkably enough, precisely through the agency of the very remedy recommended me by my spiritual advisers."

Mangan did not complete his account of this remarkable transformation. Not very long after this period we find him a prominent member of the staff of the *Comet*, a paper which deserves more attention than it has hitherto obtained.\* In its earlier days, it did yeoman service to the popular cause, but its writers became demoralised and turned the anti-tithe movement, which it represented, into a war of personalities, and the pages of the *Comet* ended by becoming the arena of party and personal hatreds. But this was subsequent to the beginning of Mangan's connection with it. The "Comet Club" consisted of several of the younger and more active literary spirits who had espoused the popular side in the struggle against the injustice caused by the levying of tithes in aid of the Protestant clergy, many of whom were absentees, from the Catholic farmers. The original members were nearly all quite unknown, but most of them afterwards became distinguished in literature or journalism. Thomas Browne † ("Jonathan Buckthorn"), was, after John Sheehan, the most voluminous contributor to the Club's first publication. Sheehan ‡ ("Philander") was a fertile and clever journalist, full of resource and wit, which in later years gave him a considerable reputation in London, where, as "The Irish Whiskey Drinker" and "The Knight of Innishowen,"

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\* To the *Dublin Literary Gazette*, started in 1830 (previously called *The National Magazine* and edited by Lever), Mangan sent his translation of Schiller's poem "To my Friends." Lever was removed from the editorship because he accepted, and perhaps wrote, an article in praise of Shelley's poetry. The enlightened proprietors put in his place, Philip Dixon Hardy, a determined and narrow "Evangelical," who speedily killed the magazine.

† Originally a miller in the Queen's County, and born about 1775. He has been called "The Irish Cobbett." *(He was a Methodist)* -

‡ Sheehan was the son of a Celbridge hotel-keeper and general merchant, and was educated at Clongowes Wood College, where "Father Prout" was one of his teachers. He was a friend of Thackeray later in life, and the undoubted original of Captain Shandon in *Pendennis*.



he was one of the chief writers for *Bentley's Miscellany* and *Temple Bar*. Two other early members deserve special notice. One, Mr. Norreys Jephson,\* M.P. (for Mallow), wrote the most pungent of the satires in *The Parson's Horn Book*, the first attack upon the tithe system directed by the Club against the Protestant clergy. This work, Part I. of which was published early in 1831, was illustrated by the other member above alluded to but not named—Samuel Lover, whose powerful etchings did as much for the agitation as any of the satires in prose and verse. Their high excellence as art would surprise those who only know Lover's artistic efforts in later years. Three of the four men mentioned were quite young at the time—Browne was a middle-aged man—and *The Parson's Horn Book*, which was their joint production, is a notable example of youthful vigour and talent. The book had an astonishing sale—its scathing attacks on the Government and on the tithe-receivers were read with delight on the popular side and alarm and indignation on the other. Sheehan, in an interesting account of the "Comet Club," published more than forty years later, says the work had "a greater circulation than any work ever published in Ireland, and created a greater sensation than had been known since the days of Swift." Several editions, the first of which consisted of fifteen hundred copies, which were sold at five shillings each, were issued and speedily sold out, an astonishing success in those times. A second series followed, and met with a like triumphant reception, and a little later *The Valentine Post Bag* made its appearance, but by that time people had become used to attacks of the kind, as the *Comet* paper, started in consequence of the demand for the *Horn Book*, was engaged in its wordy battle with Tresham Gregg,† Cæsar Otway and other opponents of the same kind. Meanwhile, the Irish people had been roused and many serious disturbances occurred. The Catholic farmers, particularly of Leinster, refused to pay tithes, and when their property was

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\* Sir Charles Denham Jephson Norreys, 1st Bart, was born in 1799, educated at Oxford, and was M.P. for Mallow, from 1826 to 1859. He was made a baronet in 1838, when he added the surname of Norreys. He died in Queens-town, July, 1888.

† The Rev. Tresham Gregg, an active Protestant controversialist, popularly known as "Thrashem Gregg," and "Trashy." He wrote a couple of feeble tragedies. Otway was more literary (his *Tour in Connaught, Sketches in Ireland, &c.*, can be read with interest in spite of their rabid bigotry). He was called by the *Comet* writers "Seize-her-Odd-Way."



distraigned upon and shipped to England (there being no possibility of a successful sale in Ireland), the owners followed, and by appealing to intending buyers, and explaining their cases made the auctions difficult and costly, or caused them to fail altogether.

Early in 1831, the promoters of the *Horn Book* and *Post Bag*, together with a few young literary friends, met at 10 D'Olier Street, and there founded the famous *Comet* newspaper. On May 2nd of that year, its first number appeared. Browne was editor, Sheehan sub-editor, the staff being composed of the members of the Club. A list of the leading members—apparently from first to last—is given by Sheehan. They were—Joseph Sterling Coyne, afterwards eminent as a dramatist, humorist, and contributor to *Punch*; Lover, Browne, Jephson and Sheehan himself; John Cornelius O'Callaghan ("Carolan"), subsequently well-known as the historian of "The Irish Brigades in the Service of France;" Maurice O'Connell, the witty and poetical son of the Liberator; Robert Knox, who eventually became editor of the London *Morning Herald*;\* Thomas Kennedy ("O'More"), author of the popular ballad entitled "The Uninscribed Tomb," and of "Reminiscences of a Silent Agitator;" Dominick Ronayne, later a Cork M.P., who wrote a series of pointed squibs called "Figaro in Dublin;" George Dunbar† ("Nebula"), whom Sheehan characterises as the "most sparkling and classic writer of English prose in any publication of his time;" and lastly, James Mangan ("Clarence"), who did not write for the paper till it was more than a year in existence. Of the score of members, says Sheehan, all but three were under twenty-five. They were not all Catholics, as some writers have assumed; Lover, Browne, Coyne, Dunbar and Knox, at least, were Protestants.

Before it had reached the age of six months, its circulation was the then phenomenal one of 2,300 copies per week. It was entirely composed of original matter, unlike any of its contemporaries, and did not purvey news of any kind except in its own dress, nor did it purloin ("Convey the wise it call," as Ancient Pistol says) from its rivals while pouring contumely upon them. So long as it steered clear of savage personalities it did excellent service, but

\* Knox edited the *Herald* from 1846 to 1858, and died in March, 1859.


† Born about 1797, and educated at Jersey until he was twelve years of age, then at Martin's school in York Street, Dublin, and later at Trinity College. He lived a great deal in France, and died there in 1856.



Sheehan admits that "measures not men" was an antiquated principle laughed at, and in December, 1831, when its weekly circulation was 3,000 copies, some of its contributors, on the ground that it had departed from the original resolution of not attacking private character, seceded and started a rival club called "The Irish Brigade." O'Callaghan, Ronayne, and O'Connell were amongst the "seceders," who issued a periodical called the *Irish Monthly Magazine*, which was not long-lived.

The *Comet's* satirical thrusts were evidently keenly felt, for they were bitterly resented, and several violent demonstrations took place outside its offices in D'Olier Street. A riotous mob of unlicked cubs from Trinity College once or twice threatened to demolish the premises and to severely maul the *Comet's* tail.

Mangan, according to Sheehan's rather doubtful statement, "was one of the *Comet's* merry youngsters." He certainly affected a gaiety he did not feel, but he was hardly merry at any time, and was not altogether a "youngster" at this time, being almost thirty years of age, and nine years older than Sheehan himself, who, by the way, was the youngest member of the club. The religion of Mangan, says the same writer, "was undemonstrative and doubtful. As he used to say himself in those days, it would be the foulest judicial murder next to that of Socrates to make him drink of the poisoned cup for an over-zealous love or hatred of any of the Churches." Concerning which statement it need only be said that though Mangan coquetted with ancient religions of the East, and was fascinated by certain religious mystics, such as Swedenborg, he was always a fervent Catholic. He certainly never obtruded his religious views on anyone, and hated intolerance from whatever quarter it might come; but he was permeated by Catholic feeling, and steeped in Catholic doctrine. The *Comet* came to a characteristic end in 1833, after Sheehan and Browne had been prosecuted by the Government. Each was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, and ordered to pay a fine of £100. The fines were, however, remitted, and the term of imprisonment never completed. Browne went to Cincinnati, where he prospered exceedingly at his original trade (that of a miller). Sheehan went to London, where he became consecutively a barrister, a "foreign" correspondent, a Parliamentary reporter, and an editor.





## CHAPTER IV.

MANGAN'S FIRST CONTRIBUTION TO THE "COMET"—"THE DYING ENTHUSIAST"—MANGAN ADOPTS THE PEN-NAME OF "CLARENCE"—THE "DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL"—POEMS BY MANGAN—DR. PETRIE AND JOHN O'DONOVAN—MANGAN'S PERSONAL SKETCHES OF THEM—THE HAYES FAMILY—"VERSES ON THE DEATH OF A BELOVED FRIEND."

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"My soul was formed for Love and Grief;  
 These both were blended at my birth,  
 But lifeless as a shrivelled leaf  
 Lie now my dearest hopes on earth."—MANGAN.

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MANGAN'S earliest piece in the *Comet* is a whimsical essay of a trifling character. It is largely made up of puns and other verbal quips, and is signed "J. C. M.," which signature shows that he had already adopted a second Christian name.

He could write admirable nonsense when he liked, and the late Edward Lear might have got a hint or two from him for those "Nonsense" books which are held not undeservedly in such high estimation by present-day critics. The editor politely intimated to the new writer that though he was cordially welcomed a little brevity was desirable. A couple of neat sonnets "By an Aristocrat" form Mangan's second contribution, and ~~we are~~<sup>were</sup> speedily followed by his poem, "The Dying Enthusiast," which appeared in No. 67 (August 5th, 1832). Credit may fairly be given to Mangan in that, though encouraged to write what was merely ephemeral and personal, he often rose far above the petty, banal conceptions of the conductors of the *Comet*, and forced upon its readers' attention more enduring stuff than they expected. This poem of "The Dying Enthusiast," though by no means up to Mangan's higher level, is entitled to praise. Mangan shortly afterwards published it in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, thus recording his own good opinion of it. It is, perhaps, of a gloomier cast than the poems of his last years, being without even the faint



gleam of hopefulness which lights them. Though he seemed to foresee clearly his own sad future life, he never entirely lost faith, and always exhorted his countrymen to "Hope on, hope ever." The poem, whose full title is "The Dying Enthusiast to his Friend," may possibly have been addressed to James Tighe, who made every effort then and after to reconcile the poet to his condition:—

"Speak no more of life ;  
What can life bestow,  
In this amphitheatre of strife,  
All times dark with tragedy and woe ?  
Knowest thou not how care and pain  
Build their lampless dwelling in the brain,  
Ever, as the stern intrusion  
Of our teachers, time and truth,  
Turn to gloom the bright illusion,  
Rainbowed on the soul of youth ?  
Could I live to find that this is so ?  
Oh ! no ! no !

As the stream of time  
Sluggishly doth flow,  
Look how all of beaming and sublime  
Sinks into the black abyss below.  
Yea, the loftiest intellect  
Earliest on the strand of life is wrecked.  
Nought of lovely, nothing glorious,  
Lives to triumph o'er decay ;  
Desolation reigns victorious—  
Mine is dungeon walled by clay :  
Could I bear to feel my own laid low ?  
Oh ! no ! no !

Restless o'er the earth  
Thronging millions go :  
But, behold how genius, love, and worth  
Move like lonely phantoms to and fro !  
Suns are quenched, and kingdoms fall,  
But the doom of these outdarkens all.  
Die they then ? Yes, love's devotion,  
Stricken, withers in its bloom ;  
Fond affections deep as ocean,  
In their cradle find their tomb ;  
Shall I linger, then, to count each throe ;  
Oh ! no ! no !

Prison-bursting death,  
Welcome be thy blow !  
Thine is but the forfeit of my breath,  
Not the spirit, but the spirit's glow.  
Spheres of beauty—hallowed spheres,  
Undefaced by time, undimmed by tears.



Henceforth hail. Oh, who would grovel  
 In a world impure as this?  
 Who would weep in cell or hovel,  
 When a palace might be his?  
 Would'st thou have me the bright lot forego?  
 Oh! no! no!"

At the time this poem was published the *Dublin Penny Journal* was in its zenith, though only a month or two in existence, and perhaps this is the most suitable place to say what is required of this famous periodical. Started by Dr. Petrie and others, and contributed to by John O'Donovan, Aubrey de Vere, Edward Walsh, Sir William Betham, Thomas Ettingsall, Robert Armstrong, Cæsar Otway, John Getty, Petrie himself, and other notable antiquaries and poets, it promised to have a long and successful career. Mangan was an early contributor. Its chief purpose was to foster Irish literature; but it had other objects, principal amongst which was the extending of the knowledge of Irish antiquities and folk-lore. Its editors were anxious to make known to the world the priceless value and extent of the material records in stone and metals, no less than in manuscript, and while it lasted it did splendid service in that direction. But, unfortunately, after its first year its proprietor sold it to Mr. Philip Dixon Hardy, whose touch was blighting. Everyone in Dublin knew that the journal was doomed to extinction as soon as this fanatical "swaddler"\* assumed control. His bigotry and prudishness were such that literature could not thrive under him. He had already compassed the death of one or two other journals, and nearly all its distinguished writers, and most of its readers, ceased to take any further interest in the *Dublin Penny Journal*. During its first year of life it was admirable in every respect. Mangan began his connection with it in November, 1832, by a translation from "Filicaja," signed "C." A second one followed on December 1st, similarly signed, but addressed from "Clarence Street, Liverpool." He masquerades as an Italian, and is referred to as "our Italian correspondent." His address was a fictitious one, for he was never out of Ireland in his life. It is interesting, as showing his gradual assumption of the pseudonym "Clarence," to note this. Other sonnets from the Italian show that he

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\* A name which has the same significance as "souper," and was applied to the then numerous class of proselytisers.



was at this time studying that language carefully. But his attention became permanently attracted to the German poets, and his interest in them never wavered or slackened from this point onwards. Over the signature of "A Constant Reader" he asks O'Donovan a couple of questions, which imply that he is studying Irish, and he adds: "I intend, Mr. Editor (*Deo volente*), in a few years hence to travel into Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, where I might chance to pick up some valuable Irish manuscripts." A few weeks later appears his poem, "The One Mystery," with the signature of "Clarence." There can be no doubt, from his fancy for repeating to his friends the lines from Shakespeare, "Clarence is come, false, fleeting, perjured Clarence," that the Duke who is only remembered by the fact of his having been drowned in a butt of Malmsey, was a fascinating individuality to Mangan, who had no other reason for adopting his title as a *nom de guerre* on so many occasions.\* "The One Mystery" belongs to the same order of verse as "The Dying Enthusiast," but it is somewhat superior in diction and rhythm. It is given here for the benefit of the many who do not know it:—

"'Tis idle, we exhaust and squander  
 The glittering mine of thought in vain;  
 All-baffled reason cannot wander  
 Beyond her chain.  
 The flood of life runs dark—dark clouds  
 Make lampless night around its shore;  
 The dead, where are they? In their shrouds—  
 Man knows no more.

Evoke the ancient and the past,  
 Will one illumining star arise?  
 Or must the film from first to last  
 O'erspread thine eyes?  
 When life, love, glory, beauty, wither,  
 Will wisdom's page or science chart  
 Map out for thee the region whither  
 Their shades depart.

Supposest thou the wondrous powers,  
 To high imagination given,  
 Pale types of what shall yet be ours,  
 When earth is heaven?

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\* Another gifted poet, whose life was almost as sad as Mangan's, but whose genius was of a much inferior order, bore the name of "Clarence"—namely, Henry Clarence Kendall, the Australian singer. He was of partly Irish origin.





When this decaying shell is cold,  
 Oh! sayest thou the soul shall climb  
 The magic mount she trod of old  
 Ere childhood's time?

And shall the sacred pulse that thrilled  
 Thrill once again to glory's name?  
 And shall the conquering love that filled  
 All earth with flame,  
 Reborn, revived, renewed, immortal,  
 Resume his reign in prouder might,  
 A sun beyond the ebon portal  
 Of death and night?

No more, no more—with aching brow,  
 And restless heart and burning brain,  
 We ask the When, the Where, the How,  
 And ask in vain.

And all philosophy, all faith,  
 All earthly—all celestial lore,  
 Have but one voice, which only saith—  
 Endure—Adore.”

Mangan's two last poems in the *Penny Journal* were  
 “Enthusiasm,” and an excellent version of Schiller's  
 “Lament of Ceres.” I quote the former—

“Not yet trodden under wholly,  
 Not yet darkened,  
 Oh, my spirit's flickering lamp, art thou!  
 Still, alas! thou wanest—though but slowly;  
 And I feel as though my heart had hearkened  
 To the whispers of despondence now.

Yet the world shall not enthrall me—  
 Never! never!

On my briary pathway to the grave  
 Shapes of pain and peril may appal me,  
 Agony and ruin may befall me—  
 Darkness and dismay may lower ever,  
 But, cold world, I will not die thy slave!

Underneath my foot I trample  
 You, ye juggles—  
 Pleasure, passion, thirst of power and gold!  
 Shall I, dare I, shame the bright example,  
 Beaming, burning in the deeds and struggles  
 Of the consecrated few of old?

Sacred flame—which art eternal!  
 Oh! bright essence!  
 Thou, Enthusiasm! forsake me not!  
 Oh, though life be reft of all her vernal  
 Beauty, ever let thy magic presence  
 Shed its glory round my clouded lot.”



One good result of Mangan's connection with the paper was his acquaintance with Petrie and O'Donovan, who were both able to befriend him in after life. He has left us his impressions of the two scholars, and a few passages are interesting. The sketches from which I quote were written in the last few months of the poet's life. Of "dear old Petrie," as Carlyle calls him, he says:—

"If he can sympathise with the dry drollery of Charles Lamb, he has himself more than I should be inclined to accuse him of; but I rather imagine that quaintest of all my bound and lettered acquaintances would have little prospect of a perusal under his hand by the side of another version of the 'Tara Hymn of St. Patrick.' The character of Dr. Petrie in private life is without blemish. His appearance is truly patriarchal, and his manner does not belie his appearance. If there be anything in or about him which even the most rigid disciplinarian could translate into the name of a failing, it is his indulgence towards the errors and weakness of mankind. Not, certainly, in my opinion, but questionless, the less that I allude to any cause disentiing me from breathing a syllable of reproach against the most abandoned of delinquents the better. I speak of the view which society would be likely to entertain of the matter. Dr. Petrie would make, I apprehend, but an indifferent Attorney-General, and, certes, would shine with the very least conceivable degree of lustre as a hanging judge."

Of O'Donovan he had an equally grateful and kindly recollection. Both treated him with consideration and friendliness. He barely mentions O'Curry in his writings, which is rather strange, seeing his fondness for paying compliments, and his unusual lack of malice. Of O'Donovan he always speaks with the highest praise:—

"I was rather a young man when I first met with Mr. O'Donovan. I had previously associated a good deal with some of the *savants* of our metropolis; but ten minutes conversation with my new acquaintance were sufficient to show me that his order of mind was markedly distinct from that of any literary man whom I had ever known.

He was thoughtful, slow, and deeply argumentative, and appeared inclined to call in question every fact that could not be substantiated by irresistible testimony, and the justness of every dogma that would not bear the most searching investigation to which the human understanding could subject it. I could not, I confess it, accompany him in many of his reasonings—not that I was unable to comprehend them or the drift of them—but because I never liked to give myself the trouble of doubting. I had then, as I have now, a large amount of belief in everybody and all things. Every possibility assumed, to my view, the appearance of a probability, and every probability the shape and lineaments of a reality. O'Donovan was in this respect precisely my antithesis. Severe, coldly-judging, and testing ethics by the science of mathematics, he seemed to me an individual whom I should always respect for his talents, but with whom I could



never have any cordial sympathy on any of the great questions which habitually absorb the consideration of all human souls not embrutified by sensual pleasure or enslaved by the pursuit of gain.

Since that period, however, I have had abundant reasons to abandon my first conceptions of the intellectual calibre of this distinguished man. In reality no one exists who combines a larger share of the imaginative mind with the philosophical than John O'Donovan. Only it is not quite apparent at first, not very clearly seen on the surface of his character. You must search for it, as you would delve into the mountain side for a mine of gold. But when you have found it it richly repays your trouble. Mr. O'Donovan never dazzles ; but he shines with a steady and well defined light. He is never brilliant, but neither is he ever obscure. His reasonings improve greatly upon acquaintance, as wine acquires a more delicious flavour by the lapse of years. You grow fond of listening to him ; and when the sound of his voice no longer echoes in your ears, it almost appears to you as though some exquisite strain of music had been suddenly stilled. There is to-day no person of my acquaintance whose conversation of an evening, be the subject what it might, I should prefer to that of John O'Donovan. . . . The private character of Mr. O'Donovan is truly praiseworthy. I happen to know something of him in this respect ; and I can with all sincerity affirm that, excepting, perhaps, Dr. Anster, I have never met with his equal for frankness of soul, and generous, genuine, unostentatious kindness. Personally I owe him a debt of gratitude which I can never repay. May he flourish and prosper like a tree in its ripeness, for he is a good man, and a thorough Irishman."

Now and again during the rest of 1832 the initials "J. C. M." appear in the *Comet*, but thenceforth the signature of "Clarence" becomes the usual mark by which his writings in the paper may be traced. Occasionally he uses the anything but cryptic signature of "B A M." In a poem entitled "Childhood," printed early in 1833, he recalls his youthful emotions and hopes, and although his infancy was not happy, he still yearns for its irresponsibilities. Viewed in the light of later experience his earlier years were comparatively blissful :—

"And where is now the golden hour,  
When earth was as a fairy realm,  
When fancy revelled  
Within her own enchanted bower,  
Which sorrow came to overwhelm,  
Which reason levelled ?  
When life was new and hope was young  
And sought and saw no other chart  
Than rose where'er  
We turned—the crystal joy that sprung  
Up freshly from the bubbling heart—  
Oh ! tell us where ?

. . . . .



I see thy willow-darkened stream,  
 Thy waveless lake, thy sunless grove  
     Before me glassed  
 In many a dimly-gorgeous dream,  
 And wake to love, to doubly love  
     The magic past.  
 Or fiction lifts her dazzling wand,  
 And lo ! thy buried wonders rise  
     On slumber's view,  
 Till all Arabia's genii-land  
 Shines out, the mimic paradise  
     Thy pencil drew.

But thou, lost vision, memory clings  
 To all of bright, and pure, and fond,  
     By thee enrolled :  
 Mementoes as of times and things  
 Antique, remote, far, far beyond  
     The flood of old."

The banter or "chaff," if not worse, which the morbid mind of the extremely self-conscious poet did not relish coming from his fellow-clerks, was soon liberally bestowed upon him by some of the *Comet* writers and notably by John Sheehan, who seems to have shown little sympathy for his troubles. Observing Mangan's many weaknesses, he evidently looked upon him with contempt. He was quite incapable of appreciating the finer qualities of his mind, his own vulgar, coarse nature finding pleasure and admiration only among the boisterous and reckless spirits who foregathered at the tavern kept by Henry Howard in Church Row,\* off Dame Street, where the proprietor's son, Alfred, the editor of the disreputable *Paddy Kelly's Budget*, and writers of his stamp were to be frequently met.† Mangan was practically driven out of the society of his colleagues in the attorney's office and the "Comet Club." There was, however, one member of the club, at least, who understood and pardoned the eccentricities of "Clarence." This was James Price, ‡ a young literary man of talent, who many years after wrote with generous feeling and admiration of

\* It stood on portion of the site now occupied by Corless's Restaurant.

† The *Comet* and *Paddy Kelly's Budget* were both eventually published opposite Howard's Tavern in Church Row.

‡ Price wrote some interesting poems for various Dublin and other papers, and was editor of the *Evening Packet* at the time of his death (January 14th, 1853). A long account of his life has been written by Mr. John M'Call for a Dublin periodical.



1830-1831 # his unfortunate friend. The shy, often abstracted poet sought comfort in the taverns himself, but he secluded himself from the gaze of his "friends." The habit of self-companionship grew upon him so much that he shunned people he knew, rarely visited anybody, and when he left his office, instead of going to his home, which had no attraction for him, he stole into one or other of the taverns, where he would sit for hours in thought, noticing no one, and if observed himself, caring little about it. He was not, it is believed, a heavy drinker at this time. He would sometimes shake off this feeling of isolation and friendlessness, and few more delightful companions could be found than Mangan in his more cheerful moments. He added a little to his income by teaching German to a few pupils. Among these was a Miss Hayes, of Rehoboth House,\* Dolphin's Barn, then a rural district outside Dublin. The house is almost certainly that one described by Mangan in one of his autobiographical fragments:—

"On the south side of the city of Dublin, and about half way down an avenue which breaks the continuity of that part of the Circular Road extending from Harold's Cross to Dolphin's Barn, stands a house plain in appearance, and without any peculiarity of external structure to attract the passenger's notice. Adjoining the house is a garden with a sort of turret lodge at the extreme end, which looks forth on the high road. The situation is lone and picturesque, and he who should pause to dwell on it must be actuated by other and deeper, and possibly, sadder feelings, than any that such a scene would be likely to excite in the breast of the poet or artist. Perhaps he should be under the influence of such emotions as I recently experienced in passing the spot after an absence of seventeen years."† . . . "Seventeen years! Let me rather say seventeen centuries. For life upon life has followed and been multiplied on and within me during that long, long era of passion, trouble and sin. The Pompeii and Herculaneum of my soul have been dug up from their ancient sepulchres. The few broken columns and solitary arches which form the present ruins of what was once Palmyra present not a fainter or more imperfect picture of that great city as it flourished in the days of its youth and glory than I, as I am now, of what I was before I entered on the career to which I was introduced by my first acquaintance with that lone house in 1831. Years of so much mingled pleasure and sorrow! Whither have you departed, or rather, why were you allotted me? You delivered me from sufferings which at least were of a guiltless order, and would shortly, in a better world, have been exchanged for joys, to give me up to others, the bitter fruits of late repentance, and which

\* Sir John Stevenson, the composer, lived in this house, it is said, when he was arranging Moore's *Irish Melodies*.

† This was written in 1849.

On Dec 31. 1831, the Carmelite Nuns opened Rehoboth as a Convent. but remained there tranquil on Jan 13, 1844.



await no recompense, and know no change, save from severe to severer. But alas ! thus it was, is, and must be. My plaint is chorussed by millions. Generation preaches to generation in vain. It is ever and everywhere the same old, immemorial tale. From the days of Adam in Eden to our own, we purchase knowledge at the price of innocence. Like Aladdin in the subterranean garden, we are permitted to heap together and gather up as much hard bright gold and diamonds as we will—but we are forever, therefore, entombed from the fresh, natural green pastures and the healthy daylight.”

Miss Catherine Hayes was a young girl, and Mangan became very much attached to her. But there is not the slightest reason for assuming, as some writers have done, that his liking for her constituted the famous love affair concerning which so much mystery has been made. There is no doubt that about this very time Mangan was in love with a lady to whom allusion will be made directly. Meanwhile, it should be mentioned that Miss Hayes died in October, 1832, and Mangan, who felt her loss very keenly, wrote a touching poem on the event in the *Comet*, entitled “Elegiac Verses on the Death of a Beloved Friend.” Price, speaking of this death, says:—

“Clarence, so keenly sensitive to the influence of grief—so devoted in his personal attachments—had not only to mourn over unrequited love, but was doomed to follow to the grave an early and faithful friend, one in whose perfect communion of feeling he ever looked for, and ever found, a perfect sympathy. His sorrow was intense. He literally would not be comforted. The gloom of his spirit seemed from his period to become more settled.”

Here are a few verses of the poem referred to:—

“I stood aloof ; I dared not to behold  
Thy relics covered over with the mould ;  
I shed no tear—I uttered not a groan—  
But yet I felt heartbroken and alone.

How feel I now ? The bitterness of grief  
Hath passed, for all that is intense is brief ;  
A softer sadness overshades my mind,  
And there thy memory ever lies enshrined.

And if I mourn—for this is human too—  
I mourn no longer that thy days were few ;  
Nor that thou hast escaped the tears and woe,  
The deaths on deaths the living undergo.

Thy spirit is at peace—oh ! blessed word,  
Forgotten by the million or unheard !  
While mine still struggles down this vale of death,  
And courts the favour of a little breath.



'Weep not for me, but for yourselves,' was said  
By Him who bore the cross on which He bled ;  
And if I drop a solitary tear,  
It is that thou art gone while I am here.

And he who, looking on the naked chart  
Of life, feels nature sinking at his heart :  
He who is drugged with sorrow, he for whom  
Affliction carves a pathway to the tomb—

He will unite with me to bless that Power  
Who gathers and transplants the fragile flower,  
Ere yet the spirit of life's certain storm  
Comes forth in wrath, to ravage and deform.

And if it be that God Himself removes  
From peril and contagion those He loves,  
I'll weep no more, but strew with freshest roses  
The hallowed mound where Innocence reposes.

The world is round me now, but sad and single  
I stand amid the throng with whom I mingle ;  
Not one of all of whom can be to me  
The bosom treasure I have lost in thee." \*

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\* This poem ran to nineteen verses in the *Comet*. Six years afterwards Mangan characteristically reprinted most of it in the *University Magazine* as a translation from the Irish !



## CHAPTER V.

AN ADVENTURE IN "THE SHADES"—INFLUENCE OF DE QUINCEY—DR. MAGINN'S CONVIVIAL HABITS—MANGAN'S PERSONAL QUALITIES—SHEEHAN'S BAD TASTE—"A FAST KEEPER"—MANGAN ON POETS—"BROKEN HEARTED LAYS"—"LIFE IS THE DESERT AND THE SOLITUDE"—MANGAN'S LAST POEM IN THE "COMET"—HIS OPINION OF THE EDITORS.

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"Ah, for youth's delirious hours  
 Man pays well in after days,  
 When spent hopes and wasted powers  
 Mock his love-and-laughter lays,"—MANGAN.

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IN his "Extraordinary Adventure in the Shades," which the *Comet* published in January, 1833, we get some interesting glimpses of Mangan.

"Under present circumstances," he says, "my only feasible proceeding is to march onward rectilineally, cheek-by-jowl with the spirit of the age, to abandon the bower of Fancy for the road-beaten pathway of Reason—renounce Byron for Bentham, and resign the brilliant and burning imagery of the past for the frozen realities of the present and the future."

After expatiating for some time upon a singular man whom he meets in "The Shades,"\* while awaiting the arrival of his friend "Brass Pen,"† with whom he had an appointment, Mangan comes to the conclusion that the strange individual before him is Dr. Bowring, the then well-known translator. Everything convinces him of the correctness of his inference, though he has never seen Bowring in his life. Every movement of the mysterious person proclaims him to be the well known delver in the fields of foreign literature. He hesitates to accost him, however.

(Shade's) Gray Home.

A tavern which stood in College Green. "A classic spot," says Mangan. The National Bank now covers its site.

† A Westmeath poet named Joseph Lestrangle, who was a contributor to the *Comet* and other journals of its class. Mr. John M'Call wrote some years ago an account of his life for an Irish periodical.



"Would it be reasonable? Would it be even polite? Should I not in fact deserve to be hooted down whenever I exhibited myself, and driven, like Ahasuerus the wanderer, from post to pillar, seeking refuge now in a cavern and now in a pot-house, and finding rest nowhere, a houseless wretch, a spectacle to society, and a melancholy memorial to after ages!"

It has already been suggested that Mangan clearly foresaw his ultimate misery, and passages like that just quoted, which are numerous even in his early writings, are evidence of his gift of foretelling "coming events" by the shadows cast before them.

He goes on to descant upon mannerism in a poet:—

"Mannerism is a grave thing, pursued I, following the current of my reflections. It is the real heavy bullion, the genuine ore, the ingot itself; every other thing is jelly and soapsuds. You shall tramp the earth in vain for a more pitiable object than a man of genius with nothing else to back it with. He was born to amalgamate with the mud we walk upon, and will, whenever he appears in public, be trodden upon like that. Transfuse into this man a due portion of mannerism—the metamorphosis is marvellous. Erect he stands and blows his trumpet, the sound whereof echoes unto the uttermost confines of our magnificent world. X Senates listen, empires tremble, thrones tumble down before him. He possesses the wand of Prospero, the lamp of Aladdin, the violin of Paganini, the assurance of the devil. What has conferred all these advantages upon him? Mannerism, destitute of which we are, so to speak, walking humbugs—destitute of which the long odds are that the very best individual among us, after a life spent on the treadmill system, dies dismally in a sack."

Finally, after the figure has undergone several transformations, Mangan is convinced that the strange visitor is a mighty oriental necromancer, and he proceeds:—

"What was to be done? Hastily to discuss the remainder of my wine, to order a fresh bottle, and to drink six or eight glasses in rapid succession, was the operation of a few minutes. And oh, what a change! Cleverly, indeed, had I calculated upon the glorious reaction. Words I have none to reveal the quiescence of spirit that succeeded the interior balminess that steeped my faculties in blessed sweetness. I felt renovated, created anew. I had undergone an apotheosis. I wore the cumbrous habiliments of flesh and blood no longer; the shell, hitherto the circumscriber of my soul, was shivered. I stood out in front of the universe a visible and tangible intellect, and held, with giant grasp, the key that had power to unlock the deep prison which enclosed the secrets of antiquity and futurity!"

It suddenly occurs to him that the magician can exercise his infernal art upon him, and he soliloquises:—

"Too intimately am I acquainted with thine iron character to doubt for an instant thy rocky immovability of purpose! What thou



willest, that executest thou! Expostulation and remonstrance, oratory and poetry are to thee so much rigmarole; even my tears will be thy laughing stock. I have not the ghost of a chance against thee. . . .

To look in any direction but the one I felt to be totally impracticable. He had spell-bound me doubtlessly; his accursed jugglery had been at work while I, with the innocent unsuspectingness which forms my distinguishing characteristic, had been occupied in draining the decanter. Was ever an inhabitant of any city in Europe so horribly predicamented? It was manifest that he had already singled me out as his first victim. I foreknew the destiny whereunto I was reserved. I saw the black marble dome, the interminable suites of chambers, the wizard scrolls, the shafts and arrows, and in dim but dreadful perspective the bloody cage in which, incarcerated under the figure of a bat, I should be doomed to flap my leathern wings through the sunless day."

Mangan eventually finds himself in bed, and learns that the extraordinary visitor who had caused him so much perturbation was none other than his friend "Brass Pen."

Now, the interest and importance of this sketch lie in its establishing, as it seems to me to do, three things—namely, that Mangan had been indulging in opium; that he was strongly under De Quincey's influence whilst writing the article, passages in which, as readers will allow, are not unlike "The English Opium-Eater;" and that the poet was already an admirable prose writer. So far, the prose extracts have been mainly those from his later writings. There can be no doubt, I think, that had he wished, had he written seriously and upon the most suitable subjects, he might have become as distinguished in prose as in verse.

Two or three weeks after the appearance of the "Extraordinary Adventure," Mangan, emulating Swift, who once wrote, as a burlesque upon Robert Boyle, a discourse about a broomstick, perpetrated "A Treatise on a Pair of Tongs," which is an extremely characteristic piece of pleasantry. It needs to be repeated that the *Comet* did not desire gloomy or remorseful verse, and made light of anything in that vein, preferring the satirical or the frivolous, but especially the partisan, pen, and Mangan was naturally inclined to "grin," as he himself expressed it. In one of his early sketches he admits a peculiarity which he was well aware every reader of his works would immediately observe:—

"I occupy," says he, "the laughable office of Grinner-General to the public at large . . . Lord Chesterfield observes—'There are some people who have a habit of always laughing when they speak, so



that their faces are perpetually on the grin.' This is precisely my case; I am grinning night and day like a mountebank through a horse collar. I now begin for the first time in my life thoroughly to understand that the great business of my existence is grinning."

In his "Treatise on a Pair of Tongs" he is most whimsical and quaint, but scarcely inspiring. Under his mask of gaiety and light-heartedness he concealed a wounded spirit, a lacerated heart. The "treatise" is really amusing nonsense, though its author was most unhappy while he was preparing this humorous effort. Here is a sample of it:—

"If a bachelor be so unfortunate as to have neither cook nor housemaid, the concentrated energies of his own mind should be lavished upon the task of burnishing his tongs. When I stalk into a drawingroom and perceive a magnificent brace of tongs genteelly lounging by the fireside I experience a glow of spirit and a flow of thought bordering on the archangelical. Standers-by are instantaneously stricken lifeless with astonishment at the golden tide of poetry which, in myriads of sunny streams and glittering rivulets, issues from my lips; poetry as far beyond what you, Public, are accustomed to get from me, as ambrosia is beyond hogwash. With modest effrontery I take a chair, and if my quick eye detect the presence of anything in the shape of wine or punch on the table I cheerfully abolish its existence. Impelled, as I am, on such occasions by an irresistible impulse, all apology is superfluous; but, to speak the truth, the mingled grace and gravity that accompany my performance of the manœuvre afford superabundant compensation to the company for the disappearance of the drinkables."

Excellent fooling, perhaps; but the thought arises—how unnatural a style for Mangan, and how much more dignified a position he might have occupied than that of "tickling the ears of the groundlings" who read the *Comet*! It is so necessary to a complete picture of the man to dwell upon his frequent change of mood, to notice his indirect allusions to himself, that, at the risk of seeming to give undue prominence to these *ephemerides*, I must quote another sentence or two, which might have been written by Dr. Maginn, whom Mangan evidently admired, and is interesting as showing the influence of that famous wit and winebibber. Mangan alludes to his own habit of—

"Swilling from time to time protracted draughts from a pitcher of punch to invigorate the nerves and preserve me from hysterics." "Let me reflect," he goes on; "it is now 2 a.m.; taverns are closed; not a minimum of rum under my roof; I am waterless, sugarless, and spir——; no, not spiritless. I go forth, Public, in terrible night and flashing rain and howling tempest, to storm the city for a beaker."

It must be remembered that at the time this was written



there was a large and admiring audience for similar stuff. It was made popular by Maginn and the thirsty group that assisted him in *Frazer's Magazine*. The man who did not relish whiskey-punch was considered a fool or a knave, and, as a matter of fact, in those pre-temperance days, it would have been almost impossible to find anybody who did not participate, more or less, in the "pleasures" of the bottle. We have seen that Mangan participated in them with eagerness in the endeavour to escape from the thoughts of his dismal life; in extenuation of his errors in this respect may be put his personal wretchedness and the persecution to which he was subject. It must not be forgotten, either, notwithstanding the opinions of modern crusaders in favour of total abstinence, that a sober Mangan might have been a nullity in literature. Without his misfortunes, and consequent excesses, we should probably have been bereft of his priceless legacy to Irish literature; and one cannot very harshly condemn a poet who, despite his follies, has done such wonderful work. It should be stated at once that, apart from his too ready and reckless indulgence in the universal vice of his day, Mangan was uncontaminated in any way. All who knew him are agreed upon this point. He never did anyone an injury—he alone suffered for his errors—he never sought to revenge himself upon any of his enemies, if he had any; he was full of piety, gentleness, resignation, and affection, as even those who have only casually studied his life and writings can see. Of revengeful feeling he harboured not a trace, though he had good reason for detesting some of his *soi-disant* friends. He has himself said:—

"All the blank-versifying in Europe to the contrary notwithstanding, revenge of personal wrongs is a mean passion. . . . I am convinced that none besides grovelling minds are capable of harbouring it."

Mitchel says very truly:—

"He had no malignity,\* sought no revenge, never wrought sorrow and suffering to any human being but himself. In his deadly struggle

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\* In one of his autobiographical allusions in the *Dublin University Magazine*, Mangan ironically remarks—"It is a matter pretty notorious at present that we have our share of *l'esprit malin*: the detection of faults never failing to afford us deep satisfaction while the discovery of beauties agonises us."



with the cold world he wore no defiant air and attitude, was always humble and affectionate,\* almost prayerful."

And again :—

"His manner and voice were always extremely gentle, and I never heard him blame anybody but himself. Neither did he speak much of his utter misery and desolation, but it was easy to perceive that his being was all drowned in the blackest despair."†

It was at this period that Mangan was most under the influence of Maginn, to whom he refers several times in his writings.‡ It is strange that one so widely read in contemporary English literature as he undoubtedly was should have felt no desire to contribute to the notable English periodicals of the day, but such seems to have been the case with Mangan. He never wrote a line in *Fraser* or *Blackwood*, or those other magazines which he was in the habit of reading. Yet there can be little doubt that had he obtained admission to the select company of contributors to the periodicals referred to his reputation in the world of literature would be vastly greater than it is. His writings would have rivetted public attention and commanded admiration outside Ireland.

James Price gives an interesting account of his first meeting with Mangan at the "Comet Club" :—

"It was at the dinner party of a literary club that he had recently joined—in the midst of a circle of Dublin's choicest spirits. . . . Primitive in appearance, simple in habits, knowing nothing of the world, and not yet under the dominion of that fatal indulgence to which, in after life, he was unfortunately a slave, he was not at home amongst the wild and reckless beings he there encountered. To 'roast' the retiring and half-frightened student, the president called on him for a song. He declared his inability to sing, and was pressed the more by his boisterous companions. Nervously anxious to court their good opinion, he then, with the utmost simplicity, said he would attempt a recitation, and actually, in a monotonous tone, went through nearly the whole of 'Marino Faliero' before he discovered that they were only amusing themselves at his expense. We afterwards met frequently at this club,

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\* One who knew him well (probably Joseph Brenan), wrote thus after his death—"He was kind-hearted and affectionate, his love was gentle as woman's. We have heard him say that he could *hate* nothing."

† Mitchel is of course speaking of the last years of Mangan's life in this passage.

‡ Now and again we come across sentences which read very like the immortal "Maxims of Sir Morgan O'Doherty," as, for example: "From the moment that any man tells me that he cannot understand the humour of Rabelais I never care to speak to him, or to hear him speak to me on literary topics."



and always found 'Clarence'—the signature appended to his early literary productions—the same simple, innocent creature, full of that fresh romance which, as at the touch of an enchanter's wand, summons up shapes of beauty and glory. . . . He was the least worldly being we ever met. His sensibilities were keen and easily excitable, and his whole organization, physical and mental, was instinct with genius. A peculiar feature of his character was the intense melancholy that rested upon him continually like a shadow. No matter how great the festivity—how bright the faces surrounding him—a deep gloom would suddenly fall upon 'Clarence,' a gloom that he could not shake off."

The *Comet*, though very willing to accept his writings, certainly never appreciated the better side of his powers, and its editor was even guilty of the bad taste of sneering at his sentiments, and of disparaging his personal appearance. Occasionally, one finds a more or less (generally less) witty allusion to him in "Answers to Correspondents," as thus—"Clarence has no permanent residence fixed on yet, and may, in the meantime, be seen of a hazy morning heavily finding his way out of a watchhouse with other Peep o' Day Boys." For a time Mangan took no notice of these remarks, but he withdrew from the paper when the usual limit of jesting was passed.

In No. 99 of the *Comet* (March 17th, 1833), there are a couple of his sonnets, one of which "A Fast Keeper," is already well known to students of Mangan's lighter effusions:—

"My friend, Tom Bentley, borrowed from me lately  
 A score of yellow shiners. Subsequently  
 I met the cove, and dunned him rather gently;  
 Immediately he stood extremely stately,  
 And swore, 'pon honour, that he wondered greatly.  
 We parted coolly. Well (exclaimed I ment'lly),  
 I calculate this isn't acting straightly;  
 You're what slangwhangers call a scamp, Tom Bentley.  
 In sooth, I thought his impudence prodigious;  
 And so I told Jack Spratt a few days after;  
 But Jack burst into such a fit of laughter;  
 'Fact is' (said he), 'poor Tom has turned religious.'  
 I stared, and asked him what he meant—  
 'Why, don't you see,' quoth Jack '*he keeps the Lent.*'"

In the second sonnet, called "Symptoms of Heart Disease," he punningly alludes to an imaginary or real love episode of his, and to its effect upon his personal appearance:—



“ My hair’s a Whig—’twill shortly turn to Grey ;\*  
 Appalled at night from dreary dreams I start :  
 My health is wrecked beyond the power of art,  
 I can’t drink anything except some whey,  
 I’m credibly informed I’ve shrunk away  
 To half my size—yet I’ve increased my sighs.”

In the following week’s issue, in “ An Ode to the *Comet*,” Mangan has a sounding eulogy of

“ The *Comet* so blazing, amazing and clever  
 The wonderful, thunderful *Comet* for ever ! ”

Of Sheehan he says :—

“ That man is a goose,  
 Or at least he’s a gander,  
 Who dreams that the visible globe can produce  
 A match for Philander.  
 On the high ground of principle  
 Phil is invincible ;  
 It is always his glory  
 To slaughter a Tory,  
 And fiercely to tweak  
 That rascally clique  
 Of Whigs by the beak  
 Till the vagabonds shriek.  
 He makes dismal examples  
 Of renegade knaves ;  
 His heel into powder imperially tramples  
 Your Castle-hack fawners and crouchers and slaves ;  
 His price is exceedingly far above rubies ! ”

And so on for a few more lines. Sheehan did not reciprocate this feeling of admiration—every allusion to “ Clarence ” (sometimes called “ Clear-hence ”) is a somewhat contemptuous one. Mangan was now nearing the end of his connection with the paper, and some of his few remaining contributions are not in the least in the *Comet* vein. They are chiefly the expression of his personal sorrows. Other pieces prove what has already been suggested, that he deliberately “ grinned,” to use a favourite term of his, in order to conceal the true feelings which were rack-ing his heart. In one of his *University Magazine* articles he grimly says :—

“ Poets are a gay, grinning, joking, jolly set of fellows, full of life, laughter, and waggy. To this all Dublin can testify. We appeal to the experience of every man, woman, and child between Rathmines

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\* Earl Grey.



and Drumcondra—between Beggar's Bush and the Fifteen Acres. Not one soul of them all, big or little, but must in honour admit that we stick like wax to the unvarnished truth."

Poets eat and drink without stint," he adds, with an evident glance at his own forlorn condition, "and seldom at their own cost—for what man of mark or likelihood in the moneyed world is there who is not eager to get their legs under his mahogany? Again, poets never fall in love—their sympathies are of too cosmopolitan an order for the exclusiveness demanded by the tender passion."

Yet despite all this affected liveliness, he says in one of his poems:—

"But oh, no horror over-darks  
The stanzas of my gloomful verse  
Like that which then weighed down my soul!"

"Broken-hearted lays—No. 1." is the title of Mangan's next piece, and it has more of the real Mangan in it than almost any other of his writings from the *Comet*. Its deliberate anticlimax is certainly an unpleasant indication of the poet's mania for mystification, the object of it being clearly to show that he was not so wretched as he pretended to be. Mangan never entirely lost this eccentricity, which has unquestionably spoiled several of his poems. The poem, which is little known, is as follows:—

"Weep for one blank, one desert epoch in  
The history of the heart; it is the time  
When all which dazzled us no more can win;  
When all that beamed of starlike and sublime  
Wanes, and we stand lone mourners o'er the burial  
Of perished pleasure, and a pall funereal,  
Stretching afar across the hueless heaven,  
Curtains the kingly glory of the sun,  
And robes the melancholy earth in one  
Wide gloom; when friends for whom we could have striven  
With pain, and peril, and the sword, and given  
Myriads of lives, had such been merged in ours,  
Requite us with false-heartedness and wrong;  
When sorrows haunt our path like evil powers,  
Sweeping and countless as the legion throng.

Then, when the broken dreams of boyhood's span,  
And when the inanity of all things human,  
And when the dark ingratitude of man,  
And when the hollow perfidy of woman,  
Come down like night upon the feelings, turning  
This rich, bright world, so redolent of bloom,  
Into a lazar-house of tears and mourning—  
Into the semblance of a living tomb!



When, yielding to the might she cannot master,  
 The soul forsakes her palace halls of youth,  
 And (touched by the Ithuriel wand of truth,  
 Which oft in one brief hour works wonders vaster  
 Than those of Egypt's old magician host),  
 Sees at a single glance that all is lost !  
 And brooding in her cold and desolate lair  
 Over the phantom-wrecks of things that were,  
 And asking destiny if nought remain ?  
 Is answered—"Bitterness and life-long pain,  
 Remembrance, and reflection and despair,  
 And torturing thoughts that will not be forbidden,  
 And agonies that cannot all be hidden."

Oh ! in an hour like this, when thousands fix,  
 In headlong desparation, on self-slaughter,  
 Sit down, you droning, groaning bore, and mix  
 A glorious beaker of red rum and water !  
 And finally give care its flooring blow,  
 By one large roar of laughter, or guffaw,  
 As in the 'Freischutz' chorus : 'Haw ! haw ! haw !'  
*L'affaire est faite*—you've bammed and bothered woe !" \*

At the very time he is writing this forced attempt at gaiety he is assuring us in another poem, and probably with truth :—

"My drooping heart can nowhere borrow  
 Language to paint its awful sorrow."

Mangan's connection with the *Comet* was now drawing to a close, and his remaining contributions, with one notable exception, are mostly exercises in rhyme. Such are his "Grand and Transcendent Ode and Acrostic, written for the purpose of giving glory to the *Comet*, and which I publicly challenge any Mohawk in Europe to beat," and "My Mausoleum," the first of which is clever, the last merely curious trifling. He pauses in the midst of his highest "toploftical" flight in the former poem to tell us that—

"Talkers are partial to caulkers,  
 Thinkers have always been drinkers, and scribblers will always be  
 bibblers."

Adding—

"Waiter ! I solemnly charge you to vanish and make yourself handy ;  
 And the best way to do that is to cadge me a bottle of brandy.  
 If you've no pitcher, you sumph ! haul in a half-gallon decanter—  
 Haul it in here by the neck, in style, in state, and *instanter*."

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\* James Price, in his recollections of Mangan (*Dublin Evening Packet*, 1849), says Mangan was under the influence of opium when he wrote this piece.



The finest of all the poems Mangan wrote for the *Comet* is one that was printed on July 21st, 1833, and entitled "Life is the Desert and the Solitude." \* He evidently had in his mind the lines from Edward Young—

"Can then Death's self be feared? Our life much rather:  
Life is the Desert—Life the Solitude;  
Death only joins us to the great majority."

In this poem Mangan throws aside his mummer's garb, and lays bare the rankling wound which made his days and nights miserable to him. If it has not all the poignancy of "The Nameless One," it has not less terrible truth and reality. It would be astonishing that neither Mitchel nor Father Meehan gave it a place in their collections, did we not know that the former knew very few of Mangan's original pieces, and that the latter, who was well aware of Mangan's *Comet* work, contented himself with collecting the whimsicalities alone. Here is the poem in its entirety—

"It is the joyous time of June,  
And fresh from nature's liberal hand  
Is richly lavished every boon  
The laughing earth and skies demand;  
How shines the variegated land—  
How swell the many sparkling streams!  
All is as gorgeous and as grand  
As the creations wherewith teems  
The poet's haunted brain amid his noonday dreams.  
  
Falls now the golden veil of even;  
The vault on high, the intense profound,  
Breaks into all the hues of heaven;  
I see far off the mountains crowned  
With glory—I behold around  
Enough of summer's power to mould  
The breast not altogether bound  
By grief to thoughts whose uncontrolled  
Fervour leaves feeling dumb and human utterance cold.  
  
Yet I am far—oh! far from feeling  
The life, the thrilling glow, the power  
Which have their dwelling in the healing  
And holy influence of the hour.  
Affliction is my doom and dower;  
And cares, in many a darkening throng,  
Like night clouds round a ruin, lour  
Over a soul which (never strong  
To stem the tide of ill) will not resist them long.

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\* Mangan afterwards attached the same title to one of his translations from Ludwig Tieck.



And all that glances on my vision,  
 Inanimate or breathing, rife  
 With voiceless beauty, half Elysian,  
 Of youthful and exuberant life,  
 Serves but to nurse the sleepless strife  
 Within—arousing the keen thought,  
 Quick-born, which stabbeth like a knife,  
 And wakes anticipations fraught  
 With heaviest hues of gloom from memory's pictures wrought.

What slakeless strife is still consuming  
 This martyred heart from day to day?  
 Lies not the bower where love was blooming  
 Time-trampled into long decay?  
 Alas! when hope's illusive ray  
 Plays round our paths, the bright deceiver  
 Allures us only to betray,  
 Leaving us thenceforth wanderers ever  
 Forlorn along the shores of life's all-troubled river.

Had I but dreamed in younger years  
 That time should paralyse and bow  
 Me thus—thus fill mine eyes with tears—  
 Thus chill my soul and cloud my brow!  
 No! I had not been breathing now—  
 This heart had long ago been broken;  
 I had not lived to witness how  
 Deeply and bitterly each token  
 Of bygone joy will yield what misery hath bespoken.

Alas! for those who stand alone—  
 The shrouded few who feel and know  
 What none beside have felt and known!  
 To all of such a mould below  
 Is born an undeparting woe,  
 Beheld by none and shared with none—  
 A cankering worm whose work is slow,  
 And gnaws the heartstrings one by one  
 And drains the bosom's blood till the last drop be gone." \*

The last piece sent by Mangan to the *Comet* is a serio-comic poem, "The Philosopher and the Child."† As he wrote no more for the paper after its appearance, it is not too much to assume that John Sheehan's remarks upon it, which are in execrably bad taste, led to the severance. Sheehan had previously annoyed the poet by his personal gibes; he seemed to take pleasure in animadverting upon the broken-down appearance of "Clarence," whom, at the

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\* This poem, somewhat altered and perhaps improved, appeared years later in the *Dublin University Magazine* under the title of "Stanzas which Ought not to have been Written in Midsummer."

† Mangan got this piece reprinted in the *Belfast Vindicator* of October 23rd, 1839, with his initials appended.



same time, he affected to regard as a fop. Mangan was unquestionably eccentric in his habits, but he was extremely sensitive to ridicule. He wore a wig to conceal his greyness, and Sheehan thought this an excellent opportunity for cheap wit. In "The Philosopher and the Child" Mangan describes how one day he saw an old patriarch talking earnestly to a little child, and he immediately conjured up in his mind a vision of Socrates and Pythagoras instructing the youth of Attica and formulating sublime truths for future ages. As the poet approaches the old man he finds that what he has assumed to be words of deepest wisdom are these :—

"Bad luck to dat oul' rap in Mary's Lane  
 Dat come and axed me for to sky de copper ; \*  
 Bad luck to him, de vagabond ! to rob  
 And swindle me wid pitch and toss, and fob  
 De penny dat I wanted for de cropper !" †

To this burlesque effusion Sheehan appended a few vulgar remarks, to the effect that its author was drunk when he wrote it, and advising him to go to Sir Arthur Clarke (a well-known Dublin physician, brother-in-law to Lady Morgan) for the stomach pump, and adding : "Make your will, and leave the coroner a lock of your wig for the trouble he will have at your inquest." That decided Mangan's departure for the *Comet*, which did not survive it long. After undergoing several transformations, among which we cannot include a return to good taste, and after incorporating itself with one or two other smaller journals, it finally ceased in December, 1833, about five months subsequent to the appearance of the last poem signed "Clarence."

Mangan has given us his opinion of the *Comet* men in the autobiographical sketch written by him and signed "E.W.," already referred to and quoted from. It is worth reprinting as a fitting pendant to this chapter.

"About this time, as I believe, he became acquainted with the editors of the *Comet*, a journal which, some fifteen years back, earned and enjoyed a high degree of notoriety throughout Ireland. They tried to corrupt him, and failed. He wrote for them gratuitously. But when he attended at their drinking bouts, he always sat at the table with a glass of water before him. They and their hangers-on, most of whom have since gone to the—angel, at length laughed him to scorn, voted him a 'spoon,' and would have no more to do with him. 'Tis a mad world, my masters !'"

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\* To play at pitch and toss. † A half-glass of whiskey.

"E. W."



## CHAPTER VI.

OPIUM-EATING—DE QUINCEY—JAMES PRICE'S TESTIMONY—EDGAR  
ALLAN POE—MANGAN'S LOVE AFFAIR—MITCHEL'S ACCOUNT—  
"MY TRANSFORMATION"—MANGAN'S DISAPPOINTMENT—HIS  
OWN STORY—LINES "TO LAURA."

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"That intolerable word  
Which, inly searching, pierceth like a sword  
The breast, whose wounds thenceforward know no healing."  
—MANGAN.

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A QUESTION which has frequently exercised writers about Mangan is, whether he had recourse to opium. He only once denied that he used it. In the short account of his life which he fathered upon Edward Walsh, he uses these words :—

"I conclude with a most solemn statement—that Mangan is *not* an opium-eater. He never swallowed a grain of opium in his life, and only on one occasion took—and then as a medicine—laudanum. The report with respect to his supposed opium-eating propensities originated from the lips of William Carleton, who for some or no purpose thought proper to spread it."

To which it may be answered that Carleton never declared it is a fact, but simply gave it as a common rumour. Carleton was not alone in thinking that Mangan took opium—his intimate friends all believed it. True, Father Meehan seems (and only seems) to deny the story. He says—"As for opium, I never knew him to use it. The poppy of the West satisfied his craving." But Father Meehan only knew Mangan from 1845 to his death, and it is quite possible that Mangan may have, like De Quincey, reduced the quantity previously taken to an infinitesimal amount, or may have given it up altogether. In one of his earliest contributions to the *Comet*, namely—"Very Original Correspondence"—there is a short passage, the only notable one in the sketch, which irresistibly reminds one of an opium-eater's fancy :—

"You know, my friend, the constitutional placidity of my temperament; how like Epictetus I am, and so forth, but coming into



collision with the wrongheadedness of the age so frequently as I do, innate integrity and a sense of principle compel me to curse by bell, book, and gaslight\* every thing and being in the vicinity of my person. The Gorgon's head, the triple-faced hell dog, the handwriting on Belshazzar's palace wall, the into-stone metamorphosing snake locks of Medusa, the Cock Lane Ghost, the Abaddon-born visions of Quincey, the opium-eater, the devil that perpetually stood opposite to Spinello, the caverns of Dom Daniel, the fireglobe that burned below the feet of Pascal, were each and all miserable little bagatelles by the side of the phantasmagoria that ever more haunt my brain and blast my eyes." †

Whatever the cause, whether intolerable pains, as in De Quincey's case, or from a desire to forget the trials and tribulations to which he was a martyr, there is no room for doubt that Mangan took opium. His intimate friend, James Price, than whom no better authority could be found, admits the use of opium:—

"Poor Clarence! what a world of dreamy enthusiasm was thine! How thickly studded was thy universe—the universe of thy better spirit—with rapturous fancies and golden hopes. How like an eastern sky thy mind became at times, 'with every thought a star.' The opium drug, so destructive in its ultimate effects, but oh, how delicious in its first visions, lifted thee from out thy abode of squalor, thy associations of wretchedness. Thou becamest the denizen of another—a fairy-world. Round thee ministrants to love and luxury and all imaginable blisses thickly thronged. Thy mean garret grew to a glowing garden, thy poor bed to a couch of roses. Changed for the time were thy corporeal being and thy spiritual existence. But oh! when thy dearly bought pleasure vanished—when the transient glow faded, and the dismal reality stared in thy glazed eye, how terrible was the reaction. Was it a wonder, poor friend, that this passion grew on thee? Was it a wonder that even the horrors of thy waking misery did not deter thee from purchasing from a pleasureless life's gloomy reality some fleeting moments of entrancing delusion."

Mitchel, who was well acquainted with Mangan during his latter years, and, at least, knew many to whom Mangan's habits were not unfamiliar, expressly mentions the use of opium:—

"Here (at the scrivener's) Mangan laboured mechanically, and dreamed for certain months, perhaps years; carrying the proceeds in money to his mother's poor home, storing in his memory the proceeds which were not in money, but in another kind of ore, which might feed the imagination indeed, but was not available for board and lodging. All this time he was the bond-slave of opium. . . . No purer and more benignant spirit ever alighted upon earth—no more abandoned wretch ever found earth a purgatory and a hell."

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\* Gas was, of course, a novelty in January, 1833.

† Almost these identical words occur in a letter which he subsequently wrote to James Price.



Again, he says, in another part of his essay :—

“And now his life was wasted and gone—the very powers of intellect and imagination, wherein he could freely live and move ‘twenty golden years ago,’ were now lying darkened and bound in the torpor produced by a horrible drug.”

Mitchel was referring, in this last sentence, to a later period of Mangan’s life than we have yet reached, but it is right to use his corroborative testimony here.

Others who knew Mangan well tell me that, though he never admitted it, it was generally understood that he was addicted to opium, especially in his earlier years. De Quincey says he will not “readily believe that any man having once tasted the divine luxuries of opium will afterwards descend to the gross and mortal enjoyments of alcohol.” But Mangan was able to accomplish this (as De Quincey suggested) almost impossible change. Neither his recourse to opium nor to alcohol was due to a desire for epicurean pleasure, but, as cannot be too often stated, with the vain object of alleviating his wretched condition of ill-health and intellectual misery. As De Quincey suggests, few would indulge in the practice “purely for the sake of creating an artificial state of pleasurable excitement.” Perhaps Mangan felt as the English opium-eater did when he first tasted the dread narcotic :—

“Happiness might now be bought for a penny, and carried in the waistcoat pocket ; portable ecstasies might be had corked up in a pint bottle, and peace of mind could be sent down in gallons by the mail coach.”

He soon learned that it relieved but to plunge again into deepest gloom and depression, and that the last state was worse than the first. De Quincey informs us that—

“The opium eater loses none of his moral sensibilities or aspirations ; he wishes and longs as earnestly as ever to realise what he believes possible and feels to be exacted by duty ; but his intellectual apprehension of what is possible infinitely outruns his power, not of execution only, but even of power to attempt.”

In this way Mangan’s already feeble will was still further weakened, and his efforts to retrieve himself were doomed to failure from the moment he sought oblivion in opium. Edgar Allan Poe, in one of his last letters to a friend, while admitting his own excesses, dwelt upon the fact that his feeling of misery was stronger than his will. He says :—



"I have absolutely no pleasure in the stimulants in which I sometimes so madly indulge. It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure that I have perilled life and reputation and reason. It has been in the desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories—memories of wrong and injustice and imputed dishonour—from a sense of insupportable loneliness and a dread of some strange impending doom."

These words apply to Mangan fully, and instead of heaping blame upon the unfortunate poet, we ought rather to give him credit for his restraint of himself during so long a period, for it was only in the last few years of his life that his feeble will completely abandoned the struggle and allowed the temptation to drink to master him altogether. It will be necessary to return to this question of opium-eating again, and, therefore, it may be left for the present.

It must have been early in the thirties—or even earlier—that Mangan made the acquaintance of a family, living in Ranelagh, in which there were three daughters. The whole affair has been made a mystery, and in many of its details it is likely to remain one, but a few facts are obtainable. Father Meehan does not mention it at all, and other writers are either equally silent, or entirely wrong in their inferences and assumptions. The name of the lady was Margaret Stackpoole, and, according to tradition, the family lived in Mountpleasant Square. Mangan felt a strong admiration for one of the girls, and from an admirer gradually became a warm lover. Miss Stackpoole, he says, reciprocated the feeling, and gave him a good deal of encouragement. Mitchel thus refers to the episode—

"In that obscure, unrecorded interval of his life,\* he seems to have some time or other, by a rare accident, penetrated into a sphere of life higher and more refined than any which his poor lot had before revealed to him; and even to have dwelt therein for certain days. Dubiously, and with difficulty, I collect from those who were his intimates many years thus much. He was on terms of visiting in a house where were three sisters; one of them beautiful, *spirituelle*, and a coquette. The old story was here once more re-enacted in due order. Paradise opened before him; the imaginative and passionate soul of a devoted boy bended in homage before an enchantress. She received it, was pleased with it, even encouraged and stimulated it, by various arts known to that class of persons, until she was fully and proudly conscious of her absolute power over one other gifted and noble nature—until she knew that she was the centre of the whole orbit of his being, and the light of his life; then, with a cold surprise, as wondering that he could be guilty of such a

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\* Presumably the period between 1826 and 1836.



foolish presumption, she exercised her undoubted prerogative, and whistled him down the wind. His air-paradise was suddenly a darkness and a chaos. . . . He never loved and hardly looked upon any woman for ever more. Neither over his disappointments did he gnash his teeth and beat his breast before the public; nor make himself and his sorrows the burden of his song."

Mitchel had means of discovering the truth of the famous love affair; and it may be taken for granted that his account is fairly correct. But the last statement is inaccurate. Mangan did frequently make his personal sorrows the burden of his song, and alluded to his hopeless love over and over again. Mitchel, however, as his collection of the poems proves, did not know a great deal concerning Mangan's literary labours. Mangan's repeated allusions to false friendship—"betrayed in friendship, befooled in love," etc.—apparently owe their origin to his feeling that he had been unfairly supplanted by a friend; and this surmise is borne out, I think, by a remarkable sketch which he wrote for the *Dublin Satirist* of October 19th, 1833. It is called "My Transformation: A Wonderful Tale;" and though the characteristic serio-comic element is introduced, one can hardly imagine Mangan writing such a sketch, unless for the purpose of indirectly taking the world into his confidence about his own experience of womankind.\* He was so persistently autobiographical in his writings that to accept this narrative as authentic is not so very wild a proceeding. A few extracts will suffice for the purpose. He describes his meeting with the lady as having taken place in 1828, when "she was twenty years of age, and a model of all that is witching and winning in woman. She was," he goes on, "the most beautiful and fascinating girl I had ever met before, or have ever since known." He found himself

"deeply, incurably smitten. I avowed my passion, and was not rejected. Changed as I am in heart and soul, I look back upon the dazzling brightness of that brief hour with feelings beyond the conception of any, save those whose bosoms have burned with a 'lava flood' like that of my own. I have wept over the recollection of it with heart-wrung tears."

He proceeds to tell how he foolishly introduced a friend, a life-long friend, to the lady, and says:—

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\* I have since discovered that the serious part of the sketch may be thoroughly relied upon. Price asserts its truth.



"I well remember that, on the very evening of the introduction, a presentiment of over-shadowing evil hung like a cloud above my spirit. I saw, as on the glass of a magic mirror, the form and character of the change that was about to be wrought upon the spirit of my dream. Those who are familiar with presentiments know that earlier or later they will be realised. So, alas! it was with me. Shape and verification were speedily given to the outlines of my vague imaginings."

He was jilted in favour of the "friend" he had introduced into the house. "Then began the tempest in his soul."

"I tried to summon a sufficient share of philosophy to assist me in sustaining the tremendous shock thus inflicted on me. In vain! in vain! The iron had found its way into my soul. There it rankled and festered; the decree had gone out, and I was thenceforth condemned to be the miserable victim of my own confidingness and the treachery of others. Possibly I might live—might bear about with me the burthen of my agony for long years to come, but my peace was everlastingly blasted, and the common atmosphere of this world, health and life to others, must be for me impregnated with invisible poison. The denunciatory handwriting had been traced along the wall of my destiny; the kingdom of my affections had been taken from me and transferred to a rival. Not, indeed, that I had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. No! fonder, truer, madder love than mine had never streamed in lightning through the veins of man. I had loved with all the intense fervour attributed only to the heroes of romance, and here was my requital! . . . . . Would not any other in my circumstances have stabbed the faithless fair to the heart, or despatched a bullet through the brain of his perfidious rival? I alone saw how futile such a proceeding must be. Uppermost in my mind floated a sense of loathing inexpressible. . . . I wrapped up my heart in the folds of bitterest scorn—this was all, and enough. No thought, no shadow of a thought of vengeance hovered within the sphere of my meditations for the future. . . . I was much too proud to be revengeful. Strange idiosyncrasy of mine! Yet not wholly unparalleled. . . . The combination of love with despair probably contributes the perfect measure of human wretchedness. . . . Weeks and months wheeled onwards, but generated no alteration in me unless for the worse. I had drunk deeply of the waters of bitterness, and my every sense was still saturated with the flavour of the accursed wave. There was a down-dragging weight upon my faculties—I felt myself gradually growing into the clay. I stood upon and almost sighed for the advent of the night that should see my head pillowed upon the green and quiet mould below me. What was the earth to me? Properly no more than a sepulchral dell, whose very freshest flowers were the rank, though flaunting, offspring of rottenness and corruption. I tried to look in the miraculous face of the sun, but his glory was shrouded by a pall of sackcloth. The burial of my hopes appeared to have been followed by an eclipse of all that was bright in the universe.

On the other hand, I cherished a morbid sympathy with whatever was terrific and funereal in the operations of nature. . . . Often, when the whirlwind and tempest awoke, I stood out under the starless firmamental cope and longed personally to track the career of the



lightning, or to envelop myself darkly in the curtains of the thunder-cloud. The pitiless booming of the sea against the naked rocks in winter possessed a peculiar charm for my ulcerated imagination . . . \*

Questionlessly, my dreams were peopled with the most horrible and hideous and misbegotten spectra that ever rioted in the desolate chambers of a madman's brain. Frequently have I started from my bed in the hollow of the night to grapple with the phantasmagoria that flitted before me, clothed in unnameable terrors. . . . The house I dwelt in was in an isolated and remote quarter of the city. Solitary, silent, and prison-like it was; nevertheless a dwelling I would not have forsaken for the most brilliant pleasure-dome under the Italian heaven. To the rear of the house extended a long and narrow courtyard, partly overgrown with grass and melancholy-looking wild flowers, but flagged at the extremity, and bounded by a colossal wall. Down the entire length of this wall, which was connected with a ruined old building, descended a metal rain-spout, and I derived a diseased gratification in listening in wet weather to the cold, bleak, heavy plash, plash, plash of the rain as it fell from this spout on the flags beneath. . . . †

Few and rare were the visitors who speckled my solitude. I had voluntarily broken the magnetic bonds which unite man to man in socialised being. . . . This human world had died to me; the lights and shadows of life's picture had long since been blended into one chaos of dense and inextinguishable darkness; the pilgrimage of my blank years pointed across a desert where flower or green thing was forbidden to live; and it mattered not how soon some shifting columns of the sand descended and swept me into its bosom. Thereafter darkness would swathe my memory for ever; not one poor sigh would be expended for me—no hands would care to gather mine unremembered ashes into the sanctuary of an urn. . . . ‡ What cared I if those who thus attempted to break down with their feeble fingers the adamant barrier that severed me from a communion with mankind, perceiving the futility of their enterprise, retired from my presence in disgust and despair?"

Mangan, however, true to his habit of jesting amid his misfortunes, § then proceeds to narrate how he was revived, awakened to life and happiness by perusing the new journal, the *Dublin Satirist*. Few people will, I think, dispute the opinion that this sketch is, so far as it is serious, a record of real experience. It looks as though Mangan had nearly completed it when it occurred to him that the readers of the *Satirist* did not want a story of unrelieved

\* See his remarkable poems, "O'Hussey's Ode to the Maguire," and "Siberia," for pictures of terrible desolation.

† Compare his poem "Twenty Golden Years Ago."

‡ Mangan was as fond as his German poets of allusion to his grave. An exact metrical rendering of this sentence might be easily gathered from one or more of his poems.

§ "I have a very reprehensible way of jesting at times in the midst of my own misery." (De Quincey's *Confessions*.)



gloom, and hence he tacked on the not very amusing burlesque ending, or anti-climax. If a theory is permissible in this matter, I would suggest that Mangan did not really declare, boldly, his love for Miss Stackpoole, but allowed his rival to forestall him simply from inordinate shyness. He does not say in this sketch that she really returned his love—and Mitchel only suggests tacit encouragement. In one of his early sonnets there are some lines which seem to refer to his own case. He is probably alluding to himself in the mention of

“The shrouded few who share  
Their locked up thoughts with none.”

And he adds—

“Ah ! think not thou this heart hath never burned  
With passion deeply felt and ill-returned.  
If, ice-cold now, its pulse no longer glows,  
The memory of *unuttered* loves and woes  
Lies there, alas ! too faithfully inurned.”

It will be seen that these lines support the present contention. In another sonnet written at the same time, he says :—

“Still I did adore  
The unreal image loftily enshrined  
In the recesses of mine own sick mind.  
Enough, the spell is broke, the dream is o’er,  
The enchantment is dissolved—the world appears  
The thing it is—a theatre, a mart !  
Genius illumines, and the work of art  
Renews the wonders of our childhood’s years,  
Power awes, wealth shines, wit sparkles, but the heart,  
The heart is lost, for love no more endears.”

At the same time, Price quotes a letter of Mangan which says that she encouraged him in every way, and the same writer also enables us to see how profoundly his disappointment affected him :—

“He would speak,” he says, “with blended bitterness and sorrow of lost love and faithless friendship. He would, with a kind of saturnine pleasure, dwell upon his own experiences, or his various readings of implicit trust requited with open perfidy—of fond affection repaid with cold scorn—of true friendship returned with hollow selfishness. Then when we laughed or strove to laugh him into a healthier mood, it was sometimes frightful—yes, frightful, with a frame so fragile and a cheek so pale—to witness the almost boisterous schoolboy mirth in which he would indulge. . . . His very nature was one of gloom. . . . He once, with unusual bitterness of manner,



alluded to the priceless argosy of a heart's first affections, tossed amid the quick-sands of a woman's caprice, to a love, fresh, pure, fervent, and beautiful as ever lighted passion's flame in human bosom, its jealous agony derided, and its first rapturous declaration chilled by cruel and bitter scorn, Poor Clarence ! It was impossible for a nature like his, so full of tender impulsiveness, to exist without loving. Once the ties of affection rent, they were rent for ever. . . . He was not formed to win the love of woman. Though never did living man possess a soul more generous or truthful in its impulses, more fond, more trusting—more womanly in its gentleness—Clarence had not 'those soft parts of conversation that chamberers have,' and acutely and keenly, according to his most sensitive nature, must he have felt this when rejected. We have an autobiographical letter beside us, written at this period, containing, amid much incoherence, a relation of the effect produced on him by the bursting of the radiant-hued bubble created by an inordinate fancy. One brief extract is sufficient—'My father and mother meant well by me, but they did not understand me. They held me by chains of iron. I dared not move or breathe but by their permission. They seemed to watch my every action, and to wish to dive into my very thoughts, few of which, much as I loved them—and I had a morbid love of them—I ever made them acquainted with. My existence was miserable. I often longed for death. Death, however, came not, but in its place came something worse than death—love. I formed an attachment to a young lady who gave me every encouragement for some months, and then appeared to take delight in exciting me to jealousy. One evening—I well remember it—she openly slighted me and shunned me. I escaped marriage with this girl, but it was at the expense of my health and mind.' ”

Mangan thenceforth looked upon the fair sex as essentially cruel and malicious, and in one of his poems exclaims

“ Man at most is made of clay—  
Woman seems a block of granite ! ”

In one of his later Irish poems (“ The Vision of Egan O'Reilly ”) the lines :—

“ Alas for us the darkened !  
We dream our years away : we mingle false and true in one.  
Pain chides us now ; now pleasure chains :  
But we are taught by naught and none—  
God's voice itself remains  
Unharkened ! ”

clearly allude to himself ; there is no doubt that he occasionally mingled the false with the true, but it is only the incredible that we need reject. Now, there is no inherent improbability in the idea of Mangan loving passionately, and being deceived by his friend and by



the lady he so deeply admired. His feelings might be expressed in Dryden's lines :—

“How could you betray,  
This tender heart, which, with an infant fondness  
Lay lulled between your bosoms and there slept  
Secure of perjured faith? I can forgive  
A foe, but not a mistress and a friend—  
Treason is there in its most horrid shape  
Where trust is greatest; and the soul resigned,  
Is stabbed by her own guards.”

It is almost certain that Mangan, who was at this time, at any rate, an easy victim to such a transient gleam of hope as this love episode afforded him, was profoundly affected by it. Sir Charles Gavan Duffy says it turned the drama of his life into a tragedy. There are some lines of an old poet \* which represent with sufficient truth the state of his mind after this severe disillusionment :—

“There is a stupid weight upon my senses,  
A dismal, sudden stillness, that succeeds  
The storm of rage and grief; like silent death  
After the tumult and the noise of life.  
Would it were death (as sure 'tis wondrous like it),  
For I am sick of living: my soul's palled;  
She kindles not with Anger or Revenge.  
Love was the informing, active fire within;  
Now that is quenched, the mass forgets to move,  
And longs to mingle with its kindred earth.”

He evidently forgot, when he introduced a friend to the object of his affections, the lines of Shakespeare :—

“Friendship is constant in all other things  
Save in the office and affairs of love.”

Perhaps he thought that the moral support of his friend would enable him to summon up the necessary courage to propose to Miss Stackpoole. In any case, he was woefully deceived, and the reason of it matters little now. From 1833 to 1849, whatever his subject, the note of disappointed love comes up in his writings. Even in his so-called Turkish, Arabic, and Persian poems we have evidence of his remembrance of the wound inflicted upon his affections. Several small snatches of the love-lyrics may be quoted. For example :—

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\* Nicholas Rowe.



"Lock up thyself within thyself; distrust the Stranger and the Fair;  
 The fool is blown from whim to whim by every gust of Passion's  
 gales;  
 Bide where the lute and song are mute, and—as thy soul would shun  
 despair—  
 Avert thine eyes from Woman's face when twilight falls and she  
 unveils!"

Again—

"Why look mine eyes bloodshot? Ah! canst thou require  
 To be told of what Love, when it rages within, does?  
 Or dost thou not know, when a house is on fire,  
 That the flames will be apt to break out at the windows?"

And this—

"Darksome though the Night of Separation  
 Unto two fond hearts must ever prove,  
 Those twin sorcerers, Hope—Imagination,  
 Raise a moon up from the Well of Love."

And this—

"My soul was as buoyant as air,  
 My books made the chief of my care,  
 Till love came, like lightning, to rend  
 My bosom and madden my brain."

Here is another allusion—

"What is love? I asked a lover:  
 Liken it, he answered, weeping,  
 To a flood unchanged and sweeping  
 Over shell-strewn grottoes, over  
 Beds of roses, lilies, tulips,  
 O'er all flowers that most enrich the  
 Garden, in one headlong torrent,  
 Till they shew a wreck from which the  
 Eye and mind recoil abhorrent.  
 Hearts may woo hearts, lips may woo lips,  
 And gay days be spent in gladness,  
 Dancing, feasting, liting, luting,  
 But the end of all is sadness,  
 Desolation, devastation,  
 Spoliation, and uprooting!"

And for a last poetical reference take this—

"Oh! the joys of love are sweet and false—are sorrows in disguise,  
 Like the cheating wealth of golden eve, ere night breaks up the skies;  
 If the graves of earth were opened—oh! if Hades could but speak,  
 What a world of ruined souls would curse the sheen of beauty's cheek!"

It is very curious that in 1839, besides writing the poem  
 "To Laura," Mangan also made several other undoubted



allusions, as I think, to his love affair. No special discernment is necessary to discover, introduced into his papers on German and Oriental poetry, a few sentences which can only have a personal significance. They have no reference to the poet or poetry then under discussion, and the conjecture is not far-fetched which applies them to his disappointment in love. Thus, speaking of a volume of Gellert's poems, he says :—

"Here, however, it now lies before us, and we hail it as an old friend—nay, as better than a friend, because it lies before us, while a friend commonly lies behind our back."

Again, in a dialogue he makes an interlocutor say, "A friend should bear a friend's infirmities," to which the other replies, "My reading of that is, 'a friend should *bare* a friend's infirmities.'" And what is the meaning of the mysterious passage in his article on another German poet, printed in the same year, after a somewhat extended absence from the magazine? Here are a few sentences :—

"About three months back we had the misfortune to sustain a severe attack of intellectual hypochondriasis, the effect of which was to revolutionise for a season all our literary tastes. . . . Neither physicians nor metaphysicians were able to comprehend, far less to remove, our malady. Where it originated we ourselves can hazard no conjecture, for who shall fathom the abyss of the human mind? Enough, that while it lasted it either paralysed or perverted all our faculties—converting us, even while we fancied ourself an eagle, by turns into an owl, a raven, and a gander."

He goes on in his usual ironical manner, which to those who knew his habits, was probably highly amusing :—

"We attribute our recovery, which was gradual, to the combined agencies of gymnastics and toast water—a sober beverage in the main, though frequently drunk twice a day for weeks in succession."

He then tells us that hosts of friends have congratulated him on his recovery, including William Carleton,

"who has fraternally counselled us to make the most of the great change that has overtaken us. We thank this distinguished man from the bottom of our ink-stand, and shall endeavour to act on the injunction, the more especially as any small change that may overtake us stands, we lament to observe, a very slender chance of being made the most of in such hands as ours."

Now this may be all mere whimsicality with no real cause, but, taken in conjunction with other allusions it seems to me to point to the disturbance of his mind consequent upon his disappointment in love. The only other



allusion of his to the subject with which I shall trouble the reader is that in his impersonal autobiography, where he says :—

“Mangan was at one period of his mysterious life drawn away, and entirely, into the snare of love, and was even within an ace of becoming a Benedict. But certain strange circumstances—the occurrence of which he has described to me as having been foreshadowed to him in a dream—interposed their ungallant proportions between the lady and him ; and so he abode a maledict, and Hymen despatched Cupid and Plutus to look for somebody else.”

Some writers, especially those who know little about his poems, always quote as corroborative of his disappointment the well-known lines from Rückert, “And then no more.” But that piece only shows that Mangan was tempted to translate those poems which more or less corresponded with his own feelings ; it is only when he goes out of his way to introduce his own sorrows into the writings of others that the matter calls for comment. No proof of this peculiar habit of his is needed. It is readily admitted by all who know them that in his German and Irish versions his own personality is often paramount, and that expressions, and almost whole poems, unwarranted by the professed originals are to be found. The lines from Rückert are too familiar to readers of even the most inadequate collection of Mangan’s poems to call for reprinting ; but there is one notable poem referred to by Mitchel, but, strangely enough, not included in his (or, indeed, in any other) collection of the poet’s works, which has an indisputable connection with this love romance of Mangan’s life. Mitchel refers to it as addressed to “Frances,” and characterises it as “one of his dreariest songs of sorrow.” Hercules Ellis, in his *Romances and Ballads of Ireland* (1850), also gives the name as “Frances.” But in 1839 Mangan himself entitled the poem “To Laura,” and attributes it to an Italian poet. As even the only reprinted version (that in Ellis’s book) is generally unknown, and is imperfect, no apology is necessary for quoting the verses in their entirety, as they appeared in the *Dublin University Magazine* of April, 1839.\*

The lines :—

“The love is deepest oft and truest  
That burns within the breast *untold*,”

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\* Dr. Sigerson has in his possession, and has recently shown me, a much earlier autograph copy of the poem, where the name is given as “Frances.”



seem, like others, to show that he never proclaimed his love openly. The following version contains two verses not in Ellis's copy, and it differs in other respects :—

"The life of life is gone and over ;  
I live to feel I live in vain,  
And worlds were worthless to recover  
That dazzling dream of mine again.

The idol I adored is broken,  
And I may weep its overthrow ;  
Thy lips at length my doom have spoken,  
And all that now remains is woe.

And is it thus indeed we sever ?  
And hast thou then forgotten all ?  
And canst thou cast me off for ever,  
To mourn my dark and hopeless thrall ?

Oh ! perfidy, in friend or foe,  
In stranger, lover, husband, wife,  
Thou art the blackest drop of woe  
That bubbles in the Cup of Life !

But most and worst in woman's breast,  
Triumphant in thy blasting power,  
Thou reignest like a demon-guest  
Enthroned in some celestial bower !

Oh ! cold and cruel she who, while  
She lavishes all wiles to win  
Her lover o'er, can smile and smile,  
Yet be all dark and false within !

Who, when his glances on another  
Too idly and too long have dwelt,  
Can sigh, as though she strove to smother  
The grief her bosom never felt !

Who, versed in every witching art  
That even the warmest love would dare,  
First having gained her victim's heart,  
Then turns him over to despair !

Alas ! and can this treachery be ?  
The worm that winds in slime along,  
Is less contemptible than she  
Who revels in such heartless wrong !

Go, then, exulting in thy guilt,  
And weave thy wanton web anew ;  
Go, false as fair, and if thou wilt  
Again betray the Fond and True !

Yet learn that this, my last farewell,  
Is less in anger than in sorrow ;  
Mine is the tale that myriads tell  
Who loathe to-day and dread to-morrow.





Me, Laura, me thou never knewest,  
 Nor sawest, that if my speech was cold,  
 The love is deepest oft and truest  
 That burns within the breast untold.

My soul was formed for Love and Grief—  
 These both were blended at my birth,  
 But lifeless as a shrivelled leaf  
 Lie now my dearest hopes on earth.

I sigh—where none my sighs return ;  
 I love—but am not loved again.  
 Till life be past this heart must burn,  
 With none to soothe or share its pain.

Adieu ! in pleasure's giddy whirl  
 Soon wilt thou have forgotten me,  
 But where, oh, most dissembling girl !  
 Shall I from thy dear image flee ?

Adieu ! for thee the heavens are bright,  
 And flowers along thy pathway lie ;  
 The bolts that strike, the winds that blight  
 Will pass thy Bower of Beauty by !

But when shall rest be mine ? Alas !  
 Soon as the winter winds shall rave  
 At midnight, through the long dark grass  
 Above mine unremembered grave !”

So ends Mangan's love romance. He never gave another woman an opportunity to trifle with his feelings, and never forgot or forgave “Laura” (or “Frances”). According to one who knew him, he once rushed, with a drawn dagger, upon a person who spoke slightly of her. In his own words—

“ True love outlives the shroud  
 Knows nor check nor change,  
 And beyond Time's world of Cloud  
 Still must reign and range.”



## CHAPTER VII.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE "DUBLIN SATIRIST"—POPULARITY OF GERMAN POETRY—IRISH TRANSLATORS—MANGAN ON GOETHE, SCHILLER, AND OTHER GERMAN POETS—"THE DYING FATHER"—THE "DUBLIN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE"—MANGAN GIVES UP SCRIVENERY WORK—SONNETS BY HIM—HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE—ENTERS THE ORDNANCE SURVEY OFFICE.

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"Knowledge and truth  
Are but golden gates to the Temple of Sorrow!"—MANGAN.

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THE *Dublin Satirist* was started on June 22nd, 1833, its first few numbers being published at 64 Upper Sackville Street, whence it was transferred to No. 1 Elephant Lane. In the same month as he relinquished his connection with the *Comet* Mangan became a contributor to the *Satirist*, sending its editor some translations from Schiller, his favourite German poet. He had thoroughly mastered German by this time, and had conceived, as he informs us, the notion of "translating Deutschland out," but when he commenced the task he had no idea of the extent of German poetical literature. Altogether he "overset" some hundreds of German poems. In his earlier attempts he did not play many pranks with the Teutons, and gave in each case the original German with his English version. What presumably influenced Mangan in his endeavour to make the German poets better known in Ireland was the activity of writers like Carlyle and many others in urging their merits upon English readers. A whole library of translations from the German was issued during the decade preceding 1833, and German mysticism and sentiment had exercised a very considerable influence upon English thought. You could not take up an English magazine without encountering the names of German poets, with translations or imitations of their works. There is no question that Mangan preferred this dreamy, melancholy literature to any other—always



excepting English, for he admired Shakespeare and Byron beyond all other poets, and often indirectly acquaints his readers with the fact. If he was fond of German poetry, neither was he blind to its defects, as we shall see ; but he greatly delighted in its peculiar qualities. To Mangan's translations most Irish people may be said to owe whatever knowledge they possess of it, and his *Anthologia Germanica*, though it may possibly have done him a disservice in causing the very prevalent, but erroneous, impression that he was simply a translator, and nothing more, would tempt many an indifferent student to study the originals of his generally beautiful versions. Mangan decidedly excels, in many of his translations, the German originals. Where he seriously admires, he nearly always does well, but he is occasionally in a sportive mood, and twists the German author's meaning beyond legitimate bounds in order to illustrate his own feelings or mood of the moment. Very few poets have succeeded so triumphantly in producing translations which are not merely faithful in spirit, but are at the same time really first-rate as poems ; and though, to secure this end, he has sometimes deviated a good deal from the precise meaning of the German poet, he always inimitably reproduces the spirit. From no other translator do we obtain so pleasurable an impression of the nature and special excellences of German verse. Other translators may be more literal—none are more genuinely poetical. He refers somewhere to Carleton's characteristic declaration that Shelley was specially created for the sole purpose of translating *Faust*, reminding the Irish novelist, who, of course, knew next to nothing of Shelley or Goethe, that the former only rendered a small portion of *Faust* into English, while Dr. Anster, who was not specially created for the undertaking, had translated the whole work, and that admirably.

The success of Mangan and Anster in translation reminds us that Irishmen have often signalised themselves in the same way. Some of the standard English versions of the classics and of foreign masterpieces have proceeded from Irish poets. Thus we have Maginn's spirited *Homeric Ballads* (which Matthew Arnold, Mr. Gladstone, and Prof. Conington have so highly praised), and his even better translations from Lucian ; Henry F. Cary's version of Dante ; Edward Fitzgerald's *Quatrains of Omar Khayyam*, which is the finest achievement of its kind in



English literature, and the same writer's *Calderon* ; D. F. M'Carthy's brilliant rendering of the same Spanish dramatist ; John O'Hagan's *Song of Roland* ; Richard Burton's *Camoen's Lusiads* ; and Quillinan's version of the same ; Francis's *Horace*, and Sir Stephen de Vere's much superior attempt ; Father Prout's *Songs of Beranger*, and Miss Costello's *Early French Poets* ; Moore's *Anacreon*, and the previous version by George Ogle ; G. A. Greene's *Modern Italian Poets*, so warmly eulogised by the critics ; and, finally, the delightful Irish translations of Ferguson, Walsh, Callanan, Sigerson, Hyde, and, of course, Mangan himself. There are many other Irish writers who have done serviceable work in the same direction, but the really notable translators have been enumerated above.

For Dr. Anster's translation of *Faust* Mangan had a considerable admiration. He was not a very great admirer of Goethe, and somewhat anticipated Professor Dowden's recent criticism of that famous writer's extraordinary and fatal fertility, and his exposure of its bewildering effect upon the German public. Mangan does not agree with Herder's characterisation of *Faust* as "rubbish and dirt,"\* or with Maginn's description of its author as "an old humbug," or even with Professor Dowden's opinion that Goethe was something of an impostor, but he is one of those who decline to accept him as one of the great world-poets. He seemed to consider that *Faust* had been as well translated by Anster as was possible or necessary, and, therefore, in his very numerous articles on German poetry, he did not himself attempt to translate more than a small fragment or two of the work. Yet it is permissible to believe that he would have left us a masterly—perhaps the standard-version, had he attempted the whole work.

His views upon German poetry are highly interesting and amusing ; and he has humorously exhibited its peculiarities in papers which, it is no exaggeration to say, are quite equal to Prout's *Reliques*. He was well aware that his tendency to paraphrase rather than to translate literally was objected to in some quarters, and he answers the objection thus :—

"We know that we have been charged with paraphrasing and even travestying our originals, and the charge may be true or false ; we neither admit it nor deny it ; but good-natured judges will, perhaps, be

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\* He, however, considered Byron's *Manfred* a greater dramatic poem.



inclined to consider that we are as literal as the difference between the structure of English and the structure of German allows us to be. In reality there is no reason that we should perpetrate paraphrases. Translations are considerably easier."

And elsewhere he says:—

"Most to be commiserated of all is his (the German poet's) English translator, who, having the severest judges in Europe for his critics, is often reduced to the necessity of either making himself ridiculous by his desperate fidelity, or criminal by his departures from it, however marvellously these may improve the original—as in five instances out of six they do, and by a process of no more magical skill than is involved in a substitution of brilliant and elevated sentiments for plain and stupid ones."

But he refuses to incriminate himself—

"We have always considered any deprecation of censure for our attempts to be quite out of the question. The entire weight of the blame rests upon the authors from whom we versify. We cannot, like the experimentalist in *Gulliver*, undertake to extract a greater number of sunbeams from a cucumber than it is in the habit of yielding. . . . It is our business to cast a veil over the German poet's blemishes, and bring forward nothing but his excellences, or what we presume to be such."

And in his characteristic bantering style he proceeds to award himself a liberal measure of praise for his exertions:—

"It is now generally admitted by both Tyrian and Trojan that we have awakened a wide and deep and intense and permanent interest in the literature of Germany, solely, by the bold, arrogant, audacious, judicious, and original manner in which we have dared to improve upon its poetry and hector its poets. We have blown soap-bubble after soap-bubble into their legitimate dignity of rainbows; and the rudest apparent grossnesses of our originals have dazzled the eye upon coming forth from our hands as gold when it issues from the furnace seventy times purified. There was music in them (the aforesaid originals), much music of the most soul-entrancing quality; but nobody guessed whereabouts it lay—not a ninny could elicit a note of it—until WE arose, and using our long goose quill as a wand, wiled it (the aforesaid music) forth to steep the senses of millions in Elysium; performing in this respect, much the same service towards it as the thaw performed towards Baron Munchausen's horn."

In his serious moments, Mangan took a very humble view of his labours in this, as in other undertakings, but he was irrepressibly fond of quizzing. He whimsically laments that he is being left alone to acquaint Europe with the wealth of German literature, and he banteringly calls upon his brother translators of the day to come to his assistance in the Herculean task he has set himself—



"Where art thou, soul of Perversion?  
 Where be thy fantasies jinglish?  
 Why lies intact so much Prussian and Persian,  
 And whither has fled the phrase 'Done into English'?

Up from thy sofa, Lord Egerton!  
 Marshal the Blackies and Gillieses! \*  
 Bravo, Von Brockhaus†—give gold by the wedge or ton!  
 Pay, till all Europe cry out, 'What a till is his!'

Oh! when translation's so feasible,  
 Where is the scamp would be scheming off?  
 Bowring, you sponge! have you ceased to be squeezable?  
 Anster the Bland! what the deuce are you dreaming of?"

He is particularly amusing in his criticism of once famous German poets, like Klopstock (whom he calls Clockstop and Stopclock, and whose so-called Miltonic style he describes as "mill-stone-ic"). Even at Justinus Kerner, a prime favourite of his, he has his fling, and says—

"His 'Dichtungen' may be said to be made up of an aggregate number of *Thränen*, *Vögel*, *Blümen*, *Büche*, and *Sterne*, with here and there a *Grab* to bury himself in." 'The German poet,' he also remarks, 'begins in a tone of thunder, as if he would bring Heaven and Earth into collision, but while you are waiting to see what will come of it he calls for his pipe, and you thenceforth lose him in the fog.'"

Of German epigrams he says—

"The humour of three-fourths of their number consists altogether in their want of point, but giants cannot be expected to excel at push-pin."

He is also very merry at the expense of Ludwig Tieck, then greatly over-rated, and his criticism is decidedly happy.

"Ludwig Tieck, man-milliner to the Muses, poet, metaphysician, dramatist, novelist, moralist, wanderer, weeper and wooer, a gentleman of very extensive endowments, is, notwithstanding, in one respect a sad quack. Such rubbish, such trumpery, such a farrago of self-condemned senilities, so many motley nothings, altogether so much drowsiness, dreariness, drizzle, froth and fog as we have got in this his last importation from Cloudland, surely no one of woman born before ourself was ever doomed to deal with. We now, for the first time in our life, stumble on the discovery that there may be less creditable methods of recruiting one's finances than even those which are recorded with reprobation in the columns of the *Newgate Calendar*. All that we can gather is that he is delectably miserable. He maintains

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\* These are the names of prominent German translators of the time.

† An eminent German publisher.



almost from first to last one monotonous wail, as mournful and nearly as unvarying as the night lament of the Whip-poor-Will in the forests of South America. He simpers and whimpers, and yet one cannot tell whether he would be thought glad or sad. He plays the poetical coquette between Fortune and Misfortune. . . . He is knocked down by a bulrush every half minute in the day, and reverently kisses the face of his fatherland fourteen hundred and forty times in twelve hours. A dead leaf throws him into convulsions, and at the twittering of a swallow the heart of the poor man batters his ribs with such galvanic violence of percussion that at three yards' distance you suspect the existence of hypertrophy, and are half disposed to summon a surgeon."

He certainly did not believe in the existence of German humour, and as regards wit, he would have endorsed the famous question and answer of Pere Bouhours, the eighteenth century literary critic — *Un Allemand peut il avoir de l'esprit? Point du tout.* In his disguised sketch of himself, from which several quotations have been made, we read the following :—

"I asked him for his opinion of German humour. 'Why,' said he, 'you have, doubtless, heard of the author who began and ended a work 'On the Rats of Iceland,' with the words 'There are no Rats in Iceland.' So my opinion of German humour is, that there is no such thing as German humour."

It is noteworthy, as showing his deep interest in German literature at the time, that of three dozen or more poems contributed by him to the *Satirist* during its existence of two years and a half, nearly thirty are from the German, and chiefly from Schiller, "Germany's greatest poet." Many of these Mangan utilised afterwards in the *University Magazine* and other periodicals, generally improving them in subsequent treatment. Just as he had rescued from the almanacs such pieces as he thought worthy of preservation by printing them in the *Comet*, so he reprinted in later periodicals some of the most skilful versions from the German which he had written for the *Comet* and *Satirist*. One of his *Satirist* contributions was used in four different places. It is worth giving here as being an anticipation of Thackeray's "King of Brentford." It is called "The Dying Father." The present version is not the *Satirist* one, but a later amended copy :—

"A father had two children, Will and Christy—  
The last a bright young lad, the first a dull humdrum.  
One day, perceiving that his hour was come,  
Stretched on the bed of death he glanced with misty  
Eye around the room in search of Christy—



'My son,' he said, 'sad thoughts begin to darken  
 My mind. You are a genius. What a task it  
 Will be for you to face the world! But hearken!  
 Inside my desk there lies a little casket  
 Of jewels. Take them all, my son,  
 And lock them up, and give your brother none.'  
 The youth was wonder-struck. He thought this droll,  
 And looking in his father's face, he said—  
 'But, bless me father!—if I take the whole,  
 What is poor Will to do? I greatly dread'—  
 'Dread nothing, Christy,' interrupted t'other;  
 "There's not the slightest ground for this timidity;  
 I'll warrant you your booby of a brother  
 Will make his way through life by sheer stupidity!"

The *Satirist* contributions are not remarkable, generally, for merit or originality, and so need not detain us long. Nearly all he wrote for it reappears later; even his punning "Elegy on Joe King" turns up years after as a Chinese Elegy on "Tchao King," a witticism evidently suggested by the present tense of the verb "to joke." Some time before the cessation of the paper he obtained admission to the *Dublin University Magazine*, to which he began to contribute early in 1834, twelve months after its first appearance. Thenceforth, for a good many years, he was enabled to confine himself almost entirely to its pages, and it is interesting to note that at least five hundred poems of his were published in it between and inclusive of the years 1834 and 1849, besides a considerable quantity of prose criticism and reflection, and a few stories. This famous magazine, the best literary organ Ireland has ever known, was started by a few Trinity College men, its first editor being the Rev. Charles Stuart Stanford, who was succeeded after eighteen months or so by Isaac Butt. Even at the beginning, its staff included some remarkably clever writers, but as time passed it gradually concentrated in itself almost the whole of the literary talent of Ireland, and obtained a great circulation and an European reputation. Writers like Lever, Ferguson, Lefanu, Anster, Wilde, Maxwell, Butt, Rowan Hamilton, Lover, Marmion Savage, Carleton, John Fisher Murray, M. J. Barry, D. F. M'Carthy, J. F. Waller, D. P. Starkey, and many others too numerous to mention, gave it for more or less lengthy periods some of their best work, and Mangan, who had probably never received payment for any previous literary work, was enabled to add considerably to his income as a scrivener. If he had received the usual figure paid by the *Magazine* in its best



2 February 1834. Peterie employed Mangan  
in his own office.

days, namely, sixteen guineas per sheet, he would have drawn a very large sum of money during the fifteen years he was connected with it, but it is quite certain that he did not. The probability is that, with his usual modesty and diffidence as to his own worth, he offered his services for a very small remuneration. Certainly he received much less than other and inferior writers after James M'Glashan obtained control of the periodical. The latter was too shrewd a Scot not to make a good bargain with the poor poet, and it is a fact that he got Mangan's valuable services at an absurdly low price in the end. Whatever Mangan's remuneration may have been, however, it was evidently sufficient to induce him to give up all work in attorneys' offices. He seems to have done no more scrivenery work after 1834, unless occasional transcripts for Drs. Peterie and Todd in the Dublin libraries and the work for the Ordnance Survey are covered by that term. ~~How he occupied himself between that date and his appointment to a small post in the Ordnance Survey Office two or three years later is not known, but, of course,~~ his literary activity can be measured by his *University Magazine* contributions, and we may assume that his time was largely taken up by writing and study. Mitchel says that—

“For some years after his labours had ceased in the attorney's office there is a gap in his life which painstaking biography will never fill up. It is a vacuum and obscure gulf which no eye hath fathomed or measured—into which he entered a bright-haired youth and emerged a withered and stricken man.”

Unfortunately, Mitchel nowhere vouchsafes a date, and we can only surmise that the period to which he refers is that at which we have now arrived.

As in the case of the *Satirist*, Mangan's earliest pieces in the *University Magazine* were translations from Schiller.\* German poetry was, seemingly, the most popular subject of the day—and the perusal of it was certainly Mangan's favourite recreation. That the conductors of the *Magazine* valued his work is clear from the fact, which they made public early in 1835, that they allowed a special departure in his favour from their rule that all contributions should be hitherto unpublished. The editor announced in the number for February, 1835, that the translation by Mangan of

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\* There is reason to believe, as already stated, that the proprietor preferred Mangan's papers on German poetry to anything else written by him.



Schiller's "Lay of the Bell" there published was a reprint. The earliest original piece of his in the *Magazine* is a sonnet, unsigned, in the number for June of the same year. It is undoubtedly Mangan's, and, as it has never been re-published, I quote it here :—

" Bird, that discourest from yon poplar bough,  
 Outweeping night, and in thy eloquent tears  
 Holding sweet converse with the thousand spheres  
 That glow and glisten from Night's glorious brow—  
 Oh ! may thy lot be mine ! that, lonely, now,  
 And doomed to mourn the remnant of my years,  
 My song may swell to more than mortal ears,  
 And sweet as is thy strain be poured my vow !  
 Bird of the poet's paradise ! by thee  
 Taught where the tides of feeling deepest tremble,  
 Playful in gloom, like some sequestered sea,  
 I, too, amidst my anguish would dissemble,  
 And tune misfortune to such melody  
 That my despair thy transports would resemble ! "

Two other original sonnets of his—"Life" and "Love"—appear in the same volume, and may be quoted if for no other reason than that which he himself suggests to us in an article on the poems of Matthisson and Salis in this same year. "We believe," he says, "that the heart and intellect of a poet are ever more easily susceptible of analysis by a simple reference to his works than by the aid of the most elaborate explanatory criticism that ever passed through the press ;" and he adds : "Thus much in temperate explanation of our preference of the poetry of poets to the prose of ourselves." Which view the present writer adopts, and conforms to by reproducing the two sonnets referred to, instead of merely expatiating upon them :—

" O human destiny ! thou art a mystery  
 Which tasks the o'er wearied intellect in vain ;  
 A world thou art of cabalistic history  
 Whose lessons madden and destroy the brain.  
 O Life !—whose page, a necromantic scroll,  
 Is charactered with sentences of terror  
 Which, like the shapes on a magician's mirror,  
 At once bewilder and appal the soul—  
 We blindly roam thy labyrinth of error,  
 And clasp a phantom when we gain thy goal !  
 Yet roll, thou troubled flood of Time ! Still bear  
 Thy base wrecks to the whirlgulf of the past—  
 But Man and Heaven will bless thee if thou hast  
 Spared for their final sphere the Noble and the Fair."



The sonnet on "Love" is, perhaps, better :—

" Spirit of wordless love ! that in the lone  
 Bowers of the poet's museful soul doth weave  
 Tissues of thought, hued like the skies of eve  
 Ere the last glories of the sun hath shone !  
 How soon, almost before our hearts have known  
 The change, above the ruins of thy throne  
 Whose trampled beauty we would fain retrieve  
 By all earth's thrones beside, we stand and grieve !  
 We weep not, for the world's chill breath hath bound  
 In triple ice the fountain of our tears,  
 And ever-mourning memory thenceforth rears  
 Her altars upon desecrated ground,  
 And always, with a low despairful sound,  
 Tolls the disastrous bell of all our years ! "

Mangan, however, does not succeed altogether in the sonnet. His was essentially a lyrical genius, which was at its best when unrestrained by any special metre or form. His translations of Italian sonnets are good, but not so good as they might have been, were it not for the metrical restraint imposed. Like Shelley, with whose lyrical gift Mangan's own might not unfitly be compared, he could hardly write a sonnet which would pass muster with the sticklers for perfection of form. One of the reasons of Mangan's fancy for German literature lay in his fondness for the ballad style, which the German poets have mastered so thoroughly. He troubled himself comparatively little with the literatures of France and Italy, so far as translating from them was concerned, feeling himself to some extent out of sympathy with them. Yet his numerous references show that he greatly admired the Italian poets, and was as well acquainted with them as with those of France and Spain. In his German translations he is strangely unequal. His versions from Goethe are sometimes unsuccessful—for him—and in other instances he proves inferior to poets of much smaller calibre; but he "overset" the poems of Rückert, Kerner (not Körner, whom he, fairly enough, dismisses with a word or two of praise), and Freiligrath, with remarkable success. In fact, his versions in those cases are unmistakably better than the originals. Some of his translations from Schiller are also very fine, notably that of "The Ideal" (which he calls "The Unrealities"), and "The Lament of Ceres;" and the famous ballads by Bürger respectively entitled "Lenore" and "The Demon Jäger" have never been so well rendered into English as



by Mangan. It is curious that one of his best translations is that of Jean Paul Richter's prose sketch, "The New Year's Night of a Miserable Man," which he has turned into admirable verse, a specimen stanza of which follows :—

" And Youth returned, and Age withdrew its terrors—  
 Still was he young, for he had dreamed the whole ;  
 But faithful is the image conscience mirrors  
 When whirlwind passions darken not the soul.  
 Alas ! too real were his sins and errors,  
 Too truly had he made the earth his goal ;  
 He wept, and thanked his God that, with the will,  
 He had the power to choose the right path still."

It is to be feared that the offence which he alleges against Richter of "squandering the wealth of his mind on fantastic fripperies," though justified, may be charged with equal truth to himself. A too large proportion of his time was expended upon curious effects in rhyme, which, however amusing and quaint, produce a similar impression to that caused by seeing a well-painted piece of still life done by a master of portrait or landscape. While recognising the cleverness and ingenuity, one unconsciously suggests that the object, rather than the manner of treatment, is of paramount importance, by the wish that such genius were better employed. Although the early contributions to the *University Magazine* are much soberer than his later ones, he occasionally ventures upon the wildly whimsical, the absurdest of absurdities. But even in these he is self-revealing, and always interesting, as, for example, in a certain digression into the subject of dreams which occurs in one of the earlier numbers. The whole passage is too long to quote, and is, to tell the truth, a little too absurd, but here are the opening sentences :—

" We have never yet had the happiness to meet with anyone who knew how to dream properly. For ourselves we lament to state that the Rip-Van-Winklish soundness of our slumbers for eleven hours out of the twenty-four effectually prevents us from dreaming at all. We are not excited even by opium, though we have repeatedly devoured stupendous quantities of that drug, and we now begin to despair of ever becoming a vision-seer. Once and once only in the course of our life did Somnus mount guard so negligently on the citadel of our imagination as to allow Morpheus to enter it ; but, oh ! that was a glorious moment when we beheld Stamboul arise before our mind's eye in all its multifarious gorgeousness, glittering with mosques, kiosks, minarets, temples and turrets."



And so on, through various experiences, until

“all melted away into thin air, leaving nothing behind but the remembrance of a dream, which,” he adds, “Dr. Macnish in his next edition of ‘The Philosophy of Sleep’ is welcome to transfer to his pages for a trifling gratuity.”

Mangan found that many of his friends, and most of his readers, looked upon him as an eccentric of the “first water,” and he endeavoured to live up to their belief. It was generally admitted that he could, better than anyone, mingle the jocose and the tragic, but any attempt to imitate any of Mangan’s peculiarities was immediately frowned upon and discouraged. A really serious article by him would have come as a disappointment to many, and he could only “edge in,” as he would say, the expression of his intimate thoughts and griefs. He became as eccentric and odd in his attire as in his sketches, and proceeded from queerness to queerness, adopting finally the style of dress which Father Meehan, who did not know him till nearly ten years after, has described. The description of his personal appearance in 1845, however, practically holds good of the year 1836 :—

“He was five feet six or seven in height, slightly stooped, and attenuated as one of Memling’s monks. His head was large, beautifully shaped, his eyes blue, his features exceedingly fine and ‘sicklied o’er’ with that diaphanous pallor which is said to distinguish those in whom the fire of genius has burnt too rapidly even from childhood. And the dress of this spectral-looking man was singularly remarkable, taken down at haphazard from some peg in an old clothes shop—a baggy pantaloon that never was intended for him, a short coat closely buttoned, a blue cloth cloak still shorter, and tucked so tightly to his person that no one could see there even the faintest shadow of those lines called by painters and sculptors drapery. The hat was in keeping with this habiliment, broad-leaved and steeple-shaped, the model of which he must have found in some picture of Hudibras. Occasionally he substituted for this headgear a soldier’s fatigue cap, and never appeared abroad in sunshine or storm without a large malformed umbrella, which, when partly covered by the cloak, might easily be mistaken for a Scotch bagpipe. This eccentricity in costume and manner was not affected, and so little did he heed the incidents passing about him that he never was conscious of the remarks and glances bestowed on him by the empty-headed fops who stared at him in the streets.”

Such was the strange figure which for some years was not averse to haunting the streets even in daylight. Subsequently he shunned the public gaze, and would only appear out of doors after dusk.



X Mangan was on the civil staff of the Ordnance  
Survey in February 1834.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

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Not long after the establishment of the historical department of the Ordnance Survey, Mangan, (who had previously been supporting some of his relatives by his earnings from the *University Magazine*), obtained employment as a copyist in the office, mainly through the personal exertions of Petrie, who thought that a regular daily employment would tend to check the tendency to drink which was becoming more and more pronounced in the poet. ~~This was about 1838.~~ Mangan's caligraphy was exquisitely formed, and his experience as a scrivener made the labour, for which he was paid five shillings a day, less irksome, perhaps, than to his colleagues. This was one of Mangan's happiest periods. He was at times unwontedly gay and lively; pecuniary troubles did not much afflict him, and everything promised well for the future. His office companions were mostly personal friends—men who understood, even if they did not appreciate, his vagaries. But it is necessary to retrace our steps a little.





## CHAPTER VIII.

MANGAN'S WIT—MASTERY OVER METRE AND RHYME—INVENTED POETS—ORIENTAL EXCURSIONS—MARSH'S LIBRARY—ORDNANCE SURVEY WORK—W. F. WAKEMAN ON MANGAN—ECCENTRICITIES OF THE POET—"TAR-WATER"—MANGAN'S RECIPE.

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"Methinks it images well  
 What thou hast been, thou lonely Tower,  
 Moonlight and lamplight mingled—the deep choral swell  
 Of Music in her peals of proudest power,  
 And then—the Tavern dice-box rattle !  
 The Grand and the Familiar fought  
 Within thee for the mastery ! and thy depth of thought  
 And play of wit made every conflict a drawn battle !" —MANGAN.

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WHETHER permissible or not from the strictest literary point of view, Mangan was much given in those days to playing with his readers—to poking fun at them—and his surprises were frequent. Sometimes, of course, he overshoots the mark, and the jokes fall flat ; but generally he is extremely entertaining, and what might otherwise had proved a partly dull and dry disquisition upon German poetry becomes a very pleasant essay, full of little pseudo-personal confidences and diverting metrical escapades, especially when his sportiveness is at the expense of the minor denizens of what he calls the "cloudland" of German literature. Their attempts at the mystical more often than not succeeded only in enveloping themselves and their readers in a sort of misty haze, and Mangan took advantage of all opportunities of reminding them that the mystical is not necessarily obscure and unintelligible. He scores off them very neatly in many places, but he is most interesting in his personal allusions—even when he is also performing tricks with words. He does not stop even at the most audacious punning, as when, alluding to his voluminousness, he remarks :—

"A sea of argument stretches before us, and the waves thereof curl about our feet. But we forbear to plunge in. Reflection recurs, and we receive a check on the bank."



And he whimsically proceeds to dilate upon the fertility which he claims to possess :—

“We possess, in a marvellous degree, the capability of expatiating to eternity upon a single topic. Our sentences meander onward, right and left, like an unbroken stream of zig-zag water through the mazes of a wilderness ; and just as you, venerable public, ‘see them on their winding way’ now, so would you see them ‘an endless year’ (as Moore says) hence, did not the barrier-walls of the *Magazine* restrain them. Give us but one pull from St. Leon’s\* elixir-bottle, and ages might elapse until the grass grew over the forgotten tombs of those who shall be still unborn in the days of our great grand-children, before our monotonous drawl should cease to astound and mystify mankind.”

And in the same quizzical manner, he insists that the public shall admire his work :—

“By the mustachious of Mohammed himself, we swear that with the brevity and beauty of this article the public must be enchanted to a degree rather, to say the truth, too painful to be dwelt on ; and with respect to which, therefore, propriety dictates to us the preservation of a dignified, we will not add a stern, silence. They, the said public, shall not feel otherwise, on penalty of being fiercely cut, every anti-human soul of them, wherever we encounter them, at home and abroad, in street and square, north, south, east, west, at church, mart, levee, and theatre. Let them, and they may abide by the consequence. . . . Our native city shall be in our eyes as a City of the Dead, and we, agreeably to the Fichtean philosophy, the only existent individual in town. We shall pace the *trottoirs*, perceiving nobody, astounded at our own solitariness, and musing, with Baconian profundity, over that instability of human affairs which in the space of thirty days has removed from the metropolis a population so celebrated for its singular dimensions, to substitute in its stead a type of plural unity—ourselves. . . . We, in short, shall be everything and the public nothing, after the manner of the second and third estates of the Abbe Sieyes. Till, upon some bland morning in October, weary of wandering hither and thither in this astounded, musing, and misty-eyed state, we shall at once halt, and proceed, with a majesty of manner worthy of the world’s wonder, to appropriate to our own use all such cash and portable valuables as may have been thoughtfully left in our way throughout the wilderness around us—chanting, the while, sundry snatches of songs, and songs of ‘snatches’ by the Arab Robbers of the Desert.”

This manner of Mangan’s wore off to some extent after a time ; it was simply a cloak to cover his inmost thoughts, which became more and more dismal when he more clearly foresaw his hapless end. It never altogether forsook him, and even his letters, which one might expect from the facts of his life to find saturated with melancholy, are largely

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\* The hero of William Godwin’s novel of that name.



couched in the same vein of forced triviality and affected gaiety. Towards the end of his life, however, Mangan's literary work assumed more dignity, more restraint; but the real Mangan cannot possibly be described by ignoring a peculiarity which is so characteristic of most of his work. In conversation he was extremely fond of verbal quips and quiddities, and this often took the form of absurd misreadings of famous sayings, or mottoes, or lines from the poets—"phonetic" waggery one might almost term it. Some of his professed discoveries of references to himself in the English poets are curious enough, as when he suggests that Spencer's line—

"The wretched man 'gan grinning horridlie,"

should read—

"The wretched Mangan grinning? Horrid lie!"

Space, however, is too valuable to devote it to many of such follies of a man of genius. It will be more to the purpose to point out his marvellous power of rhyme and his daring metrical enterprises. His metres are never obvious ones—he scorned what was easy of accomplishment to others—and it must be confessed that one cannot express particular satisfaction at this sheer waste of valuable gifts. Still these eccentricities have their interesting side. If he is often merely curious and queer, he is often humorous enough, too. Mangan's great admiration of Byron, whose fondness for apparently impossible rhymes is known to all readers, may have awakened in him a desire of emulation, such desire finding expression in the many attempts to fit rhymes to the most extraordinary names of Eastern people and places. One reason, perhaps, why Mangan's Turkish, Persian, and other translations (so-called) are so little known, is the difficulty of pronouncing what the Germans call, though not in the same sense as the English, the "outlandish" nomenclature introduced into them. Only a comparatively few of these Oriental poems by Mangan are likely to become popular. Those few, however, are very fine.

One excellent example of Mangan's gift of rhyming may be gathered from the *University Magazine* for 1837. It is entitled "The Metempsychosis," and a verse or two will suffice to show how he has treated the thorny subject of the transmigration of souls in verse. Better examples even than this, however, might be found:—



"I've studied sundry treatises by spectacled old sages  
 Anent the capabilities and nature of the soul and  
 Its vagabond propensities from even the earliest ages,  
 As harped on by Spinoza, Plato, Leibnitz, Chubb, and Toland ;  
 But of all systems I've yet met, or p'rhaps shall ever meet with,  
 Not one can hold a candle to (*videlicet*, compete with),  
 The theory of theories Pythagoras proposes,  
 And called by that profound old snudge (in Greek) Metempsychosis.

This may be snapped at, sneezed at, sneered at. Deuce may care  
 for cavils—

Reason is reason. Credit me, I've met at least one myriad  
 Of instances to prop me up. I've seen (upon my travels)  
 Foxes who had been lawyers at (no doubt) some former period ;  
 Innumerable apes, who, though they'd lost their patronymics,  
 I recognised immediately as mountebanks and mimics,  
 And asses, calves, etcet'ra, whose rough bodies gave asylum  
 To certain souls, the property of learned professors whilom.

So far we've had no stumbling block. But now a puzzling question  
 Arises : all the aforementioned souls were souls of stunted stature,  
 Contemptible or cubbish—but Pythag has no suggestion  
 Concerning whither transmigrate souls noble in their nature,  
 As Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Schiller—these now, for example,  
 What temple can be found for such appropriately ample ?  
 Where lodge they now ? Not, certes, in our present ninnyhammers,  
 Who mumble rhymes that seem to've been concocted by their  
 gammers.\*

Well, then, you see, it comes to this, and after huge reflection  
 Here's what I say : A soul that gains by many transmigrations,  
 The summit, apex, pinnacle, or acme of perfection,  
 There ends, concludes, and terminates its earthly per'grinations.  
 Then, like an air balloon, it mounts through high Olympus' portals,  
 And cuts its old connection with Mortality and Mortals !  
 And evidence to back me here I don't know any stronger  
 Than that the truly Great and Good are found on earth no longer !"

Mangan began the first of his "*Literæ Orientales*" for  
 the *University Magazine* in the year 1837, and found  
 therein an excellent opportunity for playing practical jokes  
 innumerable, especially in the invention of impossible  
 poets. He was able to do the same thing to a small  
 extent in his *Anthologia Germanica* though with more  
 difficulty, and yet, so far as is discoverable, his contem-  
 poraries do not seem to have detected it. Even at the close  
 of 1836 there is a joke of this kind in a group of poems in

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\* The *University Magazine* misprinted this as "gammars," which seems to  
 have puzzled Father Meehan, who (in *Essays in Prose and Verse*) makes it  
 "grammars"—an absurdity. There is point in the right reading.



the *Magazine* called "Stray Leaflets from the German Oak." There are several reasons for doubting the genuineness of one of these translations—that entitled "Stanzas to \* \* \* \*" and attributed to one "Drechsler." I can find no trace of any German poet of this name, and Mangan seems to ward off possible criticism by declaring, a little later, that so far this writer had only contributed to periodicals. Moreover, the poem so attributed had been previously published in the *Satirist* without any indication of German origin. Lastly, when we remember that *Drechsler* is German for a "turner," the *supercherie* seems conclusive. I give the poem here, as it has its interest—

"I knew that Disaster  
 Would shadow thy morning, and must ;  
 The fair alabaster  
 Is easily trampled to dust.  
 If the bright lake lay stilly  
 When whirlwinds rose to deform,  
 If the life of the lily  
 Were charmed against every storm,  
 Thou mightest, though human,  
 Have smiled through the saddest of years—  
 Thou mightest, though Woman,  
 Have lived unacquainted with tears.

Weep, hapless forsaken !  
 In my lyrical art I can find  
 No spell that may waken  
 The glow of young hope in thy mind.  
 Weep, fairest and frailest !  
 Since bitter, though fruitless regret  
 For the loss thou bewailest  
 Hath power to win tears from thee yet ;  
 Weep, while from their fountain|  
 Those drops of affliction can roll—  
 The snows on the mountain  
 Will soon be less cold than thy soul.

Not always shall Sorrow  
 As a scimitar pierce to thy core ;  
 Then cometh a morrow  
 When its tyranny daunteth no more ;  
 Chill Habitude, steeling  
 • The breast, consecrates it to Pride,  
 And the current of Feeling  
 Is locked like a firm winter-tide,  
 And the stricken heart pillows  
 Itself in repose upon Pain,  
 And cares roll in billows  
 O'er the hull of the soul still in vain.



Put the crumbling palace  
 Is lovely through ruin and ill,  
 And the wineless chalice  
 Sheds light on the banquet still ;  
 And as odours of glory  
 Exhale from the patriot's shroud,  
 As the mountain, though hoary  
 And barren, still kisses the cloud,  
 So may thine affections  
 Live on, though their fervour be past,  
 And the heart's recollections  
 May hallow their shrine to the last ! ”

It must not be imagined, as it has too readily been, that all Mangan's Oriental poems are original. There can be no manner of doubt that some of them are genuine paraphrases, but not of course directly from the Eastern languages. Mangan must have been well acquainted with the German fascination for the literature of the East, and not improbably got his own prepossession in that direction from German writers. He was necessarily aware of Goethe and Rückert and Freiligrath's renderings and imitations of Eastern poetry, and evidently consulted the German travellers and scholars who had done so much to make Eastern life and literature familiar to Western people. With the works of D'Herbelot, and other French *savants*, he was, of course, also familiar. Among English books, apart from translations of *The Arabian Nights*, he clearly knew the works of Sir William Jones, Edward W. Lane, and Sir Gore Ouseley; and Sale's "Koran" was naturally consulted, and probably read with delight. Speaking of the various efforts to translate Eastern poetry, he says:—

“As to translations from the Oriental tongues, no one should attempt them.”

In another place, he recurs to the same theme, noting that while Oriental literature is untranslatable into English in the strictest sense, it may be paraphrased with success in almost any language. He explains that even the proper understanding of Persian poetry is extremely difficult:—

“The student is not to flatter himself that because he has rattled through a Persian grammar and skimmed Richardson's dissertation that the business is accomplished, and that he has nothing more to do but take his MS. in hand and loll on his ottoman. A severe initiation awaits him. He must for a season renounce his country, divest himself of his educational prejudices, forego his individuality, and become, like Alfred Tennyson, ‘a Mussulman true and sworn.’ . . . If he



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would appreciate Ottoman poetry, if he would even make an approach to understanding it, he must first disencumber himself of all the old rags of Europeanism and scatter them to the winds. . . . He must begin his poetical education afresh, . . . and after a series of years (industry, commentators, and opium in the meantime assisting) he may perhaps be able to boast that he has measured the height, length, breadth, and circumference of the Great Temple in which the imagination of Bakki and the soul of Hafiz are enshrined, and beyond the extreme outer porch, or Ethnic Forecourt of which none save those who have served a like probationary apprenticeship to the Genius of Orientalism have ever been permitted to advance."

After pointing out some of the defects of Eastern poetry he proceeds :—

"It is occasionally graphic enough—can on most occasions be admired for euphony—and may at intervals exhibit sublimity ; but the great irradiating light of Imagination is not there ; the highest of the faculties, the very pillar of Genius, the vivifying soul of Thought, the power upon which poetry is dependent for its ethereality, and without which it dwindles into a most monotonous and mechanical process of mind, is wanting, and 'the long-resounding march and energy immense' of compound epithets and sonorous polysyllables make us but indifferent amends for its absence."

Mangan's "Literæ Orientales" are not by any means as well known as they should be. It is true that many of the poems are overburdened with Arabic and Persian names and allusions, and that the refrains bristle with what to unfamiliar eyes and ears seem barbarous exclamations. It may also be objected that the prose is somewhat over-embroidered ; but, after all has been said that can be said to their detriment, and when all the recognised refuse is discarded, there remains a residue of great interest and beauty. A few of the poems like "The Time of the Barmecides," "The Karamanian Exile," and "The Wail and Warning of the Three Khalendeers," have already won their way to the admiration of thousands of Irishmen. With the single exception of Edward Fitzgerald, in his "Quatrains of Omar Khayyam," no writer has come near to Mangan's richness of imagery ; while the variety of rhyme and metre, and fulness of melody in these "Literæ Orientales," which ran through various numbers of the *University Magazine*, are his own.

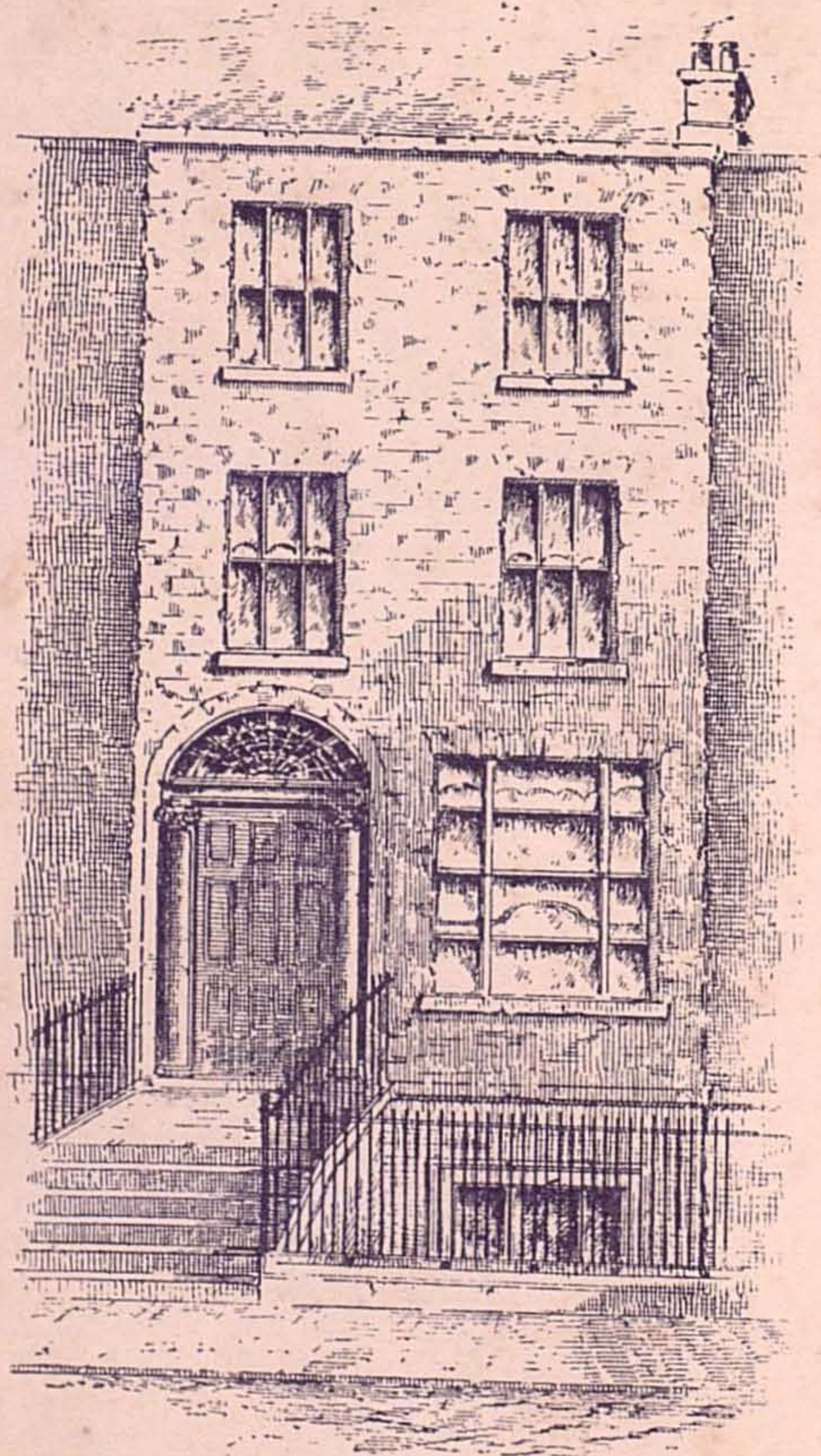
"We copy no man," says he, "we follow in the track of none. Our labours—inferior as we cheerfully admit them to be—are altogether peculiar to ourself and our tastes."

But his first batch of paraphrases (and otherwise) are mostly mere *confetti*. Before attempting an examination









ORDNANCE SURVEY OFFICE



of them it will be well to explain how Mangan obtained the books which opened up to him the glories of the Eastern world.

The date of his entrance upon his duties as a copyist for the Ordnance Survey work was ~~somewhere about 1838~~. He was sent to Marsh's Library, Trinity College, and elsewhere to transcribe necessary documents, and it is clear that the famous old library founded by Archbishop Marsh in connection with St. Patrick's Cathedral was often visited by him for the sake of its wonderful collection of old and curious literature. Here Mangan worked, surrounded by the old worm-eaten tomes in which are treasured the thoughts of all the philosophers and poets of antiquity, unjostled by clamorous moderns. In Petrie's letters to O'Donovan, quoted in Stokes's *Life* of the former, we get two very brief glimpses of the poet in 1838. In one letter he says:—

"Mangan is at work for you, and an admirable scribe he is—first rate."

In another:—

"Mangan is at work for you in Marsh's Library, and is working at the Latin, so that you will soon have in him a valuable caterer."

The office of the historical department of the Ordnance Survey was in the house of Dr. Petrie, No. 21 Great Charles Street. Here, in the little back parlour, Mangan and the minor officials did their work. The staff, apart from Petrie and O'Donovan, who worked in the front parlour, consisted of Eugene O'Curry, Anthony O'Curry, G. V. Du Noyer, the artist, P. O'Keeffe, T. O'Connor, W. F. Wakeman (then very young), and Mangan. Mr. Wakeman's description of the poet in this employment is very interesting, and must be quoted. It is almost certain that Mangan began to drink heavily while here, and that a certain member of the staff, who was a confirmed toper, and whose name may be left in obscurity, seriously injured his chances of ultimate conquest of his tendency to excess in stimulants. Mangan and he foregathered very much, and were constantly tippling. A favourite evening resort of the former, when alone, was the Phoenix Tavern, now the Tavistock, in D'Olier Street. Here he could generally be found, seated in the pew-like compartment nearest the door, with his writing materials, or with a book, and imbibing his liquor. From this date Mangan's downward course is traceable step by step.

Feb. 1834



"We were supposed," says Mr. Wakeman, "when on home duty to meet daily in the office at 10 a.m. All were usually punctual except Mangan, who, as a rule, was late, would often not appear before eleven or twelve o'clock, and would not infrequently be absent altogether. He had in our room a large unpainted deal desk, about breast high, supported upon four legs, and to match, an equally plain stool or seat, both being his own property, and of his own introduction. Upon this desk, when he worked at all, he would copy documents as required. He had nothing else to do, so that his training as scrivener made the task all the more easy. At times he would be very dull and silent, but occasionally he was apt to make puns and jokes. He generally had some awful story of a supernatural character to tell us as he was sipping his 'tar-water,' a bottle of which medicine he always carried with him. At the time I speak of Mangan could not have numbered more than thirty-five or thirty-six years, yet he was then physically worn out—aged in fact—as far as the body was concerned. His mind, however, still was that of the poet, and he was inditing those soul-stirring verses published then and afterwards in the *Irish Penny Journal* and *Dublin University Magazine*, and I believe elsewhere."

As to the "tar-water," thereby hangs a tale. Mangan was an admirer of Bishop Berkeley, the philosopher, and, indeed, had read deeply in metaphysics generally.\* But he professed a greater liking for the bishop's tar-water specific than for his philosophy, which, however, he had taken the trouble to read. The worthy bishop had a profound belief in the curative properties of the fluid, and many of his contemporaries also professed faith in it. Mangan's motive in labelling the stuff which he carried in a bottle in his right-hand pocket as "tar-water" is easily divined. According to the general belief, sedulously spread abroad by Mangan, alcohol could not be used with it, and naturally his friends hesitated to question his veracity, though few could get him to speak seriously on the topic. But he would never allow anyone to touch, or even to examine too closely, his famous bottle. There is no need to disguise the fact that his associates satisfied themselves that the secret beverage was that "red rum and water" which he had begun to use instead of opium, and which he had several times glorified in verse and prose. It is extremely likely that he had actually used "tar-water" for some complaint or other; it is tolerably clear that long after he had discontinued it, it served the useful purpose of

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\* "The time has been," he tells us, "when for the writing of Reid, Kant, Dugald Stewart, Brown, and Malebranche, I would have willingly abandoned all the poetry of Shakespeare and Byron."



covering more ruinous libations. Father Meehan has preserved a document which Mangan wrote for John Frazer ("J. De Jean") the *Nation* poet, giving directions as to the manufacture and use of the specific in question. The recipe runs as follows :—

"Pour a gallon of cold water on a quart of tar. Stir both up with a stick for five or six minutes. Let the mixture (which should be covered) lie for three days ; then pour it off. Nothing more need be done except, perhaps, to skim the oil from the surface. If rightly made it will appear of a light amber colour, somewhat like that of sherry wine.

"With respect to quantity to be taken, this will depend on the nature of the disease. In most cases half a pint in the morning and another in the evening will be sufficient. Where the complaint is of a desperate character, double or treble that quantity may be requisite. Bishop Berkeley cured a hideous malady—'a gangrene in the blood'—a leprosy, in fact, in one of his own servants by forcing him 'to drink tar-water by night and day.' He cured an old soldier who had been turned out of hospital as incurable of the dropsy, by administering to him two quarts *per diem* of this Western Balm of Gilead. He also cured—but see his work, and see Prior,\* who was, next to him, the greatest tar-waterman of the day.

"One thing, however, should be particularly attended to. This namely, that he who takes tar-water must take nothing that will interfere with it. He must not approach any intoxicating liquor. He may drink cold water and milk, and soups to any extent ; he may also drink tea and coffee, but the less of the latter the better.

"Tar-water knows its own power. It is a jealous medicine. It is the emperor of specifics, and Turk-like, 'twill bear no brother near its throne.'"

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\* Thomas Prior, a native of Queen's County, and a well known philanthropist of the last century.



## CHAPTER IX.

"LITERÆ ORIENTALES"—TURKISH DELIGHTS—"THE TIME OF THE ROSES"—"THE HUNDRED LEAFED ROSE"—MANGAN ON LUCIDITY—"THE THIRTY FLASKS"—"THE MAN IN THE CLOAK"—MANGAN DESCRIBED BY JAMES PRICE—HIS PHRENOLOGICAL STUDIES—EXAMINATION OF HIS "BUMPS."

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"'Twould seem that Nature willed in him to show  
How high mere mortal genius might aspire;  
But look upon his life and deeds the while—  
The blotted records of his years and hours."—MANGAN.

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As one of the aims of the present writer is to make the reader acquainted with some of Mangan's unknown work, giving a natural preference to that which helps to illustrate his life, a good many quotations are necessary. Still, proportionately to the extraordinary quantity of his literary production, such extracts are necessarily meagre and inadequate. When it is borne in mind that he wrote for the *Dublin University Magazine* alone what would make a dozen good sized volumes (that is considerably more than a thousand closely printed double columns of the magazine), an occasional sample of his Oriental wares will not be too much to offer. He is particularly profuse in epigram—in couplets and quatrains, many of which are excellent. They frequently remind one of *Omar Khayyam*, and the supposition that Edward Fitzgerald was acquainted with Mangan's articles when he produced those remarkable quatrains which have captured and enraptured the English critical world is not an extreme one. Bits like the following are common enough in Mangan's versions and perversions—

"My heart is a monk and thy bosom its cloister;  
So sleeps the bright pearl in the shell of the oyster."

Again—

"My friend sat sad and silent all the night,  
Until the red wine loosed his tongue,  
So when morn breaks, I said, with rosy light,  
The lark's first pleasant song is sung."



Some of the snatches are not always Eastern in style, but generally they are just what we should expect from an Oriental. The humorous element has more of Mangan's peculiar stamp upon it :—

“ Mine eyes, of old the beamiest of the beamy,  
Are now, alas ! the filmiest of the filmy ;  
So meagre am I too, no lath is like me ;  
Death, for my shadowy thinness, cannot see me,  
And when he enters my sad cell to kill me  
His lance will not know how or where to strike me.”

Here is a similar scrap—

“ I, once plump as Shiraz grape,  
Am, like Thalbh, of thin renown,  
Grown most chasmy, most phantasmey,  
Yea ! most razor-sharp in shape !  
Fact ! And if I'm blown through town  
I'll *cut* all the sumphs who pass me !”

Now and then a very fine thought is expressed, as in the following lines to Sultan Murad II.—

“ Earth sees in thee  
Her Destiny ! \*  
Thou standest as the Pole—and she resembles  
The Needle, for she turns to thee and trembles !”

Or we have admirable touches like this—

“ Came Night, with its congress of stars  
And the Moon in her mournful glory ;  
O, Time, I exclaimed, thou art just ! Nothing bars  
The Great from the Temple of Story ;  
But the Destinies ever in unison bind  
The cypress and laurel ; and, save in the dusk  
Of the sepulchre, Fame writes no *Bismillah* !”

The imagery is sometimes of a very original kind, as when, speaking of eyebrows, he says—

“ Mine are clouds that dull the orbs below,  
Or deserted bridges  
Underneath whose dreary arches flow,  
In unresting ridges,  
Evermore the waters of deep woe.”

Such are the shorter pieces, the parings or cuttings, as it were, of the fine stuffs he wove out of Eastern lore. In “ The Time of the Roses,” we have a fairly good example

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\* Murad signifies “ Destiny.”



of the longer and less known pieces. Here are some of the verses :—

“ Morning is blushing ; the gay nightingales  
 Warble their exquisite songs in the vales ;  
 Spring, like a spirit, floats everywhere,  
 Shaking sweet spice-showers loose from her hair ;  
 Murmurs half-musical sound from the stream,  
 Breathes in the valley and shines in the beam  
     In, in at the portals that youth uncloses,  
     It hastes, it wastes, the Time of the Roses.

Meadows, and gardens, and sun-lighted glades,  
 Palaces, terraces, grottoes, and shades  
 Woo thee ; a fairy bird sings in thine ear,  
 Come and be happy, an Eden is here !  
 Knowest thou whether for thee there be any  
 Years in the future ? Ah ! think on how many  
     A young heart under the mould reposes,  
     Nor feels how wheels the Time of the Roses !

In the red light of the many-leaved rose,  
 Mahomet's wonderful mantle re-glow's  
 Gaudier far, but as blooming and tender  
 Tulips and martagons revel in splendour.  
 Drink from the chalice of Joy, ye who may !  
 Youth is a flower of early decay,  
     And Pleasure a monarch that Age deposes,  
     When past, at last, the Time of the Roses !

See the young lilies, their scimitar-petals  
 Glancing like silver 'mid earthlier metals ;  
 Dews of the brightest in life-giving showers,  
 Fall all the night on these luminous flowers.  
 Each of them sparkles afar like a gem !  
 Wouldst thou be smiling and happy like them ?  
     Oh, follow all counsel that Pleasure proposes !  
     It dies, it flies, the Time of the Roses !

Pity the Roses ! Each rose is a maiden,  
 Prankt, and with jewels of dew overladen.  
 Pity the maidens ! The moon of their bloom  
 Rises to set in the cells of the tomb ;  
 Life has its winter—when summer is gone,  
 Maidens, like roses, lie stricken and wan.  
     Though bright as the fiery bush of Moses,  
     Soon fades, fair maids, the Time of the Roses !

Lustre and odours, and blossoms and flowers,  
 All that is richest in gardens and bowers,  
 Teach us morality, speak of mortality,  
 Whisper that life is a swift unreality !  
 Death is the end of that lustre—those odours ;  
 Brilliance and beauty are gloomy foreboders  
     To him who knows what this world of woes is,  
     And sees how flees the Time of the Roses !



Heed them not, hear them not ! Morning is blushing,  
 Perfumes are wandering, fountains are gushing ;  
 What though the rose, like a virgin forbidden,  
 Long under leafy pavilion lay hidden.  
 Now far around as the vision can stretch,  
 Wreaths for the pencil of angels to sketch,  
 Festoon the tall hills the landscape discloses.  
 O ! sweet, though fleet, the Time of the Roses !

Now the air—drunk from the breath of the flowers—  
 Faints like a bride whom her bliss overpowers ;  
 Such, and so rich, is the fragrance that fills  
 Ether and cloud that its essence distils,  
 As through their lily-leaves, earthward again,  
 Sprinkling with rose-water garden and plain.  
 O ! joyously after the winter closes  
 Returns and burns the Time of the Roses !

O, for some magical vase to imprison  
 All the sweet incense that yet has not risen !  
 And the swift pearls, that, radiant and rare,  
 Glisten and drop through the hollows of air !  
 Vain ! They depart, both the beaming and fragrant !  
 So, too, Hope leaves us, and Love proves a vagrant !  
 Too soon their entrancing illusion closes—  
 It cheats, it fleets, the Time of the Roses !”

Another of these Eastern poems is worth quoting for its curious rhyme effect. The poet finely likens the world to a Khan or stopping-place in a desert, and speculates on the source and destination of the pilgrims who call thereat :—

“ *To* this Khan, and *from* this Khan,  
 How many pilgrims came and went, too !  
*In* this Khan—and *by* this Khan  
 What arts were spent—what hearts were rent, too !  
*To* this Khan—and *from* this Khan  
 Which for penance man is sent to,  
 Many a van and caravan  
 Crowded came—and shrouded went, too !  
 Christian man and Moslem man,  
 Guebre, Heathen, Jew, and Gentoo,  
*To* this Khan—and *from* this Khan  
 Weeping came and weeping went, too !  
 A riddle this since time began  
 Which many a sage his mind hath bent to ;  
*All* came and went, but never man  
 Knew whence they came or where they went to.”

When Mangan wrote this poem, he had probably already learned that the old Irish poets were masters of assonance. He several times attempted the trick him-



self, but the English tongue does not easily lend itself to it without more or less cheapening results. But even if Mangan did not then know the practice of the Irish bards, he must have been well aware of the Spanish use of assonantal aid. Before leaving the "Literæ Orientales," I must quote a portion of one of the best examples of Mangan's pseudo-Turkish verse. It is entitled "The Hundred-leaféd Rose." Irish readers may be pardoned for thinking that the real significance of the poem concerns a place much nearer home than the land of the Crescent :—

" Her cloak is green, with a gloomy sheen,  
Like a garment of beauteous Jose,\*  
And prisoned around by a sentinelled wall  
Is the Hundred-Leaféd Rose.

Like Issa,† whose breath first woke from Death  
The souls in this world of woes,  
She vivifies all the fainting air,  
The Hundred-Leaféd Rose.

The Flower of Flowers, like a convent towers  
Where Virtue and Truth repose ;  
The leaves are the halls, and the convent walls  
Are the thorns that pierce the Rose.

. . . . .

Who sees the sun set round and red  
Over Lebanon's brow of snows,  
May dream how burns in a lily-bed  
The Hundred-Leaféd Rose.

The sun is an archer swift and strong,  
With a myriad silver bows,  
And each beam is a barb to pierce the garb  
Of the Hundred-Leaféd Rose.

While the moon all the long, long spectral night  
Her light o'er the garden throws,  
Like a beauty shrinking away from sight  
Is the Hundred-Leaféd Rose.

Like the tears of a maiden, whose heart o'erladen  
With sorrowful thought, overflows  
At her weeping eye, are the dewes that lie  
On the feminine cheek of the Rose.

As man after Fame, as the moth round the flame,  
As the steer when his partner lows,  
Is the Nightingale, when his fruitless wail  
Is poured to the silent Rose,

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\* The Egyptian Joseph.

† Jesus.



A Princess tranced by a talisman's power,  
 Who bloomingly slumbers, nor knows  
 That the sorcerer's spell encircles her bower,  
 Is the Hundred-Leaféd Rose.

Alas! that her Kiosk of Emerald rare  
 Should be powerless all to oppose  
 The venom of Serpent Envy's glare  
 When its eye is fixed on the Rose.

A Virgin alone in an alien land,  
 Whose friends are but silent foes—  
 A palace plundered by every hand  
 Is the Hundred-Leaféd Rose." \*

Mangan held that a poet's worst crime is to be unintelligible. He insisted that a writer of mystical tendencies need not be obscure, and it would certainly be difficult to catch him napping in this matter of lucidity. A profound believer in the use of the mystical and the spiritual—if not spiritualistic—in poetry, he is at all times intelligible—he is even luminously clear.

"No luxuriance of imagination," he says, "can atone for the absence of perspicuity. A poet above all men should endeavour to make words the images of things."

And he also says:—

"The best poetry is that which most resembles the best prose."

This was Mangan's time of greatest material prosperity. Between his earnings from the *University Magazine* and the work in the Ordnance Survey Office he must have made a decent income. Even if he had only obtained ten guineas a sheet from M'Glashan, his earnings from the *Magazine* alone would not have been less than £70 or £80 a year. The usual rate, however, was sixteen guineas a sheet; but Mangan's humility and modesty naturally prevented him from getting anything like this price during his connection with M'Glashan. Indeed, it is certain that, in the end, he worked for him at an appallingly low rate.† It was not at this time, however, than Mangan could say, as he grimly did at a later period, "I sometimes carve, but mostly starve." The year 1838 was a specially

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\* "The Time of the Roses" and "The Hundred-Leaféd Rose" were reprinted in *Songs of the Season*, a collection published by Curry and Co., Dublin, in 1839.

† One who knew him well has stated that at last Mangan obtained *sixpence* per poem from one of his "patrons"!



prolific one for him. Besides various articles on Turkish and German poetry, he wrote a couple of sketches, one of them running through two numbers of the *Magazine*, and entitled "The Thirsty Flasks." It bears one of his numerous signatures ("The Out-and-Outer"), and would make a small volume. It is an exceedingly clever story about an old magician, and is far the best thing of its kind written by Mangan. It is almost incredible that Father Meehan, who republished his most trivial sketches, should have overlooked this admirable piece. But one does not like to severely criticise the worthy priest, who has done more for Mangan than any other writer, or than any of the other friends of the poet ever dreamt of doing. "The Man in the Cloak"—"a very German story," as Mangan labels it—is the second sketch referred to above. It is fairly well known. Mangan himself used it, or rather allowed its use, more than once. It is very characteristic of his lighter moods, though some may pronounce it a piece of "melancholy wit"—a description Mangan once applied to some of his own lucubrations. The signature attached to it is "B A M." *Apropos* of "The Man in the Cloak," it would be interesting to know how Father Meehan, who would not admit that Mangan was conscious of his eccentricity in dress, accounted for the production of a certain extravaganza, of which his famous cloak is almost the *deus ex machina*.\* The piece referred to appeared a little later on. It is called "My Bugle, and How I Blow It;" and as it bears on this question of Mangan's deliberate eccentricity, I am tempted to quote a few passages from it:—

"Public, do you listen; you are elevated to the high honour of being my confidante. I am about to confer an incredible mark of my favour upon you, Public. Know, then, the following things:—

Firstly—That I am not *a* Man in *a* Cloak, but *the* Man in *the* Cloak. My personal identity is here at stake, and I cannot consent to sacrifice it. Let me sacrifice it, and what becomes of me? 'The earth hath bubbles as the water hath,' and I am thenceforth one of them. I lose my cloak and my consciousness both in the twinkling of a pair of tongs; I become what the philosophy of Kant (in opposition to the Cant of Philosophy) denominates a *Nicht-Ich*, a Not-I, a *Non-Ego*. Pardon me, my public, if I calmly but firmly express my determination to shed the last drop of my ink before I concede the possibility of such a paltry, sneaking, shabby, swindling, strip-and-pillage-me species of contingency.

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\* In one of his letters to Gavan Duffy he says—"How little do you know of the Man in the Cloak."



Secondly—That I am the *Man* in the Cloak—viz., I am not an ‘Old Woman,’ as Mrs. Trollope complains that the Yankees would call her, despite her best bonnets, satin frocks and flounces, and corsets *à l’enfant*. Neither am I a lump of moonshine all out, Stigmatise me, if you will, as a Hottentot, as a Troglodyte, as a hang-a-bone jailbird; still, you cannot put your hand on your heart and assert that I am a make-believe, a bag of feathers, a *non-ens*, a bull-beggar, a hob-goblin, a humbug, a lath-and-pulley get-up like Punch. Not at all. I do not say that you *dare* not, but I clap my wings like a bantam on a barn roof, and I crow aloud in triumph that you *cannot*, public. It is outside the sphere of your power, public. I am the the *Man* in the Cloak. *Mettez cela dans votre pipe, et fumez-le, mon Public.*

Thirdly—That I am the *Man in* the Cloak. In other words, I am by no manner of means the *Man of* the Cloak or the *Man under* the Cloak. The Germans call me ‘Der Mensch mit dem Mantel,’ the *Man with* the Cloak. This is a deplorable error in the nomenclature of that otherwise intelligent people, and I am speechless with astonishment that they could have fallen into it. Why? Because my cloak is not part and parcel of myself. The cloak is outside and the man is inside, as Goldsmith said of the world and the prisoner, but each is a distinct entity. Of that I am satisfied. On that point I, as the Persians say, tighten the girdle of assurance round the waist of my understanding—though, perhaps, there is no waste of my understanding whatever. I admit that you may say, ‘The Man with the Greasy Countenance,’ or ‘The Chap with the Swivel Eye.’ Thus also Slawkenbergius (*vide Tristram Shandy*) calls his hero ‘The Stranger with the Nose,’ and reasonably enough, for although it was at one period conjectured that the nose in question might extend five hundred and seventy-five geometrical feet in longitude, not even the most incredulous amongst the faculty of Strasburg were found to advance an opinion that the nose was not an integral part of the individual. With me the case is a horse of another colour. I do not put my cloak on and off, I grant, but I *can* do so when I please by a mere exercise of volition and muscle; and therefore it is obvious to the meanest capacity (I like original *tours de phrase*) that I am the *Man in* the Cloak, and no mistake. If any cavillers feel inclined to dispute the proposition with me further they may await my arrival in Dublin at the Fifteen Acres.

Finally—That I am the *Man in* the *Cloak*. Other men tabernacle their corporeality in broadcloth, Petershams, Redingotes, Surtouts, Macintoshes, Overalls, Wrapscales, Kangaroos, Traceys, Dreadnaughts. Every blunderer to his fancy or the fashion. I quarrel with nobody for his taste or want of taste. I do not approach any moon-calf in the public street with an uplifted crowbar, poker, pike, pitchfork, or pick-axe in my grasp, because his togger is of a different order from my own. I could not do so, independent of my intuitive benevolence of disposition. I have what Harriet Martineau calls ‘a powerful preventive check’ in my sense of what is due to the *bien-seances* of society. On the other hand, however, I yield not up a whit of my own liberty. I am aware that in Africa and Asia people wear cotton, muslin, and other stuffs—with which I won’t stay puzzling; that in parts of America the run is upon blankets; that in the West Indies nankeens are all the go; that in Egypt the men sometimes carry their duds under their arms. But am I, therefore, to ape their



example—to become an African, an American a West Indian, an Egyptian? I see not the decillionth part of a reason for doing so. I call Europe to witness that I shall never do so as long as I have my cloak. In a case like this I laugh at coercion and despise the prospect of torture. What did I buy my cloak for? Why did I pay fifteen shillings and sixpence, besides boot, for it to a Jew hawker of old rags, but that I might don it and never doff it, I should be glad to know.”

There seems to be no room for doubt that Mangan took some pains to appear an eccentric, if only to live up to the reputation as such that people had given him. His features had by this time lost all or nearly all their earlier attractiveness—their delicacy of outline. He was prematurely aged; constant study of manuscripts and books for copying purposes, intense devotion to reading, combined with chronic ill-health, and the one great failing of his life, and perhaps what he calls his “ancient malpractice of lucubrating by candle-light,” had affected his eyes very much, had reduced him to a shadow, and made him practically a total wreck, physically. But the sacred fire burned within as fiercely as ever, and at intervals blazed magnificently. Admirable as his previous work had been, his genius was yet to flash out still more finely. His greatest efforts were yet unmade. The poorer he became, the more wretched his health, the more hopeless his future, the nobler grew his utterances. James Price, the friend who knew him best, whose knowledge of him extended over nearly twenty years, gives the following personal description of him as he appeared at this period:—

“Behold him passing through our streets with a quick yet shuffling gait, as if some uneasiness hurried him onward, pausing not, looking not to the right or left, until brought suddenly to a full stop before a bookstand. See how eagerly he searches there for some old volume of German black-letter. If it is found, and his finances can secure its purchase, lo! what a flash of joyous feeling lights up those before heavy and lustreless eyes! He passes onward, his pace quickening to a run, until, in the solitude of his lonely chamber, he can commune with his new treasure.

Clarence Mangan was about five feet six in height, thin even to emaciation, and slightly stooped in the shoulders, like many men of studious habits and close application. In his dress, the eccentricity of his mind was outwardly displayed. His coat, a very little coat, tightly buttoned, was neither a frock coat, dress coat, morning coat, nor shooting coat, and yet seemed to partake of the fashioning of all four. Sometimes, however, it was covered with a blue cloak, the tightest cloak to the form that can be imagined, in which every attempt at the bias cut that gives a free flowing drapery was rigidly eschewed. But it was in the article of hats that poor Clarence’s eccentric fancy was



especially shown. Such a quaint-shaped crown, such a high, wide-boated leaf as he fancied, has rarely been seen off the stage. And though the hat usually gave the finishing touch of the grotesque to his appearance, still there was something strangely striking and interesting about him. You could not laugh at that deathly pale and visibly dream-haunted man, whose thin, worn features spoke of unhealthy seclusion, close study and heart-weariness. You could not even laugh at the grisly moustache \* which, with a strange notion, of he himself knew not what, he clothed his upper lip. You could not ; for in his eye, on his cheek, you must have read the struggle of genius with adverse circumstances ; you must have *felt* that he was no ordinary man, singularly attired though he was, on whose wan face and attenuated form the hand of death was visibly strengthening its grasp."

The mention of the story of the "Man in the Cloak" (the hero of which shows decided interest in phrenology) reminds us of Mangan's faith in that pseudo-science. He had read pretty deeply in the writings of Spurzheim and Combe, and had not improbably attended their lectures. I find that the former, who had visited Dublin about 1815, paid a second visit in 1830, delivering a course of lectures, during the progress of which he was made an honorary member of the Royal Irish Academy. He impressed a good many people, and some of the leading physicians adopted his views.† William Combe lectured in Dublin also in 1829. Mangan was among the convinced, and afterwards told his friends that he had a notion of opening an academy for the dissemination of phrenological knowledge and of the doctrines of Lavater, whose physiognomical theories had likewise conquered him. I cannot help thinking sometimes that Mangan had formed certain conclusions of his own about his "bumps," or had had them carefully examined by a competent professor of the science, and was endeavouring to live up to the description. Far-fetched as this may seem, it is, I think, the only explanation which will account for some of his actions and some of his writings, and it is quite in keeping with his character and temperament. It would explain something which appears to be unaccountable in Mangan's actions if he had been told by some phrenologist in whom he strongly believed that he possessed certain qualities which he himself had not pretended to or whose existence he had not

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\* Moustaches were then very uncommon in these islands.

† Andrew Carmichael, brother of the distinguished Dublin surgeon of that name, was a faithful disciple of Spurzheim, wrote a *brochure* on his life and theories. He was an extremely clever man, and author of some local satires of great power.



suspected. There is a phrenological account of him extant, and I shall quote it here. Father Meehan, who prints it, tells us that on his first introduction to the poet, the latter, before taking his seat, ran his fingers through his new-found friend's hair, "but," says Father Meehan, "whether he discovered anything to his or my advantage I don't remember." In spite of his implication that he did not give credence to theories of fatalism, it is certain that Mangan fully believed that his future would be a hopeless one; that his declining years would be saddening and wretched in the extreme; and that no attempt to live a nobler life would or could be successful. Hence his utterly reckless abandonment in the end.

But to return to the subject of phrenology. The following explanation of Mangan's cranial development was written in February, 1835, by a phrenologist of some note, named Wilson, who, it is believed, did not personally know the poet very well. It is of great interest, if only in view of Mangan's undoubted belief in the system:—

"This is the head of one capable of warm attachment, and of having his mind enthusiastically wrought up to the consideration of any subject or the accomplishment of any purpose. He would be apt to live much more in the world of romance than in that of reality, and with respect to the other sex, he would be inclined to cherish fanciful notions of their dispositions and characters. He has a bright imagination and possesses the spirit of poetry in a very high degree, but he would be subject to great alternation of feeling, and would be susceptible of great extremes, both of joy and grief. His mind is of an inquiring order, and he possesses ability for philosophy, but in general, and for a continuance, a literature of a lighter and more imaginative kind would suit him best. He appears to have but little combativeness, destructiveness, acquisitiveness, or self-esteem, which, with large cautiousness and no great degree of firmness, would render him very likely to be much influenced by the spirit of his associates; on the other hand having but little veneration, he would not be disposed to yield much submission to authority. He has a tender and compassionate heart for others, but especially for the young and innocent. He has also a strong desire to acquire the goodwill of others, and more particularly of those who are themselves great or amiable. He would not be of a domineering, insolent, or quarrelsome disposition; he would rather err in the contrary extreme, and regard the crimes and follies of others with too lenient an eye. In religion he would be more speculative than devotional. In politics he would prefer the people to the Crown. In all affairs of life generally, he would be more imaginative than prudent. He has but little secretiveness, and would then be inclined to express his sentiments without disguise on all occasions, perhaps often indiscreetly. Constructiveness is hardly developed at all, on which account he would not have a genius for mechanism or inventions generally, but he would possess the power of magnifying, embellishing,



and beautifying in the highest degree. A tendency to exaggerate and amplify would pervade whatever he undertook. He has great Form and Language, and would have an exquisite perception of the beauty of figure from the first and a remarkable memory for words from the latter. His memory for places would be also great. In argument he would be quick-thoughted, but singular, and prone to dissent from commonly-received opinions. In action, he would be rather irresolute, unless operated upon by some strong motive, on which occasion he would be rather impetuous. In conclusion, this is the head of one who is susceptible of strong impressions, great joy or great sorrow, but who would live much more in the past and future than in the present, and would be reckoned somewhat eccentric by the world. The principal ingredients of the character it indicates are taste, wit, extravagance, vividness of fancy, generosity, proneness to yield to the solicitations of others."



## CHAPTER X.

THE "WEEKLY REGISTER"—MANGAN'S PESSIMISM ONLY PARTIAL—HIS FEEBLENESS OF WILL—DESCRIPTIONS OF HIM BY MITCHEL AND O'DALY—HIS FASCINATING TALK—HIS TAVERN HAUNTS—HIS YEARNINGS—HIS PRACTICAL SIDE—HIS PROTEAN SHAPES—"THE TIME OF THE BARMECIDES"—DR. NEDLEY—MANGAN'S DISLIKE TO NEW ACQUAINTANCES—HIS WIT—DR. MAGINN.

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"And oh ! that such a mind, so rich, so overflowing  
 With ancient lore and modern phantasy,  
 And prodigal of its treasures as a tree  
 Of golden leaves when Autumn winds are blowing,  
 That such a mind, made to illumine and glad  
 All minds, all hearts, should have itself become  
 Affliction's chosen Sanctuary and Home !—  
 This is in truth most marvellous and sad !"—MANGAN.

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To the weekly edition of the *Register*, a very able Dublin paper, conducted by the distinguished Irish publicist, Michael Staunton, Mangan is said to have occasionally contributed in the thirties.\* But it was in the *University Magazine* of this period that the extraordinary variety of his metres, the never-failing novelty of his phraseology, attracted wide attention. No matter how complicated his measures—no two of which are alike, generally speaking—where a less discriminating intellect might have become confused, he is always clear and definite, and never gets involved. It was in the office of the *Register* that Gavan Duffy first met him, and formed the friendship which lasted so many years. Mangan had not, so far, attempted to shun society altogether. And it may be truly said that he was no misanthrope, properly speaking, at any time of his life. He did not hate his fellowman, and, like so many disillusioned poets, scourge mankind in revenge of personal suffering. Even when he was, as Mitchel puts it, "drowned in the

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\* A careful search through many volumes, however, has failed to discover anything of his.



blackest despair," he never inveighed against society, never predicted or believed in "universal smash," but always and ever limited his pessimism to himself. He was not a pessimist at all in the sense which devotes all and everything to a future of woe and misery and final destruction. He was not averse to the belief that though he himself was destined to what he calls "a death in life," the world was yet a joyous place for others, and while he saw nowhere any sign of hope for himself he constantly appealed to his countrymen to "hope on, hope ever." Hope—for others—is, indeed, the main burden of all his latest writings. "Contarini Fleming," says he, "wrote upon the wall, 'Time'; our inscription would have been 'Hope and Exertion.'"

At this time his home, such as it was, had no pleasure for him; "he found there," says Mitchel, "nothing but reproaches and ill-humour." Mitchel goes on—

"Baffled, beaten, mocked, and all alone amidst the wrecks of this world, is it wonderful that he sought at times to escape from consciousness by taking for bread, opium and for water brandy? Many a sore and pitiable struggle he must have maintained against the foul fiend, but with a character and a will essentially feeble he succumbed at last."

To quote again the same admirable writer :—

"Never was there a creature on this earth whose existence was so entirely dual and double; nay, whose two lives were so hopelessly and eternally at war, racking and desolating the poor mortal frame which was the battle ground of that fearful strife."

And Mitchel, despite his comparative lack of knowledge of Mangan's life, says many profoundly true things of the poet. His description of him may be compared with that of O'Daly :—

"Mangan, when the present writer saw him first," he says, "was a spare and meagre figure, somewhat under middle height, with a finely-formed head, clear blue eyes, and features of peculiar delicacy. His face was pallid and worn, and the light hair was not so much grizzled as bleached."

O'Daly's account is more full :—

"In person Mangan was below the middle height, and of slender proportions; the ashy paleness of his face was lighted up by eyes of extraordinary brilliancy. His usual costume was a light brown coat; he wore his hat closely pressed over his eyebrows, and used to carry a large umbrella under his arm. Of his manner and conversation it



would be impossible to give a correct idea; they may be best described by an extract from his favourite Schiller:—

‘ His dreams were of great objects,  
He walked amidst us of a silent spirit  
Cummuning with himself; yet I have known him  
Transported on a sudden into utterance  
Of strange conceptions; kindling into splendour,  
His soul revealed itself, and he spake so  
That we looked round, perplexed, upon each other,  
Not knowing whether it was craziness  
Or whether it were a god that spake in him.’ ”

To return to Mitchel, who helps to complete the picture—

“ The visitor (Mangan) would sometimes remain in conversation of his own for an hour; for though extremely silent, shy, and reserved habitually, yet, with those in whom he confided, he was much given to strange and desultory talk, which seemed like the soliloquy of a somnambulist. His blue eyes would then dilate, and light up strangely the sepulchral pallor of his face.”

He delighted his friends, as Father Meehan remarks, “with *viva voce* criticisms of the Italian, German, and French poets.” And other writers have spoken of the great charm of his conversation or monologues. Father Meehan, in one of his letters, also says:—

“ In all our conversations I never heard him say a word that was not worth remembering.”

And Gavan Duffy also tells us how he

“ spent many a night, up to the small hours, listening to his delightful monologues on poetry and metaphysics.”

He was frequently to be found in the “Phoenix” tavern in D’Olier Street, or in the “Star and Garter” close by, and would sometimes, even in so public a place, repeat aloud one of his own poems, or pieces from his favourite authors, to any close acquaintance. A poet whom he was very fond of quoting was Byron, and his reading of Byron’s “Mazeppa”—especially the passages describing the wild ride—had a weird significance not to be conveyed in print. Mrs. Petrie, the stepmother of Dr. Petrie, took a great liking to Mangan, and often obtained his promise to call and take tea with her, but he occasionally found the attractions of the tavern too powerful. Mrs. Petrie would invite him and W. F. Wakeman together, and the latter tells me that he spent some very pleasant evenings at her place (she kept a



small general shop near the Castle Yard), listening to the poet's fascinating talk and strangely effective recitation or declamation. But those who were able to secure Mangan's presence of an evening were privileged persons. He preferred to be left alone with his thoughts, with his liquor, and a book.

In a so-called Oriental poem of this period there is a quatrain which evidently came to him whilst sitting in his corner in the "Phoenix," or one of the other taverns he resorted to :—

"Boy, fill another bumper, and take care you fill it up full !  
My manner grows extremely bland when I have drained a cupful—  
My temperament, you understand, is somewhat dry and drouthful ;  
I don't eat much, and can't command a relish for a mouthful."

It should be remembered that though Mangan had unfortunately contracted his fatal habit of drinking before he met Duffy, and continued it, with few intervals, to his death, he had not, at the period now reached, become a very heavy drinker. Indeed, Duffy says—

"I never saw him affected by drink. Opium was supposed to be his temptation."\*

And James Price, who knew more of Mangan than anybody, expressly assures us that it was in his attempt to escape from the terrible drug which had obtained an almost complete mastery over his senses that he fell into the other habit, not less potent for evil, not less personally degrading. He conquered the opium fiend after a fierce ordeal of self-torture, but it is certain that his second state was worse than his first.

Mitchel very adroitly likens the poet's history to that of Ireland :—

"His history and fate," he says, "were indeed a type and shadow of the land he loved so well. The very soul of his melody is that plaintive and passionate yearning which breathes and throbs through all the music of Ireland. Like Ireland's, his gaze was ever backward, with vain and feeble complaint for vanished years. Like Ireland's, his light flickered upward for a moment, and went out in the blackest of darkness."

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\*D'Arcy M'Gee, too, in an article written before Mangan's death, uses these words—"It is reported, indeed, that the poet finds a ready, though most unhappy, way out of the evils of the actual into the ideal, and that his inspiration, like that of the Dervishes he is so familiar with, comes from opium-eating."



In Mangan's poetry and prose we frequently meet with this *sehnsucht* after the unattainable :—

"Had we Aladdin's lamp," he says somewhere, "Gyges' ring, the wishing cap of Fortunatus, Paganini's violin, the lyre of Orpheus, the collar of Moran, the sword of Harlequin, Prospero's wand, St. Leon's *elixir vitae*, the finger of Midas, the wings of Icarus, the talisman of Camaralzaman, the flying horse of Prince Firouz Schah—there is none of all the thirteen we should shrink from bartering for that which we have lost."

Wretched as his early life was he looked back to it as to a time of joy, and its irresponsibility made an especially powerful appeal to one of his weak and wavering character and enfeebled body.

In 1839, Mangan continued his excursions into German and Turkish poetry, and we find poems which had appeared before elsewhere (sometimes more than once) coming up again, generally in a new dress and to better advantage. The use made by Mangan of poems which had been previously published at a disadvantage, shows that there was a practical side to his character. And this is borne out by several who knew him. Someone—probably Joseph Brenan—writing in the *Irishman* of June 23rd, 1849, says :—

"It is a curious fact, and worth noting for his biographers, that although he passed the greater portion of his life in the region of the Ideal he was not at all unacquainted with the Real ; he acted as a theorist, but he was naturally a practical man. . . . Mangan had a rich vein of common-sense in his character. This was the source of his humour, quaint and rich, the very flowering of common-sense, for humour was as much a characteristic of his as fancy. He could be anything—gay, pathetic, or elevated, according to his mood."

In one respect these latter observations are true, but it cannot be said that humour was natural to him. He could, of course, write amusingly, and his writings are here and there humorous, but he was no humorist. His temperament was at bottom a terribly gloomy one : a settled melancholy took possession of him in boyhood, and all attempts at gaiety and pretence of light-heartedness were hollow mockeries. But that he could really produce, by a kind of *tour de force*, a witty poem or sketch even in his saddest moments, is undeniable. He could be anything by turns, but nothing long ; his moods were ever-shifting, ever-varying. He was a veritable Proteus, as he himself tells us in words already quoted. In the impersonal autobio-



graphical fragment before referred to we also find the following :—

“And do you really sympathise with your subject?” I demanded. “Yes, always, always,” was his answer. “When I write as a Persian, I feel as a Persian; and am transported back to the days of Djemsheed and the Genii; when I write as a Spaniard, I forget, for the moment, everything but the Cid, the Moors, and the Alhambra; when I translate from the Irish, my heart has no pulses except for the wrongs and sorrows of my own stricken land.”

Yet he was always himself. Dr. Anster once expostulated with him on the wrong he did himself in attributing to others what was his own, and mentioned the strong personal flavour of some of his pretended translations from the Persian of Hafiz. “Ah,” said Mangan, “anyone can see that they are only Half-his.”

In the *University Magazine* for 1839 there are many of his characteristic jokes. To Gellert he attributes some of his love-sonnets, to the Chinese his “Elegy on Joe (Tchao) King,” to the Irish his poem beginning “I Stood Aloof,” to the Italian his poem best known as “To Frances,” and so on. From an elaborate joke which he attributes to Drechsler, who, as already pointed out, had no separate existence, the following two stanzas are extracted :—

“I knew him!—By that sunken charnel cheek  
 And spectral eye  
 And drooping horizontal head.  
 I knew him! Yet, I did not, could not, speak—  
 I passed him by,  
 And in cold silence cut him dead!  
 I knew him by that vast columnar brow,  
 Once all unworn,  
 And polished to the last degree,  
 But furrowed with High-German wrinkles now—  
 I could have sworn  
 From that Shakespearean brow 'twas he!  
 Disastrous years had rolled, since last we met,  
 O'er him and me,  
 O'er me in pain—o'er him in prison;  
 And many a golden sun meantime had set  
 Red in the sea,  
 And many a silver moon had risen—  
 And now we were estranged—and he was changed,  
 As one oft is  
 By time and inward agony.  
 No matter—all my eye—my quick eye—ranged  
 Athwart his phiz,  
 And told my heart it must be he!”



In the same article in which appeared the skit just quoted from, there is the first version of a poem known to and admired by Irishmen all over the world, namely—"The Time of the Barmecides," a pretended translation from the Arabic. Mangan shortly afterwards published an improved version, which is too familiar to my readers to need reprinting here. But it may be interesting to record the fact, in view of Richard D'Alton Williams' clever and well-known parody of the poem, that Mangan, who preferred it to any other piece he ever wrote, gives a sample stanza of a (much earlier) parody of his own, which runs:—

"Ere my nose was red or my wig was grey  
Or I sat in the civic chair,  
I often left Rome on a soft spring day  
To taste the country air—  
All satin and plush were my bran-new clothes—  
All lace my white cravat—  
All square my buskins about the toes—  
And oh ! all round my hat !"

That Mangan had a special fondness for "The Time of the Barmecides," I am informed by more than one who met him. Dr. Nedley, the distinguished Dublin physician, has in his possession a copy of the poem which was given to him by Mangan under the following circumstances. He was dining with Father Meehan one night, and there met Mangan, who had a like invitation. As Father Meehan was called away on some parochial matter, the doctor, then very young, was left alone with the poet, and had a long talk with him. Mangan had just previously heard him sing "The Time of the Barmecides," to the old air of "Billy Byrne of Ballymanus," and was so charmed with the singing (Dr. Nedley was noted then and after for his beautiful tenor voice), that he promised him an autograph copy of the poem, telling him at the same time that he thought it the best thing he had ever written. This copy Dr. Nedley duly received and has religiously preserved.

Mangan became more and more solitary as time went on. Since the betrayal by his friend he had lost much of his belief and trust in mankind, and gradually developed a dread of making new acquaintances. He would not go anywhere to meet new people, and would sometimes, when inveigled, as it were, into an acquaintance, remain silent, and take the earliest opportunity of making his escape.



Mitchel remarked this, for he says that it was only when Mangan found him alone that he would enter into conversation. He also tells us that there was a difficulty in his own case, and that acquaintanceship with the poet was

"a fact not easily accomplished, for Mangan had a morbid reluctance to meet new people or to be 'introduced.'"

Gavan Duffy practically corroborates this:—

"He stole into the *Nation* office once a week," he states, "but if any of my friends appeared he took flight on the instant."

And Mangan, true to his invariable habit, introduces an admission of this peculiarity into one of his articles in the *University Magazine*:—

"We are but little disposed to prepossessions in favour of new acquaintances, whether in literature or life."

And again:—

"The poet cares nothing for solitude, but he wishes to avoid man . . . . Anything is better for us than imprisonment in a sphere within which we are 'not at home,' and nothing can be more dreadful than compulsory companionship with beings who are sufficiently alike us to awaken our sympathies in their behalf, yet more than sufficiently unlike us to make those sympathies recoil upon our hearts, burdened with the mournful lesson that in

'Our wretchedness and our resistance,  
And our sad, unallied existence,'

there lies a woe beyond our power to heal, a mystery our faculties are forbidden to fathom."

I have said that Mangan could be very amusing at times—mostly so when he is making fun of the methods of the German poets. De la Motte Fouque, the German rhymers with anything but a Teutonic name, was one of his butts. He uses a very amusing illustration to express his disappointment over the great promise and small performance of the Baron's volumes:—

"The peculiar peculiarity of the Baron's 'banquets,'" he says, referring to a special example of "great cry and little wool," "is that you can never detect the presence of aliment in any shape in any of them; not a single tumbler of double stout—not the phantom of one consumptive parsnip can be had either for love or money. Now, few people would care to stomach treatment like this. There is no precedent for it. Even our friend Bernard Cavanagh\* would, we are certain,

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\* This was a "fasting" man then exhibiting himself in Dublin. He was strongly, and no doubt rightly, suspected of being a fraud.



have manifested more hospitality than the Baron; there would have been on Bernard's mahogany at least the appearance, the theatrical show, the Barmecidal promise, of a ham and a brace of sausages. 'I never drink,' said a solemn friend of ours to us once, 'but I like to see the decanter on the table,' and there was in the observation a profounder instinct of spiritual philosophy than even the observer himself suspected."

And again, in his own odd way, he thus praises the editor of some German poetry, telling him that mere words would not express his feeling of indebtedness.

"If we owed Mr. K—— a thousand pounds, he does not suppose that we would have brass enough to tender him a groat by way of payment. No. Our sense of the magnitude of the debt would rather impose perpetual silence on us. Not one penny should we jingle against another before him. The mingled nobleness and perspicuity which have on many occasions distinguished us would enable us thoroughly to appreciate the delicacy of his feelings; and if he ever alluded to pecuniary subjects we should merely either cough him down at once or enquire, with a considerable *nonchalance*, whether he could not do himself the favour of pressing an additional thousand on our acceptance."

His jocular references to himself are, however, too often so much word-spinning, as in the following insistence that he is the "stupidest man alive." But anybody can perceive between the lines Mangan's meaning:—

"We are stupider to-day than we were yesterday, and there is not a shadow of doubt upon our mind that we shall be stupider to-morrow than we are to-day. . . . We say it without vaunting, our stupidity is a result *sui generis*—a phenomenon to be contemplated with wonder: not to be discussed without a certain awe; to be analysed only by intellects of the first order; obscurely to be comprehended even by them, and never to be paralleled by any. Many persons are called by courtesy stupid, when in point of fact they are only smoky, or perhaps in a degree muzzy; but, for us, we are not only decidedly stupid, but we are sunken, lost, buried, immeasurable *toises* down, in the nethermost depths of the lowest gulf of the last vortex of stupidity. Not one solitary ray of intelligence relieves the dense gloom that enwraps our faculties. Friends and foes alike acknowledge that our state is one to excite the deepest sympathies of the philanthropist as well as the unbounded amazement of the psychologist and the pathologist. Hence it is that we are spared the necessity of all that exertion and solicitude which break the hearts of thousands. Our stupidity is our sheet anchor, the bulwark of our strength, the pioneer that levels all impediments before us, the talisman whose touch converts ideas into gold. By means of our stupidity we flourish, we prosper, we laugh and grow fat; we are monthly winning greener laurels, and hourly getting on at an ever-accelerated pace towards the goal of fame."

In his series of maxims entitled "Sixty Drops of



Laudanum," published about this time, where Mangan now and again reminds us of Maginn, there are several such passages as this :—

"Experience is a jewel picked up by a wrecked mariner on a desert coast—a picture frame purchased at a preposterous cost, when decay has done its duty on your finest Titian—a prosperous lecturer who sermonises a sleeping congregation, a warden who alarms the citadel when the enemy has broken through the gates, a melancholy moon after a day of darkness and tempest, a sentinel who mounts guard over a pillaged house, a surveyor who takes the dimensions of the pit we have tumbled into, a monitor that, like Friar Bacon's Brazen Head, tells us that Time is past—a lantern brought to us after we have traversed a hundred morasses in the dark, and are entering an illuminated village; a pinnacle on the strand found when the tide has ebbed away; a morning lamp lighted in our saloon when the guests have departed, revealing rueful ruin \*—or anything else equally pertinent and impertinent. Why, then, do we panegyrisé it so constantly? Why do we take and make all opportunities to boast of our own? Because, wretched worms that we are, we are so proud of our despicable knowledge that we cannot afford to shroud from view even that portion of it which we have purchased at the price of our happiness."

It is worth noting here that Mangan, who, as has already been mentioned, had a pretty high appreciation of the famous but ill-fated Corkman, wrote an article upon him during the last few months of his life, from which a few sentences only, more or less applicable to himself, need be extracted :—

"Maginn," he says, "wrote alike without labour and without limit. He had, properly speaking, no style, or rather he was master of all styles, though he cared for none. His thoughts literally gushed from his brain in overflowing abundance. He flung them away, as he flung himself away, in the riotous exuberance of his heart and spirit. He cast the rich bread of his intellect upon the waters, but he did not find it again after many days, or, if he did, it came back to him with the properties of poison. . . . For all intents and purposes of posthumous renown he has lived in vain. His name, like that of Keats, has been 'writ in water'—or more properly in gin and water."

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\* These last two images are very Tom Mooreish.



## CHAPTER XI.

MANGAN ON GHOSTS—HIS GHOSTLY VISITANTS—"TWENTY GOLDEN YEARS AGO"—"IRISH PENNY JOURNAL"—"THE WOMAN OF THREE COWS"—"LAMENT FOR THE PRINCES OF TYRONE AND TYRCONNELL"—"KATHLEEN NY HOULAHAN"—"O'HUSSEY'S ODE TO THE MAGUIRE"—"BELFAST VINDICATOR"—MANGAN'S PHYSICAL DETERIORATION—W. F. WAKEMAN'S DESCRIPTION—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS.

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"Never deem it a shibboleth phrase of the crowd,  
 Never call it the dream of a rhymers ;  
 The instinct of Nature proclaims it aloud—  
 We are destined for something sublimer !" —MANGAN.

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It will be readily believed that Mangan had a pronounced leaning towards Spiritualism. We find his ideas on the subject developed in several articles in the *University Magazine*, but he often personally assured his friends that he was in communion with forms from the unseen world, and in one of his poems (an unrhymed one—for a change), occur the lines :—

"Yet is this dreary abode to me a forecourt of Paradise !  
 Neither, friend, live I alone, as thou so idly imaginest,  
 Angels and glorified souls constantly dwell and converse with me."

But these shapes were not always pleasant or welcome. He had a notion that his father\* often came to him in the night and troubled his rest. Mitchel puts it in this way—

"He saw spirits, too, and received unwelcome visits from his dead father, whom he did not love."

And in a sketch of Mangan written by D'Arcy M'Gee, but not published during the poet's lifetime, it is said :—

"He is nightly exposed to supernatural visitors, who are sometimes as unwelcome to him as if they were of the earth, earthy. I remember he complained bitterly of them to a friend, a Catholic clergyman, especially censuring 'that miserable old man (his father), who would

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\* I have not been able to discover the date of the elder Mangan's death, but it was somewhere in the thirties. His mother had died previously.



not let him sleep o' nights, coming to the side of his bed and entering into conversation.'"

The *University Magazine* for 1841 contains a couple of unsigned papers on "German Ghosts and Ghost-Seers," which are certainly Mangan's. In the first of these he insists upon the sincerity of recognising the sincerity of ghost believers.

"The incredulity of the age is incredulity in second power. Not only do we not believe in the marvellous; we believe not even in any belief therein. We are sure there are no ghosts—nay, we are sure there are no believers in such. . . . And here be it remembered that an opinion may be worth very little in itself, and yet the fact that men hold it may be worth a great deal. Methinks a ghost-believer, no less than a ghost, is a phenomenon needing to be accounted for, if possible on natural grounds. And I know not whether a nation of ghost-believers be not something quite as wonderful as an authentic irrefragable ghost."

In further articles, called "Chapters on Ghost-Craft," which bear his signature of "The Out-and-Outer," Mangan calls the unbeliever the "credulous" man, the gullible party. Even were these not signed, there are the usual evidences of Mangan's authorship. As, for example, in this passage addressed to the reader:—

"Our motives for what we do are perhaps revealable, and perhaps not; but whether they be or not, they should be beyond thy suspicion, as assuredly they are beyond thy comprehension, being mysteries, even as we ourself are a mystery."

It is unfortunate that Mangan does not give any of his own personal experiences in these articles, which are entirely devoted to German visions; consequently there is no temptation to dwell upon them here.

There are some lines in a poem of his (also unrhymed) which have a bearing on this subject of ghosts, and may be quoted here:—

"Breakfastless, bangless,\* bookless, and chiboukless,†  
Through the chill day, alone with my conscience I  
Mope in some nook, and ponder my follies,  
Which same were not few!

Mope thus all day, and through the drear hours of night,  
Wander in dreams from one to another hell,  
Chased by the ghosts of long-buried pleasure hours,  
Whom I, too late, behold in their proper shapes,  
Hideous as ghouls."

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\* Without opium.

† Without chibouk (or tobacco pipe).



The personal strain is even more marked in the well-known verses, entitled "Twenty Golden Years Ago." These appeared in the *University Magazine* in 1840 as one of the "Stray Leaflets of the German Oak." Of course, the author to whom Mangan attributes them had no existence, and the student will look in vain for "Selber" \* in any history of German literature or collection of German poetry. The poem in question has too strong a personal interest to be omitted from this work:—

" Oh, the rain, the weary, dreary rain,  
How it plashes on the window-sill !  
Night, I guess, too, must be on the wane,  
Strass and Gass † around are grown so still,  
Here I sit with coffee in my cup—  
Ah, 'twas rarely I beheld it flow  
In the tavern where I loved to sup  
Twenty Golden Years Ago.

Twenty years ago, alas !—but stay—  
On my life, 'tis half-past twelve o'clock !  
After all, the hours do slip away—  
Come, here goes to burn another block !  
For the night, or morn, is wet and cold,  
And my fire is dwindling rather low ;  
I had fire enough when young and bold  
Twenty Golden Years Ago !

Dear ! I don't feel well at all, somehow !  
Few in Weimar dream how bad I am ;  
Floods of tears grow common with me now,  
High-Dutch floods that Reason cannot dam.  
Doctors think I'll neither live nor thrive  
If I mope at home so—I don't know—  
*Am I living now ?* I was alive  
Twenty Golden Years Ago !

Wifeless, friendless, flagonless, alone.  
Not quite bookless, though, unless I chuse,  
Left with nought to do, except to groan,  
Not a soul to woo, except the Muse—  
O ! but this is hard for *me* to bear,  
Me, who whilom lived so much *en haut*,  
Me, who broke all hearts like chinaware,  
Twenty Golden Years Ago !

Perhaps 'tis better—time's defacing waves  
Long have quenched the radiance of my brow—  
They who curse me nightly from their graves,  
Scarce could love me were they living now ;

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\* *Selber* has practically the same meaning as *Selbst*—i.e., *ich selber*, myself. Mangan made use of the disguise in other "Stray Leaflets."

† Street and lane.



But my loneliness hath darker ills—  
 Such dun duns as Conscience, Thought, and Co.—  
 Awful Gorgons ! worse than tailors' bills  
 Twenty Golden Years Ago !

Did I paint a fifth of what I feel,  
 O ! how plaintive you would ween I was !  
 But I won't, albeit I have a deal  
 More to wail about than Kerner has !  
 Kerner's tears are wept for withered flowers,  
 Mine for withered hopes ; my scroll of woe  
 Dates, alas ! from youth's deserted bowers,  
 Twenty Golden Years Ago !

Yet may Deutschland's bardlings flourish long !  
 Me, I tweak no beak among them ; hawks  
 Must not pounce on hawks ; besides, in song  
 I could once beat all of them by chalks.  
 Though you find me, as I near my goal,  
 Sentimentalizing like Rousseau,  
 O ! I had a grand Byronian soul  
 Twenty Golden Years Ago !

Tick-tick, tick-tick ! not a sound save Time's,  
 And the windgust as it drives the rain.  
 Tortured torturer of reluctant rhymes,  
 Go to bed and rest thine aching brain !  
 Sleep—no more the dupe of hopes or schemes ;  
 Soon thou sleepest where the thistles blow—  
 Curious anti-climax to thy dreams  
 Twenty Golden Years Ago !”

Lest there should be any doubt as to the non-existence of Selber—whom Mangan confessed to D. F. M'Carthy was a creation of his own, though the mere name or the style alone would convince any student of German who had any knowledge of Mangan's work—it may be well to extract a few lines from a later reference by him to this bodiless poet—

“ It is fortunate for us that we are not required to criticise as well as translate, for we should scarcely know what judgment to pronounce on this eccentric writer. . . . He appears to have ‘begun the world’ with a redundancy of enthusiasm, and to have, accordingly, duly realised the saddening truth of the sentiment advanced by Moore—(if we misquote our friend Tom he will be good enough to send us a set of his works) :—

‘ Oh ! life is a waste of wearisome hours  
 That seldom the rose of enjoyment adorns ;  
 And the toes that are foremost to dance among flowers  
 Are also the first to be troubled with corns.’

Nobody can translate Selber to advantage. His peculiar idiosyncrasy unfortunately betrays itself in every line he writes, and there



exists, moreover, an evident wish on his part to show the world that he possesses 'a life within himself.'"

Leaving for a while Mangan's fearless rhymes, miraculous metres, and sly *supercheries* in the *University Magazine*, let us go back a little to the *Irish Penny Journal*, started by Gunn and Cameron, of Dublin, in the summer of 1840. While it lasted—about a year—it was an admirable journal. The leading Irish historical and antiquarian writers of the time contributed to it, its object being chiefly an antiquarian one, but it also attracted a few of the best Irish poets and novelists to its pages. Mangan, besides some prose sketches or apologues, wrote for it several of his finest and best-known translations from the Irish, which language some of his colleagues in the Ordnance Survey Office had induced him to take some interest in. The earliest of the poems was the inimitable "Woman of Three Cows," which was promptly reproduced in part in the *Belfast Vindicator*, of which his friend Gavan Duffy had become editor. Writing to him, thereupon, on September 15th, 1840, Mangan says—

"I thank you for clapping the 'Three Cows' into pound in your paper. But why did you omit the three stanzas? Are you able to give me a reason? Not you, I *take* it. However, you can make me some amends shortly. In No. 15 of Cameron's there will be a trans-magnifican bandancial elegy of mine (a perversion from the Irish) on the O'Neills and the O'Donnells of Ulster, which is admired by myself and some other impartial judges."

The elegy here referred to was the famous poem beginning "O Woman of the Piercing Wail," which Lord Jeffrey so much admired when he saw it in Duffy's *Irish Ballad Poetry* some years later. An interesting question arises here as to how far Mangan was indebted to the originals for these two poems. At this time he knew nothing of Irish, and it is admitted that O'Curry made literal renderings for him to versify. The latter made a strange claim a year or two later in a private letter to Thomas Davis in respect of these poems, and it will be best to quote this letter as it appears in the first edition of Duffy's *Life of Thomas Davis*. Speaking of Duffy's praise of Mangan's translations in *Irish Ballad Poetry*, he says:—

"According to this rule I find Mr. Mangan put forth as the best of all translators from the Irish. Now it so happens that Mr. Mangan has no knowledge of the Irish language, nor do I think he regrets that either, but anyone reading this introduction must believe that he is



deeply versed in Irish, and that he has translated directly from the originals the three pieces which appear with his name in the volume. . . . It was I that translated those poems (the three of them) from the originals—that is, I turned the Irish words into English, and Mr. Mangan put those English words, beautifully and faithfully, as well as I can judge, into English rhyme. If I have not made a faithful translation, then the versification is not correct, for it contains nothing but what is found in the translation, nor does it contain a single idea that is not found, and as well expressed, in the original.”

It is quite obvious that Mangan would not adhere so slavishly as O’Curry implies to any original, whether Irish or other. As a matter of fact, at least two of the poems, it may be said confidently, even in the absence of O’Curry’s manuscript version, are largely Mangan’s own. This assertion is corroborated by another private letter to Davis, this time from John O’Donovan. O’Donovan, commenting on Duffy’s allusions to the stiffness of his translations from the Gaelic, says:—

“I know English about six times better than I know Irish, but I have no notion of becoming a forger like MacPherson. The translations from the Irish by Mangan, mentioned by Mr. Duffy,\* are very good; but how near are they to the literal translations furnished to Mangan by Mr. Curry? Are they the shadow of a shade?”

Of the three poems named, all of which were first published in the *Irish Penny Journal*, not even “The Woman of Three Cows,” the most literal, can be said to be a genuine translation. “The Lament for the Princes,” like most of Mangan’s other Irish poems, is clearly a paraphrase. One other Irish translation by Mangan appeared in the *Irish Penny Journal*, and it is one of his best. “Kathleen-ny-Houlahan” is an exquisite poem, worthy of Mangan’s highest powers. All Irishmen who are in the least acquainted with his work probably know it and admire it as warmly as did William Carleton, who considered it the best thing Mangan ever did. While on this subject of translation from the Irish it will be useful to show that though in nearly every case Mangan paraphrased freely, and concocted—forged, O’Donovan calls it—a considerable proportion of the versions from the Irish, there is one notable instance where Mangan is surprisingly literal, and where a very grand and striking piece owes next to nothing to its versifier. I allude to the remarkable poem known to all readers of Mangan as “O’Hussey’s Ode to the Maguire.” Samuel Ferguson

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\* The third poem was MacLiag’s “Kincora.”



printed an unrhymed translation of this piece in the *University Magazine* for 1834. Seeing that he could not improve it, he did not attempt to turn it into rhyme. It was this particular version of Ferguson's that Mangan, who greatly admired it, and wished to make better known, versified. Even Mangan's genius, however, could not add much to its force and beauty, and as it will help to clear up a very important matter, a few verses of Ferguson's rendition—a very literal one—are given here in a note. Mangan kept as closely to O'Hussey's poem, as rendered by Ferguson, as he could. His version is quoted in its entirety. The bard laments that Hugh Maguire, his chief, should be wandering abroad on a perilous expedition in a terrible storm :—

“ Where is my chief, my master, this bleak night, *mavrone*?  
 O cold, miserably cold, is this bleak night for Hugh,  
 Its showery, arrowy, speary steel pierceth one through and through,  
 Pierceth one to the very bone !

Rolls real thunder? Or was that red, livid light  
 Only a meteor? I scarce know ; but through the midnight dim  
 The pitiless ice-wind streams. Except the hate that persecutes him,  
 Nothing hath crueller venomy might.

An awful, a tremendous night is this, meseems !  
 The floodgates of the rivers of heaven, I think, I have been burst  
 wide—  
 Down from the overcharged clouds, like unto headlong ocean's tide,  
 Descends grey rain in roaring streams.

Though he were even a wolf ranging the round green woods,  
 Though he were even a pleasant salmon in the unchangeable sea,  
 Though he were a wild mountain eagle, he could scarce bear, he,  
 This sharp, sore sleet, these howling floods.

O, mournful is my soul this night for Hugh Maguire !  
 Darkly as in a dream he strays ! Before him and behind  
 Triumphs the tyrannous anger of the wounding wind,  
 The wounding wind, that burns as fire !

It is my bitter grief—it cuts me to the heart—  
 That in the country of Clan Darry this should be his fate !  
 O woe is me, where is he ? Wandering houseless, desolate,  
 Alone, without or guide or chart !

Medreams I see just now his face, the strawberry-bright,  
 Uplifted to the blackened heavens, while the tempestuous winds  
 Blow fiercely over and round him, and the smiting sleet-shower  
 blinds  
 The hero of Galang to-night !



Large, large affliction unto me and mine it is,  
That one of his majestic bearing, his fair, stately form,  
Should thus be tortured and o'erborne—that this unsparing storm  
Should wreak its wrath on head like his !

That his great hand, so oft the avenger of the oppressed,  
Should this chill, churlish night, perchance, be paralysed by frost—  
While through some icicle-hung thicket—as one lorn and lost—  
He walks and wanders without rest. \*

The tempest-driven torrent deluges the mead,  
It overflows the low banks of the rivulets and ponds—  
The lawns and pasture-grounds lie locked in icy bonds,  
So that the cattle cannot feed.

The pale, bright margins of the streams are seen by none ;  
Rushes and sweeps along the untameable flood on every side—  
It penetrates and fills the cottagers' dwellings far and wide—  
Water and land are blent in one.

Through some dark woods. 'mid bones of monsters, Hugh now strays,  
As he confronts the storm with anguished heart but manly brow—  
Oh! what a sword-wound to that tender heart of his were now  
A backward glance at peaceful days !

But other thoughts are his—thoughts that can still inspire  
With joy and an onward-bounding hope the bosom of Mac Nee—  
Thoughts of his warriors charging like bright billows of the sea,  
Borne on the wind's wings, flashing fire !

\* Here is Ferguson's prose translation of this and the three preceding verses :—

" In the country of Clan Daire  
It grieves me that his fate should be so severe ;  
Perhaps drenched with the cold wet dropping of the thickets,  
Perhaps exposed to the high heaven's floods.

Cold seem to me your two cheeks strawberry-red,  
As the fury of the cloud-gathering storm  
Impels the weather-winds of the ærial expanse  
Against the royal hero of resplendent Galang.

Sore misery to us and torturing our bosoms,  
To think that the fine front and sides of his comely frame  
Should be ground by this rough, sullen, scowling night,  
In cold steely accoutrements.

His kind dealing hand, which punished cruelty,  
By frost made numb ;  
Under some spiked and icicle-hung tree.  
Oh! bleak and dreary is this night for Hugh !"



And though frost glaze to-night the clear dew of his eyes,  
And white ice-gauntlets glove his noble, fine, fair fingers o'er,  
A warm dress is to him that lightning garb he ever wore—  
The lightning of the soul, not skies.

## SUMMING UP.

Hugh marched forth to the fight—I grieved to see him so depart;  
And lo! to-night, he wanders frozen, rain-drenched, sad, betrayed,  
But the memory of the lime-white mansions his right hand hath laid  
In ashes, warms the hero's heart."\*

It will be noticed that Mangan, in order to give as literal a version as was consistent with rhyme restrains his usual metrical fancy, and leaves the poem in an appropriately rugged and savage form. The original Irish is not without considerable melody and smoothness. His incorrigible tendency to "rhyming and chiming in a very odd way" is for once subjected to control and subordinated to a good purpose. He was too strongly impressed by the greatness of the picture conceived by the seventeenth century bard of the Maguires to resort to paraphrastic escapades.

X To the *Belfast Vindicator* of 1840, 1841, Mangan contributed a few pieces of no particular merit. They are all *jeux d'esprit*, and it may be assumed that the editor did not insist upon serious contributions. The *Irish Penny Journal* of the same period did not accept such trifles, and indeed strongly dissuaded Mangan from wasting his power upon mere jokes and whimsicalities. Petrie and O'Donovan constantly urged the poet to nobler flights—the *University Magazine*, the *Belfast Vindicator*, and even the *Nation* during its first couple of years' existence, may be said to have encouraged, in not strongly discouraging, him in the production of the wildest skits and squibs. As will be seen by the letters quoted later, Mangan was quite susceptible to friendly advice in the matter of a selection of subjects. He readily adopted the suggestions of Father Meehan as to religious poetry, and of O'Donovan about the Gaelic poets; he was, in fact, extremely docile in all things except his course of life. Even here he tried hard, in deference to the wishes of his friends, to retrieve himself,

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\* "O'Hussey's Ode" was translated by Mangan for M'Glashan, who did not publish it in his magazine, but reserved it for H. R. Montgomery's *Specimens of the Early Native Poetry of Ireland*, 1846.

Mangan contributed translations for Irish  
to the Irish Penny Magazine in 1841



and though he failed in his efforts to break away from the temptations of the taverns, it is beyond doubt that it was not without terrible, pitiable struggles. But when, as Mitchel says—

“he had reached that point of remediless misery, described so terribly by the grim Roman satirist, when the soul can but say to itself, *imus, imus, præcipites*,”

when he found his exertions unavailing, he surrendered himself completely to his victor, and sank lower and lower into the abyss. Now and again at periods previous to 1846, he would reappear after an interval of absence almost completely restored to sobriety and a regular mode of life, and his friends, who were numerous at this time, rejoiced exceedingly. But when their fears were passed, he would again disappear for weeks at a time, and return bearing unmistakable evidences of indulgence in dangerous potions.

“He’d sit, without winking, in alehouses drinking,  
For days without number,  
Nor care about slumber!”

and to all remonstrances of his friends would implore them not to judge him harshly—lamenting that his temperament was too strong for him—but he would promise earnestly to give up all stimulants by degrees. His friends and well-wishers, however, came to know in time that Mangan had no control over himself. Nor could he be induced to take the pledge from Father Mathew, fearing, or knowing in his inmost heart that it was impossible to keep it. Mangan’s delicate features and weak frame already showed evident signs of the long-continued irregularity of his habits. W. F. Wakeman gives a sad picture of his appearance during the last days of the historical department of the Ordnance Survey. The description is painful reading, but its general truth is borne out by others who saw Mangan at different times and places in the city.

After mentioning other woeful signs of physical decay, he adds:—

“He possessed very weak eyes, and used a huge pair of green spectacles; he had narrow shoulders, and was flat-chested, so much so, that for appearance sake the breast of his coat was thickly padded. Of course there was no muscular strength, and his voice was low, sweet, but very tremulous. Few, perhaps, could imagine that so odd a figure might represent a genius, and Mangan himself did not appear



to care a fig what people thought of him. In fact, he seemed to court the reputation of an oddity. His coat was of an indescribable fashion; both in cut and colour; it appeared to have been a kind of drab. Out of doors he wore a tight little cloak, and his hat exactly resembled those which broomstick-riding witches are usually represented with. Sometimes, even in the most settled weather, he might be seen parading the streets with a very voluminous umbrella\* under each arm. The large coloured spectacles, already referred to, had the effect of setting off his singularly wan and wax-like countenance with as much force as might be accomplished by the contrast of colour."

Such was Mangan when compelled to seek fresh employment by the closing of his department of the Ordnance Survey Office, in which, it must be confessed, he was found to be of slight use. Indeed, but for the kindly interest of Petrie, his services would probably have been dispensed with much earlier. He never sought any further employment of a regular character, and for the next few years lived in a miserable way upon what he could earn by his pen. His parents had died before this date, and he lived with a younger brother, who, by all accounts, was a very worthless, idle character, considerably fonder of the public house than the workshop. His trade, that of a cabinet-maker, was never exercised as long as the poet could obtain either a loan or remuneration of any kind for literary work. Though Mangan was not yet altogether lost, his life was wretched in the extreme. He hoped against hope that he might, by some lucky chance, by some intervention of Providence, find a means of extricating himself from his forlorn plight. "Something," says Mitchel, "saved him from insanity—perhaps it was religion." It is in some respects the most astonishing feature of his career that even in his deepest, most abysmal misery and despair and suffering, he never lost his religious faith. He was interested in many religions, in many of the world's religious teachers, but his early convictions remained intact, and personally, apart from his habit of drinking or opium-eating, his conduct was irreproachable enough. At the approach of death his muse became more religious than ever, and his reading lay more and more in religious books, but even at this time (1840, 1841), he frequently introduces into his verse a strain of high religious feeling, as in the following stanzas taken from the *University Magazine* :—

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\* Even James Price does not forget the famous umbrella, "clutched so tightly under his arm, and forcing his faded blue cloak into a peak behind—the said umbrella being one that Mrs. Gamp would have rejoiced in "



“How shalt thou, then, find best escape  
 From all the ills that so beset  
     Life's drear exile?  
 Gold, glory, even the tempting grape,  
 At most but aid thee to forget  
     Thy state awhile?

Where, when the warring world's alarms  
 Ring loud around thee, shalt thou find  
     True peace of soul?  
 O where, but in religion's arms—  
 Where, but with Faith, which wings the mind  
     To heaven, its goal?

For me, no formal tome I cite,  
 No grave, elaborate moralist,  
     No poet-lays—  
 For he who turns to such for light  
 Meets but at most a dazzling mist  
     That mocks his gaze.

I raise my thoughts in prayer to God,  
 I look for help to Him alone  
     Who shared our lot—  
 The Mighty One of Heaven, who trod  
 Life's path as Man, though earth—His own—  
     Received Him not!

I turn to Him, and ask for nought  
 Save knowledge of His heavenly will,  
     Whate'er it be;  
 I seek no doubtful blessings, fraught  
 With present good, but final ill  
     And agony:

Come Death or Life, come Woe or Weal,  
 Whate'er my God elects to send  
     I here embrace;  
 Blest while, though tortured on the wheel,  
 I forfeit not, or worse, mis-spend  
     His holy Grace.”

And in one of the poems in the *Irish Penny Journal*,  
 that entitled “Life and its Illusions,” we have this fine  
 apostrophe—

“Ancient of Days! First Cause! Adored! Unknown!  
 Who wert, and art, and art to come! The heart  
 Yearns, in its lucid moods, to Thee alone!  
 Thy name is Love! Thy word is Truth! Thou art



The fount of Happiness—the source of Glory—  
Eternity is in Thy hands and Power—  
Oh! from that sphere unrecognised by our  
Slow souls, look down upon a world which, hoary  
In evil and in error though it be,  
Retains even yet some trace of that primeval  
Beauty that bloomed upon its brow ere Evil  
And Error wiled it from Thy Love and Thee!  
Look down, and if, while human brows are brightening  
In godless triumph, angel eyes be weeping,  
Publish Thy will in syllables of Lightning  
And sentences of Thunder to the Sleeping!  
Look down, and renovate the waning name  
Of Goodness, and relume the waning light  
Of Truth and purity!—that all may aim  
At one imperishable crown—the bright  
Guerdon which they who, by untired and holy  
Exertion overcome the world inherit—  
The Self Denying, the Peaceable, the Lowly,  
The truly Merciful, the Poor in Spirit.”



## CHAPTER XII.

THE FOUNDING OF THE "NATION"—MANGAN A CONTRIBUTOR—  
 "THE 'NATION'S' FIRST NUMBER"—HIS POLITICAL VIEWS—  
 "GONE IN THE WIND"—THE THREE HALF-CROWNS—MARTIN  
 MACDERMOTT—"WHERE'S MY MONEY?"—"PATHETIC HYPA-  
 THETICS"—"THE COMING EVENT"—MORE TURKISH POETRY  
 —TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY—"ANTHOLOGIA GERMANICA."

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"Ask him who hath suffered woes untold  
 From some volcanic strife  
 Of passionate years if he remember,  
 Tombed in the grave of Life's December,  
 Its cancelled golden June."—MANGAN.

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ON October 15th, 1842, the first number of the *Nation* was published at the office in D'Olier Street. Charles Gavan Duffy, who had given up the *Belfast Vindicator*, was the only practical journalist among the three founders, and naturally became editor of the new venture. A fairly efficient *corps* of contributors had been organised, but some of these proved of little use, and were dropped when better men came to the front. Mangan's name appears on the prospectus of the new journal as a contributor, and he opened his connection with some effective verses in the first issue, entitled, "The *Nation's* First Number." In these he acts as the herald of the new movement, and announces the attractions in store for the readers of the paper. Naturally, the verses are not of a very high order of merit, but as Mangan had seen some periodicals of great promise disappear very quietly soon after their advent, he could not have been very loftily impressed or earnestly inspired by his theme. Doggerel, but of a superior order, and certainly not unconscious, "The *Nation's* First Number" may be called, but even in this poem—dashed off, doubtless, at Mangan's characteristic lightning speed—there are some tolerable lines. The aims of the paper, he declares, will be—



“ To give Genius its due, to do battle with Wrong,  
And achieve things undreamt of as yet save in song.

Be it ours to stand forth and contend in the van  
Of Truth's legions for Freedom, the birthright of Man.

We announce a new era—be this our first news,  
When the self-grinding landlords shall shake in their shoes;  
While the Ark of a bloodless yet mighty reform  
Shall emerge from the Flood of the Popular Storm !”

Of the staff of the paper he tells his readers that—

“ Critics keener than sabres, wits brighter than stars,  
And reasoners as cool as the coolest cucumber,  
Form the host that shine out in the *Nation's* First Number !”

It is strange that for two or three subsequent years Mangan wrote next to nothing for the *Nation* of a serious character, only epigrams and squibs of his being discoverable, under several different signatures, such as “ M.,” “ Vacuus,” “ Terræ Filius,” and “ Hi-Hum.” In printing one of his skits,\* a quasi-political one, the editor refers to the author as—

“ one whose name will some day be illustrious in literature. It must not be written here, with a mere bagatelle thrown off in a moment of relaxation ; but it will write itself on marble.”

A little later † the editor prints an anonymous bit of curious rhyming by Mangan (which was, though the editor does not seem to have known it, a reprint from the *Comet* of July, 1833), and prefaces it with a very useful hint to the poet :—

“ He ought not, we think, to have thrown away his fine genius upon such a task. From some of his past contributions we know he is capable of the finest verses, grave or gay.”

Those “ past contributions,” however, were not written for the *Nation*. In reprinting subsequently (1844) his eccentric essay, “ My Bugle and How I Blow It,” the editor makes a remark which proves that Mangan's relations with the *Nation* were so far of the slightest :—

“ This pleasant extravaganza, a quiz upon the German school, by a popular writer, was given some years ago to the editor of the *Nation*

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\* March 15th, 1843.

† May 13th of the same year.



for a publication of a literary character. It is thought necessary to mention this, as we have not an opportunity of communicating with the author, and he may not choose to be identified with the particular politics of the *Nation*."

As the skit is not political in any way, and some of his squibs written directly for the *Nation* were, this editorial comment is somewhat mysterious. But it may have been suggested simply by an absence, longer than usual for Mangan, from the *Nation* office. His politics were certainly not well-defined at this time. He had, in fact, until the last two or three years of his life, no fixed opinions upon the political questions then agitating the public mind. His writings, however, attest that he had undoubted national feeling, and he certainly became in the end strongly national, allying himself with the more advanced section of Irish nationalists.\*

He was rarely to be met in the *Nation* office. Duffy says:—

"He could not be induced to attend the weekly suppers, and knew many of his fellow-labourers only by name. He stole into the editor's room once a week to talk over literary projects, but if any of my friends appeared he took flight on the instant. The animal spirits and hopefulness of vigorous young men oppressed him, and he fled from the admiration or sympathy of a stranger as others do from reproach and insult."

It was not till 1846 that he began to contribute largely to the *Nation*. Meanwhile he continued his "Anthologia Germanica" in the *University Magazine*, alternating those papers with occasional articles on Spanish poetry, and the "Literæ Orientales." During 1842 some of his best versions from Rückert appeared, including that interesting poem entitled, "Gone in the Wind," to which the following verses belong:—

"Solomon! where is thy throne? It is gone in the wind.  
Babylon! where is thy might? It is gone in the wind.  
Like the swift shadows of Noon, like the dreams of the Blind,  
Vanish the glories and pomps of the earth in the wind.

. . . . .

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\* A little earlier, when Duffy had asked him to write political articles, he had declined, sending instead some epigrams—"Do not ask me for political essays just now—I have no experience in that *genre d'écrire*, and I should infallibly blunder. I send you six pages . . . 'Jokeriana,' 'Jokerisms,' 'Flim-flam,' 'Whim-whams,' or anything else you like to call them . . . They might do for your fourth page—pray Heaven you don't imagine they'd do for your paper altogether."



Say, what is pleasure? A phantom, a mask undefined.  
 Science? An almond, whereof we can pierce but the rind.  
 Honour and Affluence? Firmans that Fortune hath signed,  
 Only to glitter and pass on the wings of the wind.

Solomon! where is thy throne? It is gone in the wind.  
 Babylon! where is thy might? It is gone in the wind.  
 Who is the Fortunate? He who in anguish hath pined—  
 He shall rejoice when his relics are dust in the wind!

Mortal! be careful wherewith thy best hopes are entwined;  
 Woe to the miners for Truth—where the Lampless have mined!  
 Woe to the seekers on Earth for what none ever find!  
 They and their trust shall be scattered like leaves on the wind.

Solomon! where is thy throne? It is gone in the wind.  
 Babylon! where is thy might? It is gone in the wind.  
 Happy in death are they only whose hearts have consigned  
 All Earth's affections, and longings, and cares to the wind."

The "Nameless One" seems to have been written in the year 1842, if Mangan's statement in the poem that he was thirty-nine be reliable, but as I can discover no trace of it in the periodicals of that period it must have been, if written, held over by Mangan till the time when he could no longer conceal the depth of his despair and misery. His muse in 1842 was in anything but a despairing or doleful mood. One of his happiest contributions to the *University Magazine* belongs to that year. It is a very amusing essay on the art of borrowing, and of evading one's creditors, with various translations from Casti, the Italian burlesque poet. It is entitled "The Three\* Half-Crowns," and Mangan prefaces his actual tackling of the subject proper by a few observations of the nature of the following:—

"The real secret of the happiness poets enjoy is to be sought in their imagination. This is the faculty to which they owe the possession of almost everything they have, and the absence of almost everything they ought not to have. It is this that elevates them, balloon like, sky-high above the petty wants and cares that shorten the days of prosers. . . . It makes more than a monarch of the poet. It is his clue through the labyrinth of life—his tower of strength in peril—his guide, mentor, monitor, oracle, shield, cloak, truncheon, tabernacle, and house of refuge. It is, in a word, the mysterious curtain-cloud that interposes between him and all matters mundane,

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\* Mangan was fond of the number three; witness his "Three Tormentors," "The Threefold Prediction," etc.



and prevents him from being affected by anything, except, perhaps, the occasional vision of a dish or decanter. Such is imagination as monopolised by the poet. We have said that he owes almost everything to it. By so saying we have left it to be understood that he now and then owes a little in other quarters. This, unfortunately, is the fact."

The poet proceeds, in a kind of sonnet sequence, to tell how he once borrowed three half-crowns, and of the endless worrying of his creditor to recover the amount. The prose and verse alike are in an inimitable style, full of humour, the rhymes reminding one very much of Byron in his "Don Juan." The ingenuity of the shifts to which the debtor resorts, the amusing fancies about creditors, and the comparisons between them and other persecutors of poets are all highly creditable to the poet's imagination. He doubts, in the sketch, whether a creditor is not worse than an Algerian pirate, and thinks he is, for while the latter only robs you of what you have, the former tries to rob you of what you have not, and never can have, namely—Three Half-Crowns. He goes on to say that various alarming portents having appeared of late, foretelling the imminent end of the world, he is surprised that under the circumstances his creditor does not find something more serious to do than harassing him for three paltry half-crowns. He discovers himself replying to every question, no matter by whom put or upon what subject, "I really haven't got them;" and when he is quite alone, and hears himself asked for them, he finds it is the echo of his own voice which, from force of custom, is asking for "those three half-crowns." He is astonished that wherever he goes he meets his creditor, and muses on the phenomenon in this wise:—

"Let Doctors dissertate about Attraction,  
And preach long lectures upon Gravitation,  
Indulging thereanent in speculation,  
For which no human being cares one fraction.  
'Tis all mere twaddle—talk and iteration;  
Of those mysterious modes of Nature's action  
There never yet was any explanation  
To anybody's perfect satisfaction.

However, this I stubbornly believe,  
And for the proof thereof see no great need  
To take down Isaac Newton from the shelf—  
That, move where'er I will—morn noon, or eve,  
I manage to attract with awful speed  
My Three Half-Crowns' Tormentor tow'rds myself!"





He says that if he were an astrologer who had found the philosopher's stone, he would rest satisfied, after his great discovery, with coining merely three half-crowns:—

“Those old alchymic dreamers!—rest their bones,  
And be their souls eternally assoiled—  
The Lillys, Arnolds, Gabors, who so toiled  
To turn base metals into precious ones!  
Sleepless and worn, amid retorts and cones,  
And crucibles, they fused and blew and boiled—  
Alas! in vain—their sulphurs, salts and stones  
Exhaled in smoke—and *they* died, fagged, and foiled.

Yet, after all, why might not Art and Labour  
Achieve the project? I don't know. Man's lore  
Is vast, and Science day by day increases;  
But this I know, that if, by following Gabor,  
I could coin Three Half-crowns, I'd ask no more,  
But break my pots and furnaces to pieces!”

The wit is admirably kept up to the last. Mangan was fond of expatiating upon loans and the inconvenience of not meeting one's creditor's demands. In this connection an absurd story, originating with D'Arcy M'Gee, may be definitely disposed of. M'Gee remarks (in a sketch which he wrote for the *Nation* during the poet's lifetime, but which was declined by that paper, though it afterwards reprinted it from M'Gee's own journal subsequent to Mangan's death),

“I have heard it said of him that being often reduced to extreme want, he was never known to borrow at a time more than one and six-pence, and if more were offered to him, he would neither accept it, nor repeat his request in that direction.”

It is a quaint notion, and not improbably emanated from Mangan himself, but it is very far from the actual truth.\* Mangan was constantly obliged to borrow from his friends, and though in some cases he paid them back in contributions of which they made profitable use, the fact remains, and is one of the points naturally best remembered by his contemporaries, that the need of a small loan was a not at all uncommon reason of a visit from Mangan.

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\* “In addition to paying Mangan liberally,” says Sir C. G. Duffy, in a letter to the present writer, “for whatever he wrote, I have memoranda in his own handwriting acknowledging about £100, in sums of £5, £10, and £15.”



*Apropos*, Mr. Martin M'Dermott has favoured me with the following reminiscence of his only meeting with Mangan :—

“ During one of my occasional visits to Ireland I happened to be breakfasting with my old friend and school-fellow, Thomas Devin Reilly, when the servant came in, and in a low voice gave him the name of a visitor. He said, ‘Ask him to come in,’ and turning to me he whispered, ‘Clarence Mangan.’ I was of course all eyes when the poet entered in the quaint, shabby attire described by Father Meehan, and with a shy, faltering step, seeing the stranger in the room, approached the table. The introduction gone through, my host asked Mangan to join us at our meal, but he declined, still in the same shy, hesitating manner, and asked Reilly if he could have a word with him outside. When the two reached the hall I heard the chink of coin, and my friend came back with one of the silk purses used then—looking very flaccid—in his hand, saying with a sigh, ‘Poor Mangan!’ ”

The subject of money naturally crops up in many of Mangan's letters—in too many of them, unfortunately—and some are extremely painful reading on that account. Others, however, are jocular in tone, and in one of these, addressed to the editor of the *Nation*, he says—

“You wish to know why I have not acknowledged the receipt of the letter of credit you sent me. I beg in reply to observe that any acknowledgment of the kind forms no part of my system. Any *given* amount of money, in gold, silver, or paper, I take, put up, and say nothing about. If it be gold, I introduce it into a steel purse ; if silver, I drop it into a silk one ; if paper, I stow it away in a pocket-book ; but I never jingle or display any of them before the eyes of others.”

In another characteristic letter to the same friend, Mangan writes in the same vein—

“ I look on odes as ode-ious compositions—adulatory stuff, flattery of the flattest sort, worthy to be paid for, not in the glorious renown which all honest, honourable, high-souled and high-heeled men seek, but out of the purse—one pound one a line—not a *camac* less ! Now you know I spit upon this sort of thing—I never take money for what I write. It is always given me, pressed on me, sent to me, flung in my phiz—and I, for the sake of a quiet life, pocket the affront ! ”

Sometimes he would ask for a loan with assumed gaiety, but not infrequently (especially, of course, in his last years) when his need was desperate, his appeals for help were as painful ordeals to his friends as to himself—

“Whether,” says Mitchel, “the beautiful and luxuriant world of dreams wherein he built his palaces, and laid up his treasures, and tasted the ambrosia of the gods, was indeed a sufficient compensation for all the squalid misery in the body is a question upon which there is



no occasion to pronounce. One may hope that it was, and much more than a compensation, for God is just."

And he adds—

"Some 'poets' there are who desire to own a dream-world and at the same time to own stock in banks and railroads."

Mangan was not one of these, but he was well aware of the value of money, and he so frequently makes it a peg upon which to hang a few rhymes or a few sentences, that perhaps a little space is not altogether wasted in dwelling upon it. He has written a poem on "the way the money goes," which, though based upon Von Gaudy's "*Wo bleibt mein geld*," is very characteristic and peculiar to himself. It is well worth quoting as a creditable specimen of his witty verse. It is entitled "Where's My Money?"—

"Ay, where's my money? That's a puzzling query.

It vanishes. Yet neither in my purse  
Nor pocket are there any holes. 'Tis very  
Incomprehensible. I don't disburse  
For superfluities. I wear plain clothes.

I seldom buy jam tarts, preserves or honey,  
And no one overlooks what debts he owes  
More steadily than I. Where *is* my money?

I never tipple. Folks don't see me staggering,  
*Sans* cane and castor, in the public street.

I sport no ornaments—not even a *bague* (ring).

I have a notion that my own two feet  
Are much superior to a horse's four,

So never call a jarvey. It is funny.

The longer I investigate the more

Astoundedly I ask, *Where* is my money?

*My* money, mind you. Other people's dollars

Cohere together nobly. Only mine

Cut one another. There's that pink of scholars,

Von Doppeldronk; he spends as much on wine  
As I on—everything. Yet *he* seems rich.

He laughs, and waxes plumper than a bunny,  
While I grow slim as a divining-switch,

And search for gold as vainly. Where's my money?

I can't complain that editors don't pay me;

I get for every sheet one pound sixteen,

And well I may! My articles are flamy

Enough to blow up *any* magazine.

What's queerest in the affair though is, that at

The same time I miss nothing but the *one*. He

That watches me will find I don't lose hat,

Gloves, fogle, stick, or cloak. 'Tis always money!



Were I a rake I'd say so. When one roysters  
 Beyond the rules, of course, his cash must go.  
 'Tis true I regularly sup on oysters,  
 Cheese, brandy, and all that. But even so?  
 What signifies a ducat of a night?  
 "The barmaids," you may fancy. No. The sunny  
 Loadstar that draws *my* tin is not the light  
 From *their* eyes anyhow. Where then's my money?

However, *apropos* of eyes and maidens,  
 I own I do make presents to the sex—  
 Books, watches, trinkets, music too (not Haydn's),  
 Combs, shawls, veils, bonnets—things that might perplex  
 A man to count. But still I gain by what  
 I lose in this way. 'Tis experience won—eh?  
 I think so. My acquaintances think *not*.  
 No matter. I grow tedious. Where's my money?"

There is another poem of his, written at this time, also attributed to an undoubted German source—Schubart—and called by Mangan "Pathetic Hypathetics," which looks very unlike anything in the literature of the Fatherland. A verse may be quoted in support of the suggestion that no German wrote it. There is clearly more of Mangan than Schubart in it. He soliloquises to this effect in the last verse :—

"Were Wine all a quiz,  
 I should wear a long phiz  
 As I mounted each night to my ninth storey garret.  
 Though Friendship, the traitress, deceives me,  
 Though Hope may have long ceased to flatter,  
 Though Music, sweet infidel, leaves me,  
 Though Love is my torment—what matter—  
 I've still such a thing as a rummer of claret!"

Mangan, of course, heard a good deal of Father Mathew's crusade against intemperance, and in one of his temperate intervals at this period he formally abjured—in verse—his excessive indulgence in stimulants. The abjuration, which is called "The Coming Event," is as excellent as it is unknown. Here it is :—

"Curtain the lamp and bury the bowl,  
 The ban is on drinking.  
 Reason shall reign the queen of the soul  
 When the spirits are sinking.  
 Chained is the demon that smote with blight  
 Men's morals and laurels.  
 Then hail to health and a long good night,  
 To old wine and new quarrels!"



Nights shall descend and no taverns ring  
 To the roar of our revels ;  
 Mornings shall dawn, but none of them bring  
*White* lips and *blue* devils.  
 Riot and frenzy sleep with remorse  
 In the obsolete potion,  
 And mind grows calm as a ship on her course  
 O'er the level of ocean.

So should it be ! for man's world of romance  
 Is fast disappearing,  
 And shadows of changes are seen in advance,  
 Whose epochs are nearing.  
 And the days are at hand when the best shall require  
 All means of salvation ;  
 And the souls of men shall be tried in the fire  
 Of the final probation !

And the witling no longer or sneers or smiles—  
 And the worldling dissembles,  
 And the black-hearted sceptic feels anxious at whiles  
 And marvels and trembles.  
 And fear and defiance are blent in the jest  
 Of the blind self-deceiver ;  
 But hope bounds high in the joyous breast  
 Of the child-like believer

Darken the lamp, then, and shatter the bowl,  
 Ye faithfulest-hearted !  
 And as your swift years travel on to the goal  
 Whither worlds have departed,  
 Spend labour, life, soul, in your zeal to atone  
 For the past and its errors ;  
 So best shall ye bear to encounter alone  
 The EVENT and its terrors !”

A month or so later in the same year (1844) Mangan contributed a fresh instalment of Ottoman poetry to the magazine, and introduced therein two of the most familiar of his poems—namely, “The Caramanian Exile” and “The Wail and Warning of the Three Khalendeers,” the last of which will be better remembered, perhaps, by quoting the opening verse—

“Here we meet, we three, at length,  
 Amrah, Osman, Perizad,  
 Shorn of all our grace and strength,  
 Poor and old and very sad !  
 We have lived, but live no more,  
 Life has lost its gloss for us  
 Since the days we spent of yore  
 Boating down the Bosphorus.”



In another poem in the same article he exhorts his readers to live nobly, to be patient, meek, docile, and courageous, and to abhor vice—

“Woe unto those who but banish one vice for another ;  
Far from thy thoughts be such damning delusion, O brother !

Donning new raiment is nobler than patching and piecing—  
Such are the tone and the tune of the ditty that *we* sing !

Cast away Pride as the bane of the soul ; the Disdainful  
Swallow much mire in their day, and find everything painful.

Like the bright moon before Midnight is blended with morrow,  
Shines the pure pearl of the soul in the Chalice of Sorrow !”

With all his own wretchedness, Mangan never faltered once in his belief in the future of others. He had given up all hope of conquering his one vice, and those who knew of it might have replied to his exhortations, “Physician, heal thyself.” But his friends trusted in a final reformation, and they did not, therefore, in spite of its apparent uselessness, cease their entreaties to him to “live his poetry, to act his rhyme.” He never resented their earnest expostulations, and often told them with tears in his eyes that it was too late—he could not give up his evil habit. One of them, James Price, tells us of his constant endeavours to bring the poet to a deeper sense of his growing degradation :—

“His unhappy transgressions,” he says, “were more widely known than his genius ; *they* were apparent to many, *it* was appreciated only by the few.”

And he continues :—

“Many a time have we pleaded with Mangan against the deadly enemy that was slowly, but steadily, destroying him. We have held the glass to his face, and bade him behold the ravages made, and not by Time. ‘Yes,’ he said, ‘I see a skinless skull there, an empty socket where intelligence once beamed ; but oh, I look within myself, and behold a sadder vision—the vision of a wasted life !’”

About this time, through the kindness of Dr. Todd, he obtained a post as assistant cataloguer in Trinity College Library, a place in which he had often studied, but the salary was very small, and towards the end of 1844 his circumstances became so desperate that his friends conceived the idea of getting some of his writings published



in volume form by a London publisher, in order to relieve his necessities; and Thomas Davis wrote to Daniel Owen Maddyn, the author of *Revelations of Ireland* and other books, who was then residing in London, to interest him in them:—

“I think you were a reader of the *University Magazine*. If so, you must have noticed the ‘Anthologia Germanica,’ ‘Leaflets from the German Oak,’ ‘Oriental Nights,’ and other translations and apparent translations of Clarence Mangan. He has some small salary in the College Library, and has to support himself and his brother. His health is wretched. Charles Duffy is most anxious to have the papers I have described printed in London, for which they are better suited than for Dublin. Now, you will greatly oblige me by asking Mr. Newby if he will publish them, giving Mangan £50 for the edition. If he refuse you can say that Charles Duffy will repay him half the £50 should the work be a failure. Should he still declare against it, pray let me know soon what would be the best way of getting some payment and publication for Mangan’s papers. Many of the ballads are Mangan’s own, and are first-rate. Were they on Irish subjects he would be paid for them here. They ought to succeed in London nigh as well as the ‘Prout Papers.’”

Maddyn did not succeed in obtaining a London publisher for Mangan, and the project had to be abandoned. In thanking him for his efforts, Davis wrote:—

“The care you took about Mangan was very kind. He, poor fellow, is so nervous that it is hard to get him to do anything business-like; but he is too good and too able to be allowed to go wrong.”

Maddyn then suggested that a literary pension should be asked for the poet, adding:—

“I entreat that there may be no democratic or high republican squeamishness shown in this matter. So long as we are living under a monarchy, let us at least have the advantages of it. And the Repealers do not profess to be anti-monarchical—neither are they, I am sure. Therefore, let Mr. Mangan’s friends not scruple to do for him what Leigh Hunt’s did three or four years since, when they sought to interest Queen Victoria for the Radical poet. In short, this point is really of consequence, and if Mangan could be well launched, his future voyages would be easier and more agreeable.”

The pension was heard of no more, however, and the German translations were only published in Dublin by M’Glashan when Gavan Duffy, who has said of Mangan that—

“his poems will live as long as Tennyson or Browning’s,”  
and of the poet himself that—

“he was as truly born to sing deathless songs as Keats or Shelley”—



guaranteed £50 for one hundred copies. M'Glashan, though well enough disposed towards Mangan, was unwilling to risk any money in the venture.

"I calculate," he wrote, "that the printing, binding, and advertising of Mangan's *Anthology* will cost us nearly £100. Our view was to publish the book, sell as many as possible, and give Mangan an equal share of the profits, and in this manner I conceive he would be more benefited than by any definite sum we could afford to give him. However, as our wish is, as much as yours can be, to serve Mangan, without incurring any unnecessary risk, suppose you pay Mangan £25 in the meantime, and remainder to us until the expenses of the book have been covered. Could I be sure the volumes would sell equal to their merits, there would be little difficulty about an arrangement very profitable to Mangan, but I cannot forget they are verse, and the public took ten years to buy one small edition of Anster's *Faust* a book which all at once occupied a very high position in the literary world."

The following letter from Mangan refers to these transactions with M'Glashan \* :—

"Thursday, Noon.

"MY DEAR DUFFY,—I have just received your exceedingly kind note. You are the soul of goodness and generosity. Will you be at leisure on Saturday, Sunday, or Monday evening? If you can I will be most happy to call out (and out) on you. I say out-and-out, as I conceive that as yet I have made you only a series of half (*and* half—that's paying you back, eh?) drop-in Paul-Pryish visits, or visitations. I have made out the inventory for the sale (excluding, as you advised, pots and pans) and put it into the hands of M'Glashan.

Yours ever faithfully,

J. C. MANGAN."

Another letter to Duffy may be quoted in this connection :—

"Friday, 3 o'clock.

"MY DEAR DUFFY,—I am harassed, goaded, made mad! I have but a few days wherein to make up an *Anthology* for M'Glashan, and my health is failing, though I am now living very regularly, at least very abstemiously. But I would rather fail anywhere than in my duty towards you. Within the last hour I have written what I send you. I hope you will not dislike it, and if you do not, I hope it will be in time. As soon as I have finished the *Anthology* I will call on you with more poetry. God bless you.

Ever yours faithfully,

J. C. MANGAN."

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\* See *Irish Monthly*, 1883, p. 381.



It had been intended to include a volume of *Echoes of Foreign Song* by Mangan in the Library of Ireland series projected by the *Nation*, but the idea was given up, and in June, 1845, or thereabouts, the *German Anthology*,\* comprising a selection of nearly 150 pieces, was brought out in two volumes by M'Glashan. It sold very well, and was warmly praised in many quarters. Mangan's preface to the work is the only professedly direct personal communication to the public from the poet, and as such is worth transferring to these pages:—

“The translations comprised in these volumes have (with a single exception) been selected from a series which have appeared at irregular intervals within the last ten years in the pages of the *Dublin University Magazine*. They are now published in their present form at the instance of some valued friends of mine, admirers, like myself, of German literature, and, as I am happy to believe, even more solicitous than I am to extend the knowledge of that literature throughout these kingdoms.

It will be seen that the great majority of the writers from whom they are taken are poets who have flourished within the current century. In confining myself generally to these I have acted less from choice than from necessity. Little or none of that description of material which a translator can mould to his purpose is to be found in the lyrical or ballad compositions of the earlier eras of the German muse, and the elaborate didactical poems of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries would not, I apprehend, be likely to suit the highly-cultivated tastes of the readers of the present day. My design, I need scarcely remark, has been to furnish not miscellaneous samples of all kinds of German poetry, but select samples of some particular kinds; and if I have succeeded in this design I have achieved all that my readers would, under any circumstances, thank me for accomplishing.

Of the translations themselves it is not for me to say more than that they are, as I would humbly hope, faithful to the spirit, if not always to the letter, of their originals. As a mere matter of duty, however, I am exceedingly anxious to express—and I do here, once for all, express—my most grateful acknowledgment of the very favourable reception they have experienced from the various periodical publications of the day, and more especially from the newspaper Press. Though I may at times be induced to think that the language of my reviewers has been too flattering, I, nevertheless, gladly accept it as evidence of a generous goodwill on their part towards me, which, while it does them honour, should excite me to such endeavours as might in some degree qualify me to deserve it.

J. C. MANGAN.”

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\* It is now published in two small shilling volumes by James Duffy.



## CHAPTER XIII.

MANGAN IN TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY—MITCHEL'S FIRST SIGHT OF HIM—DR. JOHN KELLS INGRAM—MANGAN'S EXTENSIVE READING—HIS VERSATILITY—FATHER MEEHAN AND MANGAN—A NIGHT WITH MANGAN—THE GROWING EVIL—MANGAN'S IRREGULARITIES—LETTERS TO M'GLASHAN.

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“So is my spirit bound with chains,  
And girt with troubles, that 'tis wonder  
A single spark of soul remains  
Not altogether trampled under.”—MANGAN.

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MANGAN'S employment in Trinity College Library being merely of a temporary and supplementary nature, his earnings were naturally small. I am informed that there is no record on the books of the college of his engagement, which was due mainly to the kindness of Dr. J. H. Todd, the eminent scholar, whose influence in the institution was considerable. Mangan's duties were of a comparatively light character, consisting of the classification of the stores of literature which were gradually accumulating in the library. He had previously been a fairly assiduous reader there, and his new occupation gave him further opportunities of studying the mediæval books in which he revelled. Mitchel, who was at the time a young solicitor, with a strong bent towards literature, but without any actual literary acquaintances (his introduction to the *Nation* Office being accomplished a little later), thus describes his first glimpse of the poet, whose poems he was the earliest to make an effort to collect—

“The first time the present biographer saw Clarence Mangan was in this wise: Being in the College library, and having occasion for a book in that gloomy apartment of the institution called the ‘Fagel’ library, which is the innermost recess of the stately building, an acquaintance pointed out to me a man perched on the top of a ladder, with the whispered information that the figure was Clarence Mangan. It was an unearthly and ghostly figure, in a brown garment; the same garment, to all appearance, which lasted till the day



of his death. The blanched hair was totally unkempt; the corpse-like features still as marble; a large book was in his arms, and all his soul was in the book. I had never heard of Clarence Mangan before, and knew not for what he was celebrated, whether as a magician, a poet, or a murderer; yet took a volume and spread it on a table, not to read, but with pretence of reading to gaze on the spectral creature upon the ladder."

Dr. John Kells Ingram, the distinguished political economist (who is, however, best known amongst his countrymen by his fine rebel song, "Who Fears to Speak of '98"), has been good enough to give me a slight account of Mangan as he recollects him:—

"I saw very little of Mangan in the College library, and never met him elsewhere. Dr. Todd was librarian at the time when he was employed—I believe as temporary clerk. I have no doubt that Todd, knowing his poverty, employed him rather on that account—being interested in him as a man of genius—than for the sake of any work he was likely to do. He certainly did not strike me as a serviceable official. Perhaps the most interesting fact about him which I then learned was that he used any spare time he had in reading the works of Swedenborg.

There is now no one in the library who was there in Mangan's time. . . . When I said above that I saw very little of Mangan in the library, I meant to convey that the time during which he and I were both there was very short. I had one conversation with him—I forget on what, but, no doubt, on some literary subject—and at the close of it he said to me with the air of a prince: 'Sir, I shall always be glad to converse with you.'"

Dr. Ingram's statement about Swedenborg is borne out by Mangan's own allusions to that mystical writer. He was not a follower of Count Emmanuel, but he had a great admiration for the man and his writings. M'Gee, in the sketch of Mangan already referred to, remarks:—

"In his later years Mangan has become a disciple of Swedenborg in religion, and is a firm believer in all the inhabitants of his invisible world."

He was undoubtedly powerfully attracted by the spiritualistic imaginings of Swedenborg, and, like him, constantly saw "a sphere of light about men's souls."

But his reading took other directions than this. He was deeply versed in the lives of the saints, and I have been informed by several that St. Francis d'Assisi was particularly venerated by him, and that he would expatiate upon his life and meditations for hours. Father Meehan mentions some of the books in which Mangan was specially interested,



and the list could be greatly extended, if necessary, merely from his own frequent indications of literary preferences.

"His reading," says the worthy priest, "then ranged over subjects which few but himself would have deemed interesting—Zedler's *Universal Lexicon*, Zeiler's *Recueil de toutes les Lettres*, Ugolino's *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Sacrarum*, Van Til's *De Usu Instrumentorum Musicorum apud Hebraeos*, and Calmet's *Dissertatio in Musicam Veterum Hebraeorum*—tomes that, in all likelihood, have seldom been taken down from their *loculi* since. Another ponderous old volume—Mathew Paris's *Historia Anglorum*, written in 1248-9—proved to him a source of real delight, for it was from the Benedictine's pages he first learnt the weird story of the Everlasting Jew. . . . This most singular legend, which, like the generality of all legends, was the outcome of a popular fiction, all but fascinated Mangan, so much so that for many years before his decease he meditated a poem descriptive of his wanderings."

Mangan, however, contented himself with translating the poems by Schubart and Schlegel on the subject. One book which has not been alluded to by Father Meehan was such a favourite with Mangan that he is constantly referring to it in his articles and letters. This was Godwin's *St. Leon*, the principal character of which possesses a wonderful elixir which caught Mangan's fancy.

In one of his letters to Duffy, Mangan takes the opportunity of praising Maturin, in whose works, as previously suggested, he saw only the genius.

"Did it ever occur to you that Maturin's *Milesian Chief*—the most intensely Irish story I know of—might be brought out in a cheap form to advantage? Did you ever hear of Gamble,\* the author of *Northern Irish Tales*? He made a powerful impression on me when I luxuriated (*a la* Werter) in my teens. His narratives are all domestic and exceedingly melancholy. Which county of Ulster gave him birth I wist not, but in one of his tales he apostrophises the Mourne as his own river—and in truth he seems to have drunk royally of its waves, for he is very, very mourne-ful. Something might be done with him too. Sherlock is the name of the Irish writer whom I spoke to you of some thirteen months back in the Dublin Library. His letters are particularly spiritual, and I think would bear a republication." †

Mangan's love of literature and his absorption in books remained with him even in his most abandoned moments,

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\* I think John Gamble came from Strabane, or thereabouts. *Views of Society and Manners in the North of Ireland* was another book of his. It was published in 1819.

† Thomas Carlyle afterwards made the same suggestion to Duffy. It is to the "Letters" of Martin Sherlock (2 vols. Lond. 1781) that Mangan and Carlyle referred. They would hardly bear republication, however.



and he read even on his death bed. He assimilated the contents of whatever interested him so thoroughly that he was able to project himself into the mind of the author, and to identify himself completely with his thoughts. Hence his wondrous skill as a translator, whether from the Irish, the Turkish, or the German.

"He has written hymns," says D'Arcy M'Gee, "with the spiritual fervour of Sedulius, and philosophised with the subtilty of Schiller. From a fairy-tale to a canticle, nothing comes amiss to him; he is a German with the Germans, a Mussulman among the Turks, and a very Seanachie among the Celts from whom he sprung. And all these phases of intellectual labour have been included in a long life of unvarying misery."

John Cashel Hoey, in an article upon the poet,\* uses almost the same language.

"He could be a Bursch among the Germans, a Persian in Ispahan, a Turk in Constantinople, a Spaniard in Madrid, or a Celt in Con-naught. . . . He was often more German and Gaelic than the authors he translated from."

From these extracts it would almost seem as if either M'Gee or Hoey wrote the admirable criticism which is prefixed to the selection from Mangan's poems (only twenty being given) which was issued as a supplement to the *Nation* of December 15th, 1852, for there is considerable similarity between certain passages in each of the notices, as, for example:—

"The idiosyncrasy of the author, or of the country, the time or the language is exquisitely observed. Place and time become diaphanous to that intense and vivid imagination. He is a Dervish among the Turks, a Bursch among the Germans, a Scald among the Danes, an Improvisatore in Italy, or a Seanachie in Ireland. And his fancy revels with equal light and freedom by the Bosphorus or the Baltic."

From the date of his acquaintance with Father Meehan, Mangan saw more of him than of any other of his literary friends. He was always welcome to the Presbytery in Lower Exchange Street, where he occasionally found D. F. M'Carthy, R. D. Williams and others who were interested in him. Father Meehan would not allow anyone to say a word against Mangan, and often defended him from unsympathetic comments. Personally he did all in his power to wean the poet from his unfortunate habits,

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\* Printed in *The Universal News*, London, of February 1st, 1868



but even he, who had more influence over him than anybody, could not effect any permanent good in that direction. If Mangan was anxious for sympathy, he did not want or appreciate the patronising air of some of the people with whom he came in contact. He had peculiar views on the question of patronage, and would only accept help from those he personally liked, or those who were indebted to him for literary services.

"There is no error," says he, in one of his confidences, "more decided than that of supposing that the mind of a great and original tone requires what is called encouragement or patronage. On the contrary, such a mind should voluntarily erect an impassable barrier between its own operations and any support that others might be inclined to tender it. All support of the kind, like that which the ivy affords to the oak, would, in fact, have a latent tendency to impare its vigorousness."

Though Mangan had refused, previous to his acquaintance with Father Meehan, to take any temperance pledge, even when Father Mathew himself administered it outside of the Church of St. Michael and St. John\* to large numbers of people in his presence, he did subsequently take it on several occasions, mainly through Father Meehan's earnest advice, but speedily broke it.

"Withal," says that writer, "what he had seen of the marvellous revolution wrought by Father Mathew impressed him beneficially; so much so, that for whole months he would avoid the use of alcohol in any form. During those intervals of self-denial, he endeared himself more and more to his young associates, frequented the sacraments, and scrupulously kept faith with those who had secured his literary services. What joyous evenings we had then listening to his anecdotes of crazed Maturin—in some measure his own *menechme* or *alter ego*—whom he used to follow through the streets, Dr. Brennan,† of *Milesian Magazine* notoriety, Sir Harcourt Lees,‡ and other eccentrics with whose vagaries he was thoroughly acquainted."

A popular tavern to which Mangan frequently resorted was "The Bleeding Horse," in Camden Street, where a

\* Father Meehan was curate of this church from 1836 to his death in 1889.

† Dr. John Brennan hardly needs any introduction to Irish readers. Numerous stories are told of him. He was a Carlow man, a biting satirist, and a profound believer in tar water, as Mangan also professed to be. His magazine, of which only a few numbers appeared, is exceedingly scarce. The price was 3s. to friends, 2s. 6d. "to enemies."

‡ Lees, though a knight, was a Protestant clergyman. He was noted for his sporting tastes, and his controversial zeal against the Catholics.



"free and easy" used to be held every evening. There are a few people still living in Dublin who remember him as a frequenter of these social gatherings. He was rarely accompanied by anyone, unless his brother William, and would sit for hours sipping his liquor, now and again listening to the singers, and even occasionally contributing a recitation himself, but mostly quite abstracted and oblivious of what was going on around him. A writer named Joseph Hudson, in *The Shamrock* of 1873, using the signature of "J. H.," describes a meeting with Mangan at one of these convivial meetings. His account is said to be apocryphal, but it is sufficiently near to admitted facts to warrant its use here. He tells how, one dark chill November evening, he and a friend who knew Mangan, went to a "free-and-easy" "in the neighbourhood of Camden Street," where all were welcome who had the wherewithal for a drink, or the ability to sing or otherwise contribute to the evening's entertainment:—

"The company was chiefly composed of tradesmen, scribes, counter assistants, and the better class of the labouring population. . . In the midst of this jolly assembly might be seen one silent, solitary individual, generally seated near the fire—so near as to make one suppose that the faded colour of his brown coat was scorched from its heat. Speak to him—his reply is short and civil, his voice soft and musical, and hushed almost to a whisper. A young man of the company sings one of Moore's matchless melodies, followed by rounds of applause. Mangan applauds not; he gazes on the ceiling as though his mind wandered far away from the scene around him. . . . Poor Mangan! You seemed happy in the enjoyment of those few brief hours—wit and humour went flashing around, full glasses and light hearts carried all before them. Mangan declined to sing, but repeated with great delicacy of feeling the words of an old German song, 'All my Riches are my Songs'; then, pointing to his glass, said in sad tones, 'You found me poor and have kept me so.' "

Hudson goes on to say that after getting from Mangan a promise to "conquer his every social weakness," they left him, and next day his friend received from the poet a poem in his handwriting, the quality of which may be gathered from the few lines which follow:—

"Farewell to the sparkling wine-cup!  
The brain-deceiving wine-cup!  
The cup that slays a thousand ways,  
The soul degrading wine-cup!



Farewell to the revelling wine-cup !  
The flattering, fooling wine-cup !  
The cup that snares, that sinks and wears,  
The fame-defiling wine-cup !

Farewell to the tempting wine-cup !  
The danger-scoffing wine-cup !  
An upas-tree, my land, to thee,  
Is the baneful, stainful wine-cup !”

Even Father Meehan, who, as already stated, saw more of Mangan during these last years than any other literary friend, frequently lost sight of him for months :—

“ Ah, the pity of it ! Waywardness and irresolution were strongly developed in Mangan, and despite words of encouragement and gentle attentions he would, at intervals, be missed for weeks and months from the little circle in the attic, none knowing whither he had gone.”

His nervous system was at this time greatly disordered, and his physical weakness was lamentable to behold.

“ I have never met,” says Mangan himself in the pretended sketch by Edward Walsh, “ anybody of such a strongly marked nervous temperament as Mangan. He is in this respect quite a phenomenon ; he is literally all nerves and muscles. In accordance with such a temperament, Providence has endowed him with marvellous tenacity of life. He has survived casualties that would have killed thousands—casualties of all kinds—illnesses, falls, wounds, bruises, wet clothes, no clothes at all, and nights at the round table. His misfortunes have been very great, and he ascribes them all to his power of writing, facetiously deriving calamity from *calamus*, a quill.”

James M'Glashan, the publisher, aware of Mangan's deplorable lack of resolution and craving for stimulants, used to pay in instalments such small sums as the latter earned. He used to beg earnestly for money in advance for his literary work, and it was generally given to him, but in small amounts. It was well known to all his friends that he could not keep it or use it wisely. Five pounds would vanish as speedily as five shillings. The present writer has been told by some of those who used to see him that the forlorn condition of the poet was a heart-rending sight for those who knew and admired his genius. That such a man should sink so low and, as was by this time fully recognised, beyond retrieval, was an appalling reflection for his best friends :—

“ But the cry of his spirit,” as Mitchel truly says, “ was ever—  
' Miserable man that I am, who will deliver me from the wrath to come ? ' ”



The same admirable writer is, however, unnecessarily brutal when he observes that

“there were two Mangans, one well known to the muses, the other to the police,”

a sentence which might imply that the unfortunate poet was lost to all decency, and led a particularly scandalous life—an implication very far removed, indeed, from the truth. His one fault, his only crime, was the ever-gnawing desire for such oblivion as he could procure in the taverns. His friends did absolutely everything to rescue him from his debasement, reminding him often of the duty he owed to his high reputation as a writer, but all to no purpose. He either argued the question in his own peculiar fashion, or declared his utter helplessness. And, as he says in one of his essays—

“Poetry never had at any time more to do with rectitude of purpose or conduct than with red hair or round shoulders.”

His friends, as Mitchel remarks,

“regarded him with reverential compassion and wonder, and would have felt pride in giving him a shelter and a home. But sometimes he could not be found for weeks; and then he would reappear, like a ghost or a ghoul, with a wildness in his blue, glittering eye, as of one who had seen spectres; and nothing gives so ghastly an idea of his condition of mind as the fact that the insane orgies of this rarely-gifted creature were transacted in the lowest and obscurest taverns, and in company with the offal of the human species.”

He rightly adds that those who knew him

“could do nothing for him; he would not dwell with man. or endure decent society; they could but look on with pity and wonder.”

Mitchel puts the facts very crudely, but, unfortunately, they cannot be disputed in so far as they refer to the period subsequent to 1845. His irregularities were tolerated in Trinity College Library as long as Dr. Todd could possibly tolerate them, but eventually his services had to be dispensed with. All that Mangan has to say about this dismissal—to which he seems to me to clearly refer in a sketch of Dr. Todd which he wrote for the *Irishman* of 1849—is this—

“He does not, I fancy, advance quite the length of Voltaire in the assumption that human beings should be habitually regarded by wise men much in the light of rattle-snakes or tigers, but circumstances, of



which, of course, I know nothing, may have accustomed him to entertain a certain distrust of mankind. If I be wrong in this opinion—and nothing more than an opinion it is—I beg his pardon.”

James M'Glashan, to whom Mangan was worth a good deal more than he paid him, was sometimes compelled to speak rather harshly to the wayward poet. The following extracts from his letters to M'Glashan—which cover the period between 1843 and 1848, are of interest as showing his literary activity, his frequent promises of reform and his invariable impecuniosity :—

“MY DEAR SIR,—I thank you from my heart for your kindness. I enclose you additional stanzas of ‘the Death Chant.’\* The difficulty of varying the forms of expression in such a peculiar poem increases on me of course as I proceed.

Would you want a Midsummer Anthology for June? or a Polyglot for the opening volume in July? or a very striking story, the scene of which should be laid in our college?

I return you the proofs—Lamartine's poem † is, in my opinion, the finest thing I have ever done. I could wish you to glance at stanzas 15 to 18. They are powerful, and yet I wrote them (in pencil) reclining against a haystack after a fast (like St. Leon's in the Dungeon of Bethlem Gabor) of thirty-six hours. I am clearly convinced that there may be worse intemperance in eating than even in drinking. I fancy I have discovered the true key to my health, and, please the Fates! hope to unlock with that same key the portal that bars me from the free and uncontrolled exercise of my intellect. You shall have the remainder of my monthly contribution by Monday. There will be some striking and fiery ballads therein. It will conclude, unless you object, the ‘Stray Leaflets.’ I am rather anxious to be done with the German, and to enter upon some new track. How glad I should be to get that Danish volume of Ewald's *Poems* which I bespoke of you. The Irish Anthologies, however, are those to which I mean now chiefly to devote my attention. May God bless you, my dear sir; you do not know of what service the sum you so off-handedly gave me has proved to me.”

In another letter he says :—

“I would entreat of you not to judge me over harshly for my great past lapses. Men see effects. It is for God alone to scrutinise causes. I leave myself in future to be tested by my acts, not my promises. A retributive eternity is rapidly coming upon me, and woe unto me now and for ever if I fail to fulfil the mission allotted to me.”

Again :—

“I now propose, as far as possible, to retrieve the past, and I hope

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\* A long Scandinavian poem entitled “The Death Chant of King Regner Lodbrok.”

† “Farewell to France,” which, however, subsequently appeared in the *Nation* instead of the *University Magazine*.



I shall be sustained by your kind offices. I enclose you a legendary ballad from the Bohemian, the literature of which I have been studying for several months. Could you favour me with the usual price for it? It is with great pain that I bring myself to make this request, as, when I consider the multitude of my past obligations to you, when I reflect on your immeasurable and unostentatious kindnesses to me, I am overwhelmed. But, please God, I will yet achieve more for my reputation than I have yet accomplished. That I might not be tempted to relapse into my old habits, I have renewed my vow of abstinence."

So large a proportion of the scanty correspondence of Mangan which has survived is devoted to what must, I suppose, be called matters of business, that there is necessarily a good deal of monotony in it, and not a few repetitions. Here is an extract from another letter to M'Glashan, more or less characteristic:—

"I have now no longer the same motive for requesting money from you, which, unfortunately, I too often had on former occasions. In other words, I am now and henceforth a water-drinker. The College has lately received a large accession of Oriental works. Although you may not entirely credit it, it is a fact that I have made great progress in the Persian language, and am ready to teach it to such of my countrymen as are willing to do credit to the Vallanceyan notion of their Oriental descent. If you would care to introduce Hindoo poetry to your readers, I could supply you with it. And now, my dear sir, I have but one request to make of you—that is, that you will not judge of me by what you have known of me. I have really only begun to exist within the last month. You, perhaps, remember that Godwin describes St. Leon, after the latter has been imprisoned bodily for twelve years, as 'the mere shell and shadow of a man—of no more worth and power than that which a magic *lanthorn* inscribes on a wall.'\* Imagine, then, what my condition must have been, shut up within the cells of my own chafed and miserable spirit for fifteen years. Retrospection, however, answers no purpose: the future is the empire of the human will."

He was always attentive to any suggestions as to his contributions, and, consequently, as it is known that M'Glashan often exercised the functions of editor, overruling the latter personage whenever he thought fit, even when he was a man of the reputation of Lever,† it is

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\* "But it revokes my thraldom's ban,  
And I, the faint and feeble-hearted  
Shell and shadow of a man,  
Arise like one refreshed with wine."—MANGAN.

† *Apropos*, Lever thought highly of Mangan's usefulness to the *Magazine*. He once wrote: "Mangan is a really first-rater—keep him by you."



*2<sup>nd</sup> "Irish Monthly Magazine" for Sept. 1845*  
*then on 4 "Pleasures from the Pen" 4<sup>th</sup>*  
*Mangan - & in Oct. a further instalment of*  
JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.  
*a second cheap. "The Miller's Daughter" in Jan. 1846.* 153

possible that the subjects of some of Mangan's articles in the *University Magazine* were of M'Glashan's own choosing. In one of his letters Mangan asks:—

"Would you desiderate any new and striking article for the January number of the *Magazine*? Or shall I continue the 'Lays,' or give you a German or an Oriental Anthology? Anything you bespeak you can have."

As a final example, for the present, of his letters to M'Glashan, take this:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—Let me hope that you are not angry with me. Could you know all that I have suffered of late, any resentment that you might feel against me would be converted into compassion. But I believe that it is not in a nature like yours to harbour resentment against anyone. I shall have finished the Anthology (Spanish), I hope, by Saturday, when, I do not hesitate to say, you will witness a marked improvement in my appearance. If you do not at once perceive that I am thoroughly changed, I will consent that you shall refuse all future assistance. I have two or three literary projects in my mind, but the execution of them will altogether depend upon your kind reception of me; for if you cast me off I resign literature altogether.

You said, when leaving you on Tuesday, that you feared I might misappropriate the £1 you so kindly presented to me. I paid my landlord 15s.; with the remainder I was enabled to procure a bath (which has done me great service) and an umbrella, which I always miss."

With the exception of half-a-dozen translations from Lamartine, a story called "The Threefold Prediction," some twenty or thirty original poems and short versions from the German, and some scattered thoughts, all of which were published in *The Irish Monthly Magazine* between September, 1845, and February, 1846, Mangan's entire work during the next year or two was contributed to the *Nation* and *University Magazine*.

As the poems contributed to the *Monthly Magazine* were apparently quite unknown to Father Meehan, and are not mentioned by any other writer about Mangan, and have never been collected, it may be well to give the reader a few specimens here.\* One is called "Lines written in a Nunnery Chapel"—

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\* I am indebted to Mr. John O'Leary for the reference to and loan of this extremely scarce magazine, which is not in the British Museum, or in any of the Dublin libraries.



“ Me hither from noonlight  
 A voice ever calls  
 Where pale pillars cluster  
 And organ tones roll—  
 Nor sunlight nor moonlight  
 E'er silvers these walls—  
 Lives here other lustre—  
 The Light of the Soul.

Here budded and blossomed—  
 Here faded and died—  
 Like brief blooming roses  
 Earth's purest of pure !  
 Now ever embosomed  
 In bliss they abide—  
 Oh ! may, when Life closes,  
 My meed be as sure ! ”

Here is a characteristic scrap—

#### WISDOM AND FOLLY.

“ They who go forth, and finally win  
 Their way to the Temple of Truth by Error's multiplied stages,  
 They are the Sages !

They who stop short for life at some inn  
 On the side of the road—say Momus's, Mammon's, or Cupid's,  
 They are the Stupids ! ”

Another is entitled, “ Rest only in the Grave ”—

“ I rode till I reached the House of Wealth—  
 'Twas filled with Riot and blighted health,

I rode till I reached the House of Love—  
 'Twas vocal with sighs beneath and above !

I rode till I reached the House of Sin—  
 There were shrieks and curses without and within.

I rode till I reached the House of Toil—  
 Its inmates had nothing to bake or boil.

I rode in search of the House of Content—  
 But never could reach it, far as I went !

The House of Quiet, for strong and weak,  
 And Poor and Rich, I have still to seek—

That House is narrow, and dark, and small—  
 But the only Peaceful House of all ! ”



And these two small snatches which he attributes to his favourite Ruckert :—

“ Yes ! true Poetry is wizard power ;  
 ’Tis the felt enchantment of the heart—  
     But the Poet, what is He ? Enchanted  
 Or Enchanter ? Master of his art,  
 Or but Slave ? Haunts he the Worldsoul’s Tower !  
     Or is he himself the worldsoul-haunted ? ”

“ Because a chance hath overset  
     Thy House of Cards, thou grievest !—Why so ?  
 Since thou thyself art standing yet,  
     Thou hast no cause to sigh and cry so.  
 Besides, thou mayest, if thou but will,  
     Construct a nobler dome at leisure :—  
 The Cards are on the table still,  
     And only wait the Builder’s pleasure ! ”

Another of the poems is a version of Eichendorff’s “ Miller’s Daughter,” which seems to me to be much superior to that other and better-known one given in several collections :—

“ The mill-wheel turns with a saddening sound—  
     I hear it each morning early,  
 When the sun arises red and round,  
     And the flower cups glisten so pearly,

The Miller’s daughter is gone away—  
     And oh ! most bodeful wonder !  
 The ring she gave me on Valentine’s Day  
     Sprang yester-even asunder !

No longer now may I linger here—  
     I’ll don the willow and till grim  
 Death shall at length arrest my career,  
     I’ll wander about as a pilgrim.

I’ll wander with lute from bower unto hall,  
     From shepherd’s dell unto city,  
 Compelling tears from the eyes of all  
     Who shall hearken my doleful ditty.

The mill-wheel turns in the early morn :  
     I hear both wheel and water—  
 And I turn too—away, forlorn—  
     For I think of the Miller’s daughter.

That wheel shall turn and turn again,  
     Re-turn, re-turn, for ever ;  
 But the Miller’s faithless daughter—when  
     Shall she return ?—Ah ! never ! ”



“The Counsel of a Cosmopolitan” which follows is also attributed to the German, but it has more of Mangan in it than of any German writer.

COUNSEL OF A COSMOPOLITAN.

“Give smiles and sighs alike to all,  
Serve all, but love not any ;  
Love’s dangerous and delicious thrall  
Hath been the tomb of many.

The sweetest wine-thoughts of the heart  
Are turned ere long to bitter ;  
Sad memories loom when joys depart,  
And gloom comes after glitter. .

Why pawn thy soul for one lone flower,  
And slight the whole bright garland ;  
Clarissa’s eyes, Lucinda’s bower,  
Will fail thee in a far land !

Love God and Virtue ! Love the Sun,  
The Stars, the Trees, the Mountains !  
The only living streams that run  
Flow from Eternal Fountains ! ”

Here is another characteristic piece, without a title :—

“The night is falling in chill December,  
The frost is mantling the silent stream,  
Dark mists are shrouding the mountain’s brow,  
My soul is weary : I now  
Remember  
The days of roses but as a dream.

The icy hand of the old Benumber,  
The hand of Winter is on my brain,  
I try to smile, while I inly grieve :  
I dare not hope, or believe  
That Summer  
Will ever brighten the earth again.

So, gazing gravewards, albeit immortal,  
Man cannot pierce through the girdling Night  
That sunders Time from Eternity,  
Nor feel this death-vale to be  
The portal  
To realms of glory and Living Light.”



## CHAPTER XIV.

THE "NATION" AGAIN—"NIGHTMARES" AND "MARES' NESTS"—  
 THE FAMINE YEAR—"THE PEAL OF ANOTHER TRUMPET"—  
 "THE WARNING VOICE"—"THE RYE MILL"—"THE SAW  
 MILL"—MANGAN'S DESIRE FOR DEATH—HIS GROWING  
 SELF-ABANDONMENT—NERVOUS AFFECTIONS—LETTERS TO  
 M'GLASHAN—MANGAN AND JOHN O'DALY—ANGLESEA STREET  
 BOOKSELLERS—"THE ANNALS OF THE FOUR MASTERS"—  
 "POETS AND POETRY OF MUNSTER"—JOHN KEEGAN'S  
 DESCRIPTION OF O'DALY.

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"To stamp dishonour on thy brow  
 Was not within the power of earth ;  
 And art thou agonised when now  
 The hour that lost thee all thy worth  
 And turned thee to the thing thou art,  
 Rushes upon thy bleeding heart?"—MANGAN.

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THE *Nation*, believing, with Horace Walpole, that only a man of genius can trifle agreeably, gladly printed all the squibs and skits that Mangan sent to it, but its editor did not fail to observe that the poet might have been better employed. In printing a whimsical set of verses on "The Blackwater"—a compound for which Mangan found several rhymes—the editor remarks:—

"Here we have the truest poet this country has produced in our days—to the few we need not name him, to the many it is still premature—writing versicles very much akin to the nonsense verses with which Swift and his friends made war against the spleen and blue devils."

Nevertheless, Mangan proceeded on his way, scattering epigrams and *jeux d'esprit* on the one hand, and reserving his serious work, so far, for the *University Magazine*. There are a couple of articles in that periodical for 1845 which I have no hesitation in attributing to Mangan. They are respectively entitled "Nightmares" and "Mares' Nests," and are unsigned, but certain passages strongly suggest the author of the polyglot anthologies. With the



exception of a rare joke, the articles are in the very serious vein. In the first-named article he says, among other things, that Blake the artist was fortunate in being able to transmit his nightmares to canvas :—

“Happy was Blake, who lived in good understanding with the artist within him, and whose ready pencil transferred the unearthly creations of this latter to insensible canvas, instead of receiving them on his own sensitive skin. The pencil was the conductor which carried off innocuous the destructive-creative force, the lightning that would have smitten and fused his own corporeality into new, anomalous, fantastic forms. . . . Had Blake not been able to paint his nightmares, and his daymares too, they would have painted themselves in wizard marks upon his own body.”

The madman, according to Mangan in this article, is he whose power of transmitting his imagination is arrested, and whose own soul receives all its effects. The whole article is marvellously acute, and, did space allow, might be largely quoted with advantage. In the article on “Mares’ Nests” there are also some interesting and characteristic passages, as, for instance, this :—

“Children are the greatest artists, creative, genial. What a dramatist, what a romancer, what a magician, is the child in his play ! That is a lingering after-sheen of the glory of his infancy. And the true artist is a child all his life. Only in so far as he is a child is he a creator ; ceases he to be child-like, he is thenceforth no more an artist, but a mechanic : a cobbler, not a genius. He is, in Fichte’s phrase, a hodman ; useful when building is going on, yet not to be called a builder. He is a picture-wright, or a play-wright, or a tale-wright : a versifier or a prosifier—anything but a poet.”\*

At this same time Mangan was continuing his versions and perversions from the German, and in the number which contains the article on “Nightmares” there are some characteristically whimsical pieces from the German of Selber (himself). Even in these, however, we get an occasional line or two of a serious or half-serious character, as where he gives us, in a poem of which the refrain is—

“Hark ! again the rueful winds are blowing,  
And alas ! I dwell alone !”†

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\* In Macaulay’s Diary is a reflection to practically the same effect—that children are the truest poets, by the strength of their imagination.

† The last refrain of all is—

“Hark ! again the rueful winds are blowing,  
And alas ! I want a loan !”



a verse like the following :—

“O, ye rosy ghosts of buried hours,  
Haunters of a head which they made hoary,  
How you mock one when Disaster lours,  
With your shameless Tantalusian glory!  
Memory draws upon her ill-got wealth  
All the more as Fancy waxes thrifty.  
I want neither! Give me Hope and Health,  
Give me life, O, Eighteen Hundred Fifty!  
Give me back, not Youth's imaginings,  
But its feelings, which are truer things.”

One of his critics truly says that into his rhymes,

“however fantastic or difficult, his language flows with all its unimpaired vitality and grace, like fused metal into a mould.”

And the *Nation*, after his death, said of his poetical work with equal truth :—

“He has faults, which he who runs may read, mannerism, grotesque, and an indomitable love of jingling; he often sins against simplicity, but the inextinguishable sin of commonplace no man can lay to his charge.”

Even his rebuses and acrostics have an air of distinction about them. But the time was nearing when Mangan's thoughts were, of necessity, more often raised above the trivialities of life, when a larger and freer utterance and nobler aspirations took the place of the smaller and, as it were, constrained movements of his earlier career. From the opening of the year 1846, when the fearful shadow of an impending famine was cast over the country, Mangan, though he did not change his own habits or mode of life, almost entirely forgot his mannerism, and assumed the character of an almost inspired prophet. In impressive odes like “The Warning Voice” and “The Peal of Another Trumpet,” he pointed to the future, and bade his countrymen hold up their hearts, imploring them to act with dignity, moderation, and courage, and not to allow the terrible outlook to overwhelm them with despair. More than anyone of his time, he predicted the misery of the forthcoming years. He urged, above all things, the stern necessity of preparation for whatever the future might bring, the supreme importance of firmness, the danger of weakness and irresolution. Hitherto he had been contented with the name of “poet;” he now appeared as the great national poet of Ireland—the most splendidly endowed with imagination and keenness of vision of any



Irishman of his time. And thus in "The Peal of Another Trumpet," he addressed his suffering fellow-countrymen:—

“ Revolution’s red abyss  
 Burns beneath us all but bared—  
 And on high the fire-charged cloud  
 Blackens in the firmament,  
 And afar we list the loud  
 Sea voice of the unknown event.  
 Youths of Ireland, stand prepared!  
 For all woes the meek have dreed,  
 For all risks the brave have dared,  
 As for suffering, so for deed,  
 Stand prepared!  
 For the pestilence that striketh  
 Where it listeth, whom it liketh,  
 For the blight whose deadly might  
 Desolateth day and night—  
 For a sword that never spared  
 Stand prepared!  
 Though that gory sword be bared,  
 Be not scared!  
 Do not blench and dare not falter!  
 For the axe and for the halter,  
 Stand prepared!”

It was to the *Nation* that Mangan contributed his finest National poems, beginning with "The Warning Voice,"\* to which he prefixes the following sentences from Balzac's "Livre Mystique":—

“ Il me semble que nous sommes à la veille d’une grande bataille humaine. Les forces sont là ; mais je n’y vois pas de général.”

In the following week's issue the editor characterises it as "the most impressive poem, perhaps, we ever published," and quotes these words of "a dear correspondent":—

“ M.’s poem sounded to me like the deep voice of a dying man, making his last appeal to the good in men’s hearts, or a voice from the sky, so far was it above all the littleness of party prejudice or party motives.”

From the opening lines—

“ Ye Faithful!—Ye Noble!  
 A day is at hand  
 Of trial and trouble  
 And woe in the land,”

---

\* It appeared on February 21st, 1846. Mitchel erroneously attributes it to 1847, when, of course, it would have been practically a prophecy "after the event."



to the *finale*, this fine poem soars high beyond the sometimes petty complaints of the poets of the day :—

“ Now, therefore, ye True,  
Gird your loins up anew !  
By the good you have wrought,  
By all you have thought  
And suffered and done !  
By your souls, I implore you,  
Be leal to your mission—  
Remembering that one  
Of the two paths before you  
Slopes down to Perdition.

To you have been given  
Not granaries and gold,  
But the Love that lives long  
And waxes not cold ;  
And the zeal that hath striven  
’Gainst Error and Wrong,  
And in fragments hath riven  
The chains of the Strong.

Your true faith and worth  
Will be history soon,  
And their stature stand forth  
In the unsparing noon ! ”

Nearly all his writings in the *Nation* of this year are serious, and indeed lofty in tone. Among them are his most superb poems, like “ Dark Rosaleen,” “ The Dream of John McDonnell,” “ Siberia,” “ Shane Bwee,” “ A Cry for Ireland,” “ A Vision of Connaught in the Thirteenth Century,” “ A Lament for Sir Maurice Fitzgerald,” and others of lesser note, but he did not give up altogether his mere rhyming exercises. No further examples of his powers in that direction are, perhaps, necessary ; but as “ The Rye Mill,” which appeared in the *Nation* a week after “ The Warning Voice,” has interesting associations, a couple of verses or so may be given here—

“ The drab-coloured river rushed on at full speed—  
The Rye, that noblest of trout streams—  
• The coppices around looked very dun indeed,  
As dim as the dimmest of Doubt’s dreams.  
To the north rose a hill o’er a field—or a fen ;  
But albeit I felt able to climb hill  
And cliff like a goat, I didn’t see it then—  
I saw but the picturesque Rye Mill !



And winged, as with light, were the weeks of my stay  
 In its neighbourhood! We all know how slips  
 The long day away with a boy while at play,  
 With a girl while gathering cowslips:  
 But mine was but a moment from morn unto eve,  
 Though in truth I was part of the time ill  
 With a cold in my throat, which I caught, I believe,  
 Through a hole in the wall of the Rye Mill.

What's the Chancellor himself? \* A mummy in a wig.  
 What's his office? At best a sublime ill.  
 Take the woolsack, O Brougham! but let me sit and swig  
 Adam's ale † on a meal sack in Rye Mill!"

This mill, on the Rye, near Leixlip, had a peculiar fascination for Mangan, who had seen it in earlier years, when it had taken a strong hold on his imagination. Not long after the appearance of the poem just quoted, and in the same year, Mangan returns to the subject in the *Nation*, but this time he calls it a saw mill. In sending "The Saw Mill" to Duffy, he says:—

"The lines I enclose are something *à propos de rien* of a mill that I remember having seen in my boyish days in Rye Valley, Leixlip. If they suit you I shall be glad, and if they do not, why somebody else will be, of course—for spaces must be filled up in newspapers as well as in society."

The poem is so peculiar, so strange, that perhaps readers who do not know it will like to see it. Here it is:—

"My path lay towards the Mourne agen,  
 But I stopped to rest at the hill-side  
 That glanced adown o'er the sunken glen,  
 Which the Saw-and-Water-mills hide,  
 Which now, as then,  
 The Saw-and-Water-mills hide.

And there as I lay reclined on the hill,  
 Like a man made by sudden qualm ill,  
 I heard the water in the Water-mill  
 And saw the saw in the Saw-mill!  
 As I thus lay still,  
 I saw the saw in the Saw-mill!

The saw, the breeze, and the humming bees,  
 Lulled me into a dreamy reverie,  
 Till the objects round me, hills, mills, trees,  
 Seemed grown alive, all and every,  
 By slow degrees  
 Took life, as it were, each and every!

---

\* Lord Brougham.

† Water.



Anon the sound of the waters grew  
To a dreary, mournful ditty,  
And the sound of the tree that the saw sawed through  
Disturbed my spirit with pity,  
Began to subdue  
My spirit with tenderest pity!

Oh, wanderer! the hour that brings thee back  
Is of all meet hours the meetest.  
Thou now, in sooth, art on the track,  
Art nigher to home than thou weetest!  
Thou hast thought Time slack,  
But his flight has been of the fleetest!

For thee it is that I dree such pain  
As, when wounded, even a plank will;  
My bosom is pierced, is rent in twain,  
That thine may ever bide tranquil,  
May ever remain  
Henceforward untroubled and tranquil.

In a few days more, most Lonely One!  
Shall I, as a narrow ark, veil  
Thine eyes from the glare of the world and run  
'Mong the urns in yonder dark vale,  
In the cold and dun  
Recesses of yonder dark vale!

For this grieve not! Thou knowest what thanks  
The weary-souled and meek owe  
To Death! I awoke, and heard four planks  
Fall down with a saddening echo,  
I heard four planks  
Fall down with a saddening echo!"

Whether Mangan, who was, as he himself tells us, "a being of incredible sensibility," actually heard in his boyish visit to the Rye the falling of planks, or whether he merely dreamt of the incident, the poem is highly characteristic. The reference to death reminds one that he had for years looked forward to it as to a release from trials too hard to bear. He did not conceal from his friends—nor even from his readers—that it would be welcome; he mentions somewhere, indeed, that he had serious notions of emulating Cato, and of compassing what he so much longed for. Although he was now writing almost constantly for the *Nation* and *University Magazine*, his friends were rarely able to meet him. Father Meehan saw most of him during these last years, being prepared to seek him out in the most noisome alleys and



courts in the city—places where others would not go. Mangan would not and could not reform to oblige his friends; it is almost certain that, with the loss of a power of restraint, he had also lost the wish or will to restrain himself. James Price says of this period:—

“At last friends could do nothing for him. The ever-gnawing craving for excitement *would* be satisfied, though self-respect and man's esteem were sacrificed. Pity him, weep for him, but censure him not! His own self reproaches were abundant punishment for his fault. The horror of his waking reaction was a terrible expiation to pay for human infirmity.”

He would promise earnestly to change his habits, and really made heroic efforts to carry out his promises, but all without avail. In one of his lighter effusions he admits that no amount of teaching can effect a change if the will is not present. A line or two will suffice:—

“Philosophy, thou preachest  
Vainly unto all who take to tippling or the tea-chest;  
Wonder-worker truly wert thou couldst thou but achieve a  
Change in our Teetotalites, who sit and count their siller,  
Or in our Teetotumites who reel from post to pillar.”

Yet he would voluntarily abstain, sometimes for weeks, from drink, though it was evident to all who knew him that he suffered agonies in the effort.

Even before he began to drink at all, as has already been stated, his nerves were practically destroyed, and his nervous condition in moments of extreme distress was pitiable to witness. The present writer has heard from the lips of some of those who knew Mangan descriptions which are too painful to write. Only a faint glimpse of him here and there can be attempted. A certain distinguished Dublin physician informs me that he saw him one bitterly cold night, insufficiently clad, steal into the *Nation* office, and hand into Mr. Fullam, the manager, a few pages of manuscript, begging at the same time that some money should be given to him on account. The manager told him that he was prohibited from doing so; he had received peremptory orders not to advance money to any contributor. Mangan implored so earnestly that at last he was given a small sum, and my informant tells me that one would have imagined from his manner in receiving it that he had just been reprieved from a sentence



of immediate death. The sequel is pathetic. The manuscript handed in was the "Warning Voice," which appeared in the next issue of the paper. The same scene was often repeated in M'Glashan's office. M'Glashan declined to pay Mangan except in small amounts, knowing full well that the unfortunate poet would have been speedily relieved of the whole sum, if he had got it, by his brother and other hangers-on, though Mangan would solemnly assure him, and often with truth, that he urgently wanted the whole amount for necessary purchases, or to pay off a specially pressing debt for rent. But the publisher was well aware that any artful knave or cajoler among those with whom he chose to associate could easily frustrate any such intention as Mangan expressed. One of the letters already given has some bearing upon this point, and in the following note Mangan explains to M'Glashan what he had done with money which had been given him—money which was not a gift, but due for work worth ten times such remuneration :—

"MY DEAR SIR—With what you so kindly and off-handedly gave me on Tuesday I was enabled to procure several articles of dress (shirts, stockings, etc). I was, in truth, very much in need of them. If you will say £2 for the enclosed contribution I shall be quite satisfied. This will enable me not only to settle with my worthy hostess, and, I am sorry to say, unworthy laundress, but, my dear sir, it will provide me with the means of procuring some books of Danish and Swedish poetry. I know where these are to be had, and very cheap, and I confess I would prefer the possession of one book purchased with my own earnings to that of a hundred presented to me by others. Alas! if it were not so should I not have a large (foreign) library to-day? For what munificence could surpass yours towards me in that same article of books?"

In another letter he mentions that he has been offered the post of French and German correspondent in a Liverpool house (Wilmington and Pratt's), in which situation, he says, the hours of work will kill him. He asks M'Glashan to save him from this alternative to literature.

"In the name of heaven, advance me something with the generosity which has always characterised your dealings with me. If you will not, let me know the worst. . . . If you decide against doing so—and if you do, I must acknowledge you will decide justly—I shall not complain. My circumstances have rendered me quite reckless."



Then a little later he writes :—

“On reflection I think it better to adhere to my promise, and to ask no more money in advance. I cannot always continue, even for the sake of others, to submit to the forfeiture of self-respect. It would and could only end in destroying the last particle of spirit within me, and would render me alike a reproach to myself and a burthen to others.”

One other letter to M'Glashan during this period will suffice just now :—

“I have always, my dear sir, found you very kind and off-hand in your pecuniary transactions ; indeed, in this respect I know nobody like you. I make you now a fresh proposal, and I pledge myself to work for you with all the powers of my mind and intellect. I pledge myself to rise early, to labour hard, not to spare myself, to endeavour to cultivate my intellectual powers to their highest point, and, in fine, to redeem the last and past years of my life as far as may be possible. In fact, I pledge myself to become a new man in soul, body, mind, character, and conduct. But my fate now, I say it solemnly, is in your hands. You have been hitherto the kindest of friends to me, and I trust in heaven you will not now, in the darkest hour of my life, abandon me.”

Another friend of Mangan was John O'Daly, the second-hand bookseller, of Anglesea Street, in whose shop the poet was frequently to be found. He made rough metrical versions of Munster poems for O'Daly, who gave him from time to time very small sums for them. Anglesea Street had several other booksellers of note at this period. One, Patrick Kennedy, was a literary man of no mean order. His collections of folk tales and his Wexford and Carlow sketches have earned a deserved popularity. Another, M. W. Rooney, is remembered as the publisher of many useful school classics, and as the fortunate finder of a very early edition of *Hamlet*, concerning which he has published a pamphlet. O'Daly was chiefly known as a publisher and editor of Gaelic books, but he brought out other works of a creditable character. Finally Bryan Geraghty, another Anglesea Street bibliopole, issued Connellan's *Annals of the Four Masters*, the cost of which ruined him. It did not meet with sufficient support, and, naturally, O'Donovan's far greater and more complete edition injured to a very considerable extent its chances of success. Connellan's imperfect edition has its particular interest here, for it was Mangan who “Englished” it, Connellan not being particularly well acquainted with



that language. O'Donovan thus refers to it in one of his letters to Davis :—

“The translation of the *Annals of the Four Masters*, published by Mr. Geraghty, though put into readable English by Mangan, is full of errors, and you will find it very unsafe to trust it.”

But it was John O'Daly, among the booksellers, with whom Mangan was mostly connected. He would be found occasionally in Rooney's, where he frequently obtained the loan of books; but he did a considerable amount of work for O'Daly of a more or less crude kind. His translations from the Irish, which form the well-known volume, *The Poets and Poetry of Munster* (published after his death), are rarely of high poetical merit. Many of them are decidedly inferior to the previous versions by Edward Walsh, Ferguson, and Callanan. Of the fifty-six poems in the book, not much more than a dozen are worthy of Mangan's gifts. It is very doubtful whether he would have allowed them to appear in their present more or less prosaic form.

The only two pieces which are really well-known are “The Fair Hills of Erin,” and “the Dame of the Slender Wattle,” though they are not the best poems in the volume. A number of these pieces were written for O'Daly in the little shop, quickly, and almost without consideration, and it is more than probable that Mangan, had he been alive at the time of publication, would have given them, as he often did with his earlier poems, an additional polish, or other necessary revision. That some injury is done to his fame by the popular impression that this is a very important work of his, is clear from the fact that one or two English writers have spoken slightly of his Irish poems simply from a study of this volume. For example, Mr. John H. Ingram, both in his well-meant but hopelessly inaccurate account of Mangan in the *Dublin University Magazine* for December, 1877, and in his somewhat less inadequate criticism of the poet in Miles's *Poets and Poetry of the Century*, characterises his Irish translations as “spiritless” and poor. If he had said that those in *The Poets and Poetry of Munster* were generally so, he would have been, even then, rather unduly severe; but the implication that all Mangan's Irish translations (that is, of course, those he is acquainted with) are in the same category, is preposterous. His truly magnificent Irish



poems do not belong to *The Poets and Poetry of Munster*, and, indeed, were not written for O'Daly at all. The poems translated for O'Daly, are, in fact, mostly mere drafts for future consideration, made from the bookseller's own prose translations, and the volume only contains pieces which were unpublished at his death. In the pieces like "Dark Rosaleen," and "A Cry for Ireland," he followed not his originals but his phantasy, and deviated widely from the former whenever he chose to do so—which was pretty often. They are rather voluntaries upon Irish themes than translations.

Mangan had only the merest smattering of Irish so far, but he began to learn it in earnest, so far as I can make out, some time in this year of 1846, to which we have arrived. O'Daly's shop was one of his known haunts. Its proprietor was a curious man, not specially loved by certain of his countrymen on account of his coquetting with the "souters," in whose ranks he had enrolled himself somewhat earlier. When the little boys in Kilkenny began to run after him, calling out "souper," he thought it time to give up his new friends, and used to mollify the urchins by saying, "Aisy, boys, amn't I goin' to lave thim?" John Keegan, the poet, has left us in one of his unpublished letters a sketch of O'Daly, which may be worth quoting here :—

"John O'Daly," he says, "the publisher of the *Jacobite Relics*,\* is another intimate friend of mine. He and I corresponded every week. He is a County Waterford man. I first met him in Kilkenny in 1833, when he kept the school there for teaching Irish to the Wesleyans of that city. He, I am sorry to say, renounced the Catholic creed, and was then a furious Biblical. He subsequently came back, and is now living in Dublin, secretary to the 'Celtic Athenæum,' and keeps a bookseller's shop in Anglesea Street. He is one of the best Irish scholars in Ireland. He is about fifty-five years of age, low-sized, merry countenance, fine black eyes, vulgar in appearance and manner, and has the most magnificent Munster brogue on his tongue that I ever had the luck to hear."

Before closing this chapter it may be worth while to quote an anonymous squib of Mangan's from the *Nation* of April 4th, 1846. It had then its special significance for Irishmen :—

---

\* By Edward Walsh.



## THE DOMICILIARY VISIT.

*(A Scene in the Faubourg St. Antoine, Paris.,*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ—

An Officer of the Gendarmerie and a Citizen.

*Off. De par le Roi.* You are Pierre Coulissee?*Cit.* I am.*Off.* I thought so. Scan date,  
Address, and signature of this!*(Gives him a paper.)**Cit. (reads)* "Arrest—by Royal mandate . . ."  
Why, what's my crime? *J'ignore*—*Off.* Poh! Poh!

Of course, young man, you ignore it—

Your name is in the Black Book, though,

With two red marks before it!

Whence came you by those four cane-swords?

*Cit.* Cane-swords? Which?*Off.* Yonder sham-rods!*Cit.* They are mere tobacco-pipes.*Off.* No words!—*(Writes—"Two poniards and two ramrods" !)**Cit.* Heavens! You don't mean—*Off.* A Frenchman means  
The thing he does. Your press-keys!*(Opens a drawer.)*

What make you with those tools?

*Cit.* Machines.*Off.* Ay, such machines as Fieschi's! \*  
Pray, what's that carbine-like affair  
Behind the window-shutter?*Cit.* A walking-stick. *(Il en a l'air.)**Off.* Speak up, sir! What d'ye mutter?*Cit.* A stick.*Off.* Don't shout! A lie's no truth  
Because 'tis bellowed louder.  
A gun, you mean. A stick, forsooth!  
Why, one can smell the powder!*(Takes up a book.)*

Ha! "Treatise on the Poles"!

*Cit.* The South  
And North Poles only.

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\* "I need not remind the reader that Fieschi is regarded as the inventor of the most terrific 'infernal machines' of modern times." (Mangan's note).



*Off.*

Rebel !

How dare you ope your *gamin* mouth ?

Your explanations treble

Your guilt. South Pole and North ? To what

Owes Earth its *revolutions*

If not to these, you leveller-flat

Of thrones and institutions ?

Give up that letter ! Ha ! what's here ?

*(Reads)*

“ Dear Claude, I could not borrow

One hour to-day; but never fear,

I'll do the job to-morrow.”

So-ho ! The job ? Oh, yes !—we hit

The meaning of such letters—

You'll do *the King's* job—eh ? That's it !

Come, Jean, put on his fetters ! ”



## CHAPTER XV.

MANGAN AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE—"SIBERIA"—"TO THE INGLEEZE KHAFIR"—"THE DREAM OF JOHN M'DONNELL"—"MY THREE TORMENTORS"—JOHN KEEGAN AND EDWARD WALSH—CONTEMPORARY OPINION OF MANGAN—"DARK ROSALEEN"—"VISION OF CONNAUGHT"—LETTERS TO DUFFY.

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"I am not young ; I am not old ;  
I live, yet have no life."—MANGAN.

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MANGAN'S contributions to the *Nation* had now become far more valuable and interesting than those to the *University Magazine*, for which M'Glashan, who seems to have been afraid of the poet's personal revelations, was apparently more anxious to obtain translations than original poems. Having begun to study Irish in a more or less desultory way, Mangan became deeply interested in it. He never had a good knowledge of the language, but to conclude that he was completely ignorant of it, as all who have commented upon his life and writings have done, is absurd. He could not have translated the archaic poems he did without help from Irish scholars, but he certainly knew something of modern Irish. His long and intimate connection with O'Donovan, O'Curry, Connellan, and O'Daly forbids the idea that he "did not know one word of Irish." Where did he obtain the scraps of the language which he occasionally employs, with an evidently full knowledge of their meaning, in some of the *University Magazine* articles? It is noteworthy that, though at the time of the *Irish Penny Journal*, and a little later he makes his acknowledgments to O'Curry, O'Donovan, and others for *literal prose versions* of the poems versified by him, he does not do this in his latter years, but simply mentions where he obtained the original.\*

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\* A case in point is the admirable "Cry for Ireland," otherwise "A Lament for Banba," which appeared in the *Nation*.



Moreover, we have his own direct testimony that he had some acquaintance with Irish—stated, not in a *jeu d'esprit*, but in a serious letter to M'Glashan, written about this time, of which a portion follows. "The Will of Cathaeir Mor," referred to therein, did not eventually appear in the *University Magazine*, however, but in the *Nation*.

"It strikes me that a very telling thing might be made out of 'The Will of Cathaeir Mor' in O'Donovan's 'Leagbhar na-g-ceart.' I would cast the translation in the same irregular metre as the original, only occasionally doubling the rhymes in a single line, which has a very good effect on an English ear. It would, if attractively rendered, appear as one of the most characteristic and extraordinary of our archæological literary relics. I have got two or three pupils whom I am instructing in German and Irish, and hope to obtain more."

*Apropos* of German, Mangan contributed very few translations from that language to the *Nation* after the spring of 1846. Almost all his poems thenceforward were Irish in subject. When these are professedly translations more or less free they are always admirable—sometimes they are really superb. All things suffer by translation, except a bishop, according to the old joke, but it cannot be said that any of the Irish poems Englished by Mangan lose anything by his treatment of them. The *Nation* of 1846 is full of fine poems by him. In the issue of April 18th there are two poems so dissimilar in every respect that they call for more than a passing notice. One is that remarkable description of appalling desolation and frightful silence which he has written upon "Siberia." Three verses alone need be quoted—

" In Siberia's wastes,  
No tears are shed  
For they freeze within the brain,  
Nought is left but dullest pain,  
Pain acute, yet dead.

Pain as in a dream,  
When years go by  
Funeral-paced, yet fugitive,  
When man lives, and doth not live,  
Doth not live—nor die.

In Siberia's wastes  
Are sands and rocks.  
Nothing blooms of green or soft,  
But the snow-peaks rise aloft,  
And the gaunt ice-blocks."



And then we have, cheek by jowl near it, that amusing pseudo-Turkish malediction by "Meer Djafrit" \* on "Djaun Bool Djenkinzun" in three verses, a portion of which follows:—

"I hate thee like sin,  
     For thy mop-head of hair,  
 Thy snub nose and bald chin,  
     And thy turkey-cock air.  
 Thou vile Ferindjee  
     That thou thus should'st disturb an  
 Old Moslem like me,  
     With my Khizzilbash turban.

I spit on thy clothing,  
     That garb for baboons—  
 I eye with deep loathing  
     Thy tight pantaloons—  
 I curse the cravat  
     Which encircles thy throat,  
 Thy cooking-pot hat  
     And thy swallow-tailed coat!

Go hide thy thick sconce  
     In some hovel suburban  
 Or else don at once  
     The red Moozleman turban!  
 Thou dog, don at once  
     The great Khizzilbash turban!"

These poems were followed in a week or two by that exquisite ballad, "The Dream of John M'Donnell," one of the most harmonious of all his Irish poems. Listen to these verses:—

"I lay in unrest—old thoughts of pain.  
     That I struggled in vain to smother,  
 Like midnight spectres haunted my brain,  
     Dark phantasies chased each other.  
 When lo! a figure, who might it be?  
     A tall fair figure stood near me!  
 Who might it be? An unreal Banshee!  
     Or an angel sent to cheer me?

Though years have rolled since then, yet now  
     My memory thrillingly lingers  
 On her awful charms, her waxen brow.  
     Her pale translucent fingers,

---

\* Mere chaff writ? *Apropos*, how few would suspect, from his chaff, the fine flour of Mangan's genius?



Her eyes that mirrored a wonder world,  
 Her mien of unearthly mildness,  
 And her waving raven tresses that curled  
 To the ground in beautiful wildness.

‘Whence comest thou, Spirit?’ I asked, methought,  
 ‘Thou art not one of the Banished!’  
 Alas for me! she answered nought,  
 But rose aloft and vanished;  
 And a radiance, like to a glory, beamed  
 In the light she left behind her—  
 Long time I wept, and at last medreamed  
 I left my shieling to find her.

And first I turned to the thunderous North,  
 To Gruagach’s mansion kingly;  
 Untouching the earth I then sped forth  
 To Inverlough, and the shingly  
 And shining strand of the fishful Erne,  
 And thence to Cruachan the golden  
 Of whose resplendent palace ye learn  
 So many a marvel olden.

I saw the Mourn’s billows flow—  
 I passed the walls of Shenady,  
 And stood in the hero-thronged Ardroe,  
 Embosked amid greenwoods shady:  
 And visited that proud pile that stands  
 Above the Boyne’s broad waters,  
 Where Ængus dwells, with his warrior-bands  
 And the fairest of Ulster’s daughters.

To the hall of MacLir, to Creevroe’s height,  
 To Tara, the glory of Erin,  
 To the fairy-palace that glances bright  
 On the peak of the blue Cnocfeerin,  
 I vainly hied. I went west and east—  
 I travelled seaward and shoreward—  
 But thus was I greeted in field and at feast—  
 “‘Thy way lies onward and forward!’”

Leaving the *Nation* for a little while, and returning to the *University Magazine*, I find a poem in the March number, entitled “The Three Tormentors,” which is personal, though attributed to the German. The three tormentors are—Intemperance, Desire for Money, and Love. Here are the first and last verses:—

“Three spirits there be who haunt me always,  
 Plaguing *my* spirit in sundry small ways.



One is apparelled in purple and red ;  
 He sits on a barrel—a chaplet of laurel,  
 Which ought to be mine, and *was* before he  
 Robbed me of brains, and bread, and glory,  
 Wreathed around his globular head,  
 And a royal and richly bubbling cup  
 Of the blood that he drains from his victims' veins,  
 In his hand, that shakes as he lifts it up !

Oh ! woe, woe,  
 And sorrow  
 To me, to be  
 His slave  
 Through every coming morrow,  
 Till years lay me low,  
 Low in an honourless grave !

The third—oh ! the third is a marvellous creature,  
 Infant-like, and of heavenly feature;  
 His voice is rich as the song of the spheres ;  
 But, ah ! what tragic unrest its magic  
 Doth bring to the bosom who shall tell of ?  
 To me that voice has been as the knell of  
 Death and Despair through bitterest years !  
 And then his bright and mischievous eyes !  
 Their mildest glance is the wound of a lance,  
 'Neath which the heart's blank innocence dies !

Oh ! woe, woe,  
 And sorrow  
 To me, to be  
 A slave  
 To these through every morrow,  
 Till years lay me low,  
 Low in mine honourless grave."

There is in the same magazine for this year a quatrain by Mangan—entitled "Ibrahim Pacha and Wellington," and said to be from the Coptic—which may be worthy of mention. William Smith O'Brien, in one of his visits to Limerick, had been given a public reception by the townspeople, and had been presented with a monster brush by the brushmakers, expressive of their desire to sweep away the abuses of the Government.\* The incident excited a good deal of comment at the time, and Mangan wrote an impromptu on the subject, which he showed to his friends, one of whom sent it to the *University Magazine*, where it appeared anonymously. Here it is:—

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\* Like Van Tromp, the Dutch Admiral so signally defeated by Blake, who used to hoist a broom at his masthead as an indication that he would sweep the English from the seas.



“Is there a wise man in your queen’s dominions?”  
 Asked Ibrahim.\* The Prince of Waterloo  
 Replied—“There cannot, Sire, be two opinions  
 Of Williamsmithobrienbrushboru.”

It may be interesting to learn how Mangan was regarded by his brother-poets of the *Nation*. What Edward Walsh thought of him is not known, but in a note to “Shane Bwe, or the Captivity of the Gaels,” published in that paper on June 13th, 1846, Mangan gives us his opinion of Walsh, alluding to him as

“a gentleman to whose literary exertions Ireland is indebted almost beyond the power of repayment.”

Mangan’s versions or perversions from the Irish have not the wonderful Celtic homely touch of Walsh’s, but they have far more power and freedom. Walsh was a man of high poetical genius, nevertheless, whose Irish poems are, perhaps, even more valuable than Mangan’s as examples of the native Gaelic muse. There is an admirable letter on Walsh’s home life among John Keegan’s unpublished correspondence. It is so interesting that no apology is necessary for quoting it here. Keegan is writing to a friend of his in the country:—

“I met poor Edward Walsh by mere chance in the Northumberland Coffee-room on last Saturday. He dragged me home to see his children (four beautiful little things) and their mother—the far-famed *Brighideen bhan mo sthore*,† whose praises he sang so sweetly in the song of that title, and the still more exquisite verses of *Mo Craoibhin Cno*. She is a sweet, simple-looking, love-inspiring woman of twenty-six years of age, though she looks like a *thackeen* of eighteen. She is not a belle or a ‘blue,’ but she is well-formed, speaks English prettily and Irish bewitchingly. I am almost in love with the poet’s wife myself, and envy him the treasure he enjoys in the once charming and still interesting Bridgid Sullivan of Amhan Mor. I believe she feels for me in a kindred vein, for she seemed enraptured at having me at her fireside, and will not rest if I do not go every day in the week. I never spent a happier hour than at poor Walsh’s, though I fear his fortunes are not looking brilliant just now. He is forty-three years of age, tall and elegant in figure, and looks the very essence of feeling and intelligence—he seems, too, like myself, to have suffered much mentally, for his face is worn and his hair is nearly thoroughly silvered. Mrs. Walsh is tall . . . of pale complexion, with large blue eyes, very

\* Who had been visiting England.

† So spelled by Keegan.



prominent and apparently swelled, as if with some radical disease or excessive weeping. She was in her hair, and justly has her husband described that hair when he says—

‘My girl has ringlets rich and rare,’

for never did lovelier hair decorate Eve herself in Eden than clusters over the fair brow of *Mo Craoibhin Cno*. Yet she is not (at) all a beautiful woman. She is not intellectual-looking or graceful, although one must love her at first sight.”

Keegan, a peasant poet whose talent almost amounted to genius, gives us two glimpses of Mangan himself in his letters, which, though anything but flattering, have their importance. His admiration for Mangan was certainly not excessive, and like another poet, John D. Frazer, though to a much less extent, wondered at the great praise which he received from Irish critics of the day. Frazer was somewhat envious of Mangan’s popularity with the *Nation* writers, who found many opportunities, and lost none, of sounding his praises in that paper.

“For the life of me I cannot see where is Mangan’s merit at all,”

said Frazer to one of his friends. He frequently complained that Mangan was unoriginal, and his jealousy led him to make the foolish charge that Mangan knew neither German nor any other language besides English. As he was himself practically an uneducated man, he was hardly in a position to judge of Mangan’s originality. Keegan’s first allusion is *apropos* of *The Irish Catholic Magazine* (edited by Father Meehan), to which Mangan and others contributed, and it is written with strong prejudice. The reference to religion is grossly wrong:—

“The Rev. C. Meehan is principal editor. Mr. E. Walsh, I am sorry to say, is discarded from its pages, and why? Guess. Because he had a difference in the *Register* with D. F. M’Carthy,\* who happens to be a special favourite with the Rev. Mr. Meehan. Clarence Mangan is engaged on it, though he is a madman and a drunkard, and without a spark of religion. Worth your while to see Clarence Mangan. I met him in Dublin. He is about forty-two years of age, pale face, little cat-like eyes, sleepy in his appearance, and slovenly, sottish, and clownish in exterior. He is a man of magnificent talent, but of no originality of conception.”

There is a second reference, less unjustifiable, in another of Keegan’s letters:—

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\* Walsh was extraordinarily sensitive, as his previous difference with Thomas Davis showed.



"I got an invitation," he writes, "to hold a *tete-a-tete* with Clarence Mangan some day next week, and I think I will accept of it. I will be happy to know that highly gifted man. He is a most extraordinary fellow, living in strict seclusion, and seldom appearing abroad except in tap-rooms and low public-houses. He might earn £20 a week by his pen, but he cares nothing if he can get enough of wine and whiskey, fuel and plain clothes. He is about my age, slovenly in his person, and cares nothing for what the world may say or think of him or his talents."

Samuel Ferguson had a high opinion of Mangan's genius, and more than once devoted some space in the *University Magazine* to praise of his work. He also, like Dr. Anster, warmly interested himself in the fate of the poet, and aided him in material matters.

"Poor Clarence Mangan," writes Lady Ferguson to the present writer, "sometimes lived in a garret in Johnson's Lane, off Britain Street and from time to time my dear husband and others among Mangan's well-wishers tried to save him from the misery which his habits brought on himself. But no permanent rescue of this child of genius from 'that pit abysmal' was possible. His fits of drinking, and, if I am not mistaken, of opium-taking, were too strongly rooted, and baffled all endeavours to save him from himself. . . . He would send a messenger from some den to say he was a prisoner, or very ill, or starving, and Sir Samuel would go and see him and give him money and advice, and do what he could to rouse him to exertion and give him a fresh start. . . . Dr. William Stokes was also ready to succour a man of genius, and I have heard him discuss with my husband the problem of how to assist Mangan."

Another of the *Nation* poets, D. F. M'Carthy, held Mangan in high esteem, and despite his follies, which strained the good feeling of even his greatest admirers and friends, never ceased to speak well of him. In a poem signed "Vig," which appeared in the *Nation* after some months of absence on the part of Mangan from its pages, M'Carthy asks:—

"Where, above all, art thou, O Clarence Mangan?—  
And here you will allow me just to state,  
Although I am no bruiser like Jack Langan,  
And not in any sense a man of weight,  
Yet I would walk from Rathlin to Rathangan  
That man to fight, call out or lick, or slate,  
And spoil his taste for vision and for victual,  
Who would attempt to wrong thee in a tittle."

Bearing upon this question of contemporary opinion of Mangan's personality and genius, an article in the *University Magazine* of a year or so later contains a very interesting



passage on him, portion of which may be transferred to this chapter :—

“We may be permitted to express our admiration and wonder at the spontaneity of his genius, as well as its richness and profusion. Month after month he twirls his kaleidoscope, as if it required no efforts but the shifting of his fingers to produce those ever-changing forms of the beautiful and the grotesque in which he delights to indulge. He seems but to breathe on the strange and quaint legends and wild melodies of distant lands, frozen up as it were by the frosts of a hundred dialects, and lo ! as if of their own accord, the foreign harmonies break melodiously on the startled ear like the tunes in the bugle-horn of Munchausen ! If we had not seen him in the flesh, if we had not shaken his delicate hand, and been held by his ‘glittering eye,’ like the wedding guest by the Ancient Mariner, so miraculous seems his acquaintance with all tongues known and unknown—so familiar does he appear with all authors, dead, living, and unborn, that we would be strongly inclined to suspect the respectable and prudent publisher of this magazine of having secured, ‘at enormous expense,’ the reversion of the *Wandering Jew* from M. Sue, now that that famous personage must live by his wits. . . . However, we have certified that Clarence Mangan, though unquestionably mysterious, is yet a reality, and not a myth.”

On May 30th, 1846, “Dark Rosaleen” was printed in the *Nation*, and remarkable as had been some of Mangan’s previous poems in that journal, its readers were quite amazed at the passion and beauty of this magnificent piece. The question was then and is now asked : “Is it a translation from the Irish, or is it original ?” By enabling readers to see the unrhymed translation from the original Irish lyric of “Roiseen Dubh,” which Mangan used in writing his poem, the matter may be finally settled. The Gaelic author was one Costello, of Ballyhaunis, and Mangan got his English version from one of Ferguson’s articles in the *University Magazine* on Hardiman’s *Irish Minstrelsy*. It will be seen that the most famous of Mangan’s poems is an extremely free rendering, a transformation of an undoubtedly good love-song into a much finer and grander poem—a national apotheosis. It is to all intents and purposes an original poem :—

“Oh, rose-bud, let there be not sorrow on you on account of what  
happened to you ;  
The princes are coming over the sea, and they are moving over the  
ocean.  
Your pardon will come from the Pope of Rome in the East,  
And spare not the Spanish wine on my Roiseen Dubh.



The road is long over which I brought you from yesterday to this day—

Over mountains I went with her, and under sails across the sea—  
The Erne I passed at a bound, though great the flood,  
And there was music of strings on each side of me, my Roiseen Dubh.

You have killed me, my fair one, and may you suffer dearly for it !  
And my soul within is in love for you, and that neither of yesterday nor to-day.

You left me weak and feeble in aspect and in form ;  
Do not discard me, and I pining for you, my Roiseen Dubh.

I would walk the dew with you and the desert of the plains,  
In hope that I would obtain love from you, or part of my desire.  
Fragrant little mouth ! You had promised me that you had love for me ;  
And she is the flower of Munster, she, my Roiseen Dubh !

Oh ! smooth rose, modest, of the round white breasts !  
You are she that left a thousand pains in the centre of my heart.  
Fly with me, oh, first love ! and leave the country.  
And if I could, would I not make a queen of you, my Roiseen Dubh !

If I had a plough, I would plough against the hills ;  
And I would make the Gospel in the middle of the Mass for my black rose-bud ;  
I would give a kiss to the young girl that would give her youth to me,  
And I would make delights behind the fort with my Roiseen Dubh.

The Erne shall be in its strong flood, the hills shall be uptorn ;  
And the sea shall have its waves red, and blood shall be spilled ;  
Every mountain valley, and every moor throughout Ireland shall be on high,  
Some day before (you) shall perish, my Roiseen Dubh !”

Now, Mangan's "Dark Rosaleen" has only a remote resemblance to the literal version just quoted. To be sure, he mentions the Erne, and the plough, and the Pope and the Spanish ale ; but what splendid use he makes of them ? Mangan's poem is an allegory—Dark Rosaleen being Ireland, the priests the foreign auxiliaries coming to her aid, and the wine and Spanish ale allusions to the weapons and other expected assistance from Spain and Italy. Take the third, fifth, and sixth verses of Mangan's poem, which are the nearest in affinity, and compare them with the original, and it will be proved what little similarity there is between the two poems :—

“ All day long in unrest  
To and fro do I move ;  
The very soul within my breast  
Is wasted for you, love !



The heart in my bosom faints  
 To think of you, my queen !  
 My life of life, my saint of saints,  
     My dark Rosaleen !  
     My own Rosaleen !  
 To hear your sweet and sad complaints,  
 My life, my love, my saint of saints,  
     My dark Rosaleen !

Over dews, over sands  
 Will I fly for your weal :  
 Your holy, delicate, white hands  
     Shall girdle me with steel.  
 At home, in your emerald bowers,  
     From morning's dawn till e'en,  
 You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,  
     My dark Rosaleen !  
     My fond Rosaleen !  
 You'll think of me through daylight's hours,  
 My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,  
     My dark Rosaleen !

I could scale the blue air,  
 I could plough the high hills,  
 O, I could kneel all night in prayer,  
     To heal your many ills !  
 And one beamy smile from you  
     Would float like light between  
 My toils and me, my own, my true,  
     My dark Rosaleen !  
     My fond Rosaleen !  
 Would give me life and soul anew,  
 A second life, a soul anew,  
     My dark Rosaleen !"

Early in July, Mangan sent his beautiful "Vision of Connaught in the Thirteenth Century," to the *Nation*. Irish readers will remember its superb metrical structure, its marvellous music, its weird imaginative power. Its opening lines lift one to a higher level than was possible with any of his Irish contemporaries :—

"I walked entranced  
     Through a land of Morn ;  
 The sun, with wondrous excess of light,  
     Shone down and glanced  
     Over seas of corn  
 And lustrous gardens aleft and right."

Robert Buchanan, in calling it "a piece of wondrous



workmanship,"\* is only giving it its bare due as a technical triumph. But it is something more—it is instinct with life, and gives us an almost blinding glimpse of a world of imagination rarely visible to even the greater poets. When Mangan

“Dreamed this dream  
Of the time and reign  
Of Cahal Mor of the Wine-Red Hand,”

he was living a life, the misery of which is quite indescribable. Such money as he earned—well, enough has been said of his use of it. Some of his letters to Duffy, written about this time, are by turns humorous and tragic. In sending the “Lament over the ruins of Teach-Molaga” (Timoleague, Co. Cork), he affects merriment in his odd way :—

“Clarence is come—false, fleeting, perjured Clarence, who stabbed me in my grave near (Timoleague). I trust, my dear Duffy, that poor Shane O’Colain † will not thus greet me on my entrance into Hades. I have just finished his “Lament,” and hope I have done it at least justice. The measure I have chosen is one peculiarly elegiacal—namely, eight syllables, twelve syllables, ten syllables, and six syllables to each verse. But enough. Again to quote my namesake,

“My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep!”

And he adds :—

“In truth I feel as if I should never laugh again.”

In another letter he says :—

“What I sent you lastly was vastly ghastly. I hope the enclosed will be more to your taste. Alter any word in it you like, or rather, any word you don’t like.”

He had previously promised Duffy, to whom he looked as a generous employer and friend, to give the National movement the fruits of his genius, the aid of his pen, and he wrote :—

“I promise in an especial manner—and my friend Duffy may, if he will, make the promise public—that I will begin in earnest to labour for my country henceforward, and that, come weal or woe, life or death, glory or shame, the triumphal car or the gallows, I will adhere to the fortunes of my fellow-patriots. And I invoke the vengeance of hell upon me if ever I prove false to this promise.” ‡

\* In “A Look Round Literature.”

† John Collins, author of the “Lament” in question.

‡ He wished Duffy to propose him as a member of the Confederation, but the former dissuaded him from the idea, in view of his principal dependence upon Tory employers.



He did not prove false thenceforward till his death, a not distant event; his noble teachings, his earnest exhortations in the National papers form the most inspiring part of the poetical inheritance left to his countrymen. He adds to the last quoted letter one of those bursts of gratitude which all who knew Mangan remember as specially characteristic of him:—

“May God bless you! You have been to me, as Godwin remarked of Curran, the sincerest friend I have ever had.”

He carried to extremes the gratefulness which distinguished him, and sometimes spoke of small services rendered to him, and even of returned benefits, with extraordinary effusiveness. Other letters to Duffy\* have their inevitable joke, as thus:—

“I will shortly give you a funeral wail from the Turkish on the decease of one of the sultans. The spirit of the composition closely resembles what we meet with in Irish poems. . . . The small ballad from one of Muller’s Greek melodies I have thrown into several stanzas. It is, however, all one in the Greek.”

Or he introduces proof of his knowledge of all that is weird or fabled or grotesque, opening one letter thus:—

“May Gog and Magog watch over thee, my friend! Mayest thou find favour in the eyes of Brahma the Originator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Seeva the Destroyer.”

He not infrequently descends from his highest altitudes to ask for a very small service or a loan. At other times he describes a vision, as in this instance:—

“I had a singular dream a few nights back. There was a light and a throng—not the ‘lurid light and trampling throng’ of Coleridge, yet quite as impressive. In other words, a monster moon shone in the firmament, and a crowd of people were beneath, with whom I held, as I suppose, a long conference. I say ‘as I suppose,’ for all that I distinctly remember was that, turning away from them, I found myself on the verge of a precipice, with the words of St. John in my mouth: ‘And none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?’”

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\* See *Four Years of Irish History*.





## CHAPTER XVI.

MANGAN'S ADVICE TO HIS COUNTRYMEN—HIS PATRIOTIC FEELING  
 —“A CRY FOR IRELAND”—“THE IRISH CATHOLIC MAGAZINE”  
 —“ANTHOLOGIA HIBERNICA”—MANGAN'S DESPAIR—IN  
 SOCIETY—CARLETON AND THE POET—MANGAN'S CHANGES OF  
 RESIDENCE—THE MACDERMOTTS—DR. ANSTER—FATHER  
 MEEHAN—EXCUSES TO M'GLASHAN—THE FAMINE.

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“Alone the Poet lives—alone he dies.  
 Cain-like, he bears the isolating brand  
 Upon his brow of sorrow. True, his hand  
 Is pure from blood-guilt, but in human eyes  
 His is a darker crime than that of Cain.”—MANGAN.

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MANGAN adopted various signatures in the *Nation* during 1846. Several of his poems were signed “Monos,” such as “Shane Bwee” and “Cean Salla”; “The Saw-Mill,” already quoted, was signed “A Mourne-r,” and another poem, entitled “An Invitation,” purporting to come from an American, is subscribed “A Yankee.” He urges the “friends of Freedom” to abandon worn-out and decrepit Europe for a “healthier, holier clime,”

“Where your souls may grow in strength,  
 And whence Love hath exiled Fear!”

Here are a couple of the more inspiring verses of this poem :—

“Cross with me the Atlantic foam,  
 And your genuine goal is won.  
 Purely Freedom's breezes blow,  
 Merrily Freedom's children roam  
 By the doedal Amazon  
 And the glorious Ohio!

Thither take not gems and gold,  
 Nought from Europe's robber-hoards  
 Must profane the Western Zones.  
 Thither take ye spirits bold,  
 Thither take ye ploughs and swords,  
 And your fathers' buried bones.”



In his "Counsel to the Worldly Wise," published in the *Nation* a little later in the year, we have Mangan's only recorded tribute to the work of Thomas Davis, expressed in a quaint and characteristic fashion :—

" Go A-Foot and go A-Head !  
 That's the way to prosper ;  
 Whoso must be carriage-led  
 Suffereth serious loss per  
 Day in health as well as wealth  
 By that laziness with which  
 Walkers have from Birth warred ;  
 And ere long grim Death by stealth  
 Mounts the tilbury, and the rich  
 Loller tumbleth earthward !

Also, keep your conscience pure—  
*Neither lie nor borrow ;*  
 He who starves to-day, be sure  
 Always carves to-morrow.  
 March in front ; don't sulk behind ;  
*Dare to live*, though sneering groups  
 Dub you *rara avis*—  
 ' Serve your country—love your kind,'  
 And whene'er your spirit droops,  
 Think of Thomas Davis ! "

There is another of his minor pieces, written for the *Nation* at the same time, which merits attention. It was suggested by a landscape by Maclise, and is called " The Lovely Land." It shows that Mangan was very sensible of the beauties of Irish scenery :—

" This is some rare climate olden,  
 Peopled not by men, but fays,  
 Some lone land of *genii* days,  
 Storyful and golden !

O ! for magic power to wander  
 One bright year through such a land !  
 Might I even one hour stand  
 On the blest hills yonder ?

• • • • •

What divinest light is beaming  
 Over mountain, mead, and grove !  
 That blue noontide sky above  
 Seems asleep and dreaming !

• • • • •



No ! no land doth rank above thee  
 Or for loveliness or worth !  
 So shall I, from this day forth,  
 Ever sing and love thee !”

Among the many well-known poems which succeeded each other so rapidly this year in the paper was the splendid “Lamentation for Sir Maurice Fitzgerald,” which an Irishman can hardly read without a glow of pride, the “Lament for Patrick Sarsfield,” the “Lament over the Ruins of Timoleague Abbey,” and “A Cry for Ireland.” What could be more admirable, more beautifully expressed, or more melodious than these verses from the last-named poem :—

“O, my grief of all griefs  
 Is to see how thy throne  
 Is usurped, whilst thyself art in thrall !  
 Other lands have their chiefs,  
 Have their kings—thou alone  
 Art a wife, yet a widow withal !  
 Alas, alas, and alas  
 For the once proud people of Banba !”\*

The high house of O’Neill  
 Is gone down to the dust,  
 The O’Brien is clanless and banned ;  
 And the steel, the red steel  
 May no more be the trust  
 Of the faithful and brave in the land !  
 Alas, alas, and alas,  
 For the once proud people of Banba !”

In the literature of passionate lament Mangan has perhaps never had a peer. So much of his poetical work is in this vein that one might expect to find a monotony of cadence, a sameness of imagery, but such is not the case. All is varied, all is picturesque, all is charged with emotion in its highest expressiveness.

He gave comparatively little of his work during 1847 to the *Nation*—it was in the *University Magazine* that most of his subsequent writings appeared. He, however, wrote a few excellent poems of a religious character for the *Irish Catholic Magazine*, which was published by James Duffy and edited by Father Meehan, who gladly found employment

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\* *Banba* is one of the oldest names by which Ireland was known to the bards.



for the poet on its staff. It only lasted a little over a year, but during its existence he contributed to it, among other things, a notable "Lamentation of Jeremias over Jerusalem," "Father Klaus of Unterwalden," "The Death and Burial of Red Hugh O'Donnell," the remarkable translation of "St. Patrick's Hymn before Tara," "David Lamenteth Saul and Jonathan," a "Te Deum Laudamus," the "Stabat Mater," and one or two other pieces, Irish or religious. His "Pompeii," too, which had appeared many years before, was reprinted in the magazine by the reverend editor. But we must turn to the *University Magazine* to find the choicest examples of his work of that year. In a series of "Anthologia Hibernica" appeared "Ellen Bawn," one of Mangan's raciest and most Irish of poems, the stately "Welcome to the Prince," beginning—

“ Lift up the drooping head  
*Meehal Dubh Mac Giolla Kierin!*  
 Hot blood yet boundeth red  
 Through the myriad veins of Erin ;”

and the more characteristic and more beautiful "Love Song," paraphrased from the Irish, which follows. There is a personal note in this poem which affords an excuse for reprinting it here, Mangan's work being the best source of information as to his moods and feelings :—

“ Lonely from my home I come  
To cast myself upon your tomb,  
And to weep.  
Lonely from my lonesome home,  
My lonesome house of grief and gloom,  
While I keep  
Vigil often all night long  
For your dear, dear sake,  
Praying many a prayer so wrong  
That my heart would break !

Gladly, O my blighted flower,  
Sweet Apple of my bosom's Tree,  
  Would I now  
Stretch me in your dark death-bower  
Beside your corpse, and lovingly  
  Kiss your brow ;  
But we'll meet ere many a day,  
Never more to part,  
For even now I feel the clay  
Gathering round my heart.







But in a further poem of 1847, entitled "Moreen, a Love Lament," Mangan has some terrible verses concerning his hopeless life. Some of these, amended, were introduced into a poem which was written as a reply to a friend who had invited him to visit him—a reply in verse which is so truly autobiographical that it cannot be withheld from readers. This poem, which he called "The Groans of Despair," and which was not published during his life-time, was suggested by "Moreen," and there is considerable similarity between them. I quote the former poem as being distinctly finer. It is one of the numerous pieces of high merit by him not included in any collection. I have introduced one verse—the sixth—from "Moreen," as properly belonging to the present poem:—

"Oh no, my friend! I abide unseen—  
*You* paint your home as left forlorn?—  
 Yet ask not *me* to meet you more,  
 This heart of mine, once gay and green,  
 Far more than yours is now outworn,  
 And feels as 'twere one cancered sore;  
 I walk alone in trouble  
 Revolving thoughts of gloom,  
 Each passing day doth but redouble  
 The miseries of my doom!

In trouble? Oh, how weak a word!—  
 In woe, in horror, let me say—  
 In wretchedness without a name!  
 The wrath of God, the avenging sword  
 Of Heav'n burns in my breast alway,  
 With ever freshly torturing flame!  
 And desolateness and terror  
 Have made me their dark mate—  
 The ghastly brood of sin and error  
 Repented all—TOO LATE!

I see black dragons mount the sky,  
 I see earth yawn beneath my feet—  
 I feel within the asp, the worm  
 That will not sleep and cannot die,  
 Fair though may show the winding sheet!  
 I hear all night, as through a storm  
 Hoarse voices calling, calling  
 My name upon the wind—  
 All omens, monstrous and appalling,  
 Affright my guilty mind.





I exult alone in one wild hour,  
 That hour in which the red cup drowns  
 The memories it anon renews  
 In ghastlier guise, in fiercer power—  
*Then* Fancy brings me golden crowns,  
 And visions of all brilliant hues  
 Lap my lost soul in gladness,  
 Until I awake again,  
 And the dark lava-fires of madness  
 Once more sweep through my brain !

You tell me truth may win me back—  
 Alas ! your words but pierce like spears !  
 Alas ! my hopes lie long inurned !  
 The gone is gone—man cannot track  
 Afresh his course of blasted years  
 Or bid flowers bloom where fires have burned ;  
 Such flowers bloomed once around me  
 But those are dead !—all—all !  
 And now the fiends who've bound me  
 Hold me in hopeless thrall !

In those resplendent years of Youth  
 When virtue seems the true romance,  
 And nought else lures the generous mind,  
 I might, even had I strayed from Truth,  
 Have yet retrieved my road perchance,  
 And left mine errors far behind—  
 But return now ?—oh, never  
 Never and never more !  
 Truth's holy fire is quenched for ever  
 Within my bosom's core !

Farewell ! my friend. For you fair hope  
 Still smiles—though lone, you still are free.  
 But, for myself, I nightly die—  
 In dreams I see that black gate ope  
 That shows my future doom to me  
 In pictured forms that cannot lie !  
 Farewell ! forget my story  
 I live beneath a ban :  
 But to the all-wise God be glory,  
 Whate'er becomes of Man !”

If there is anything in literature more awful, more despairing, than these verses into which Mangan has put so much genius, so much emotion, the present writer is unacquainted with it. Dante himself could hardly have written a more terrifying description of the feelings of a lost soul in the *Inferno*. The verses are marvellously expressive of Mangan's thoughts in his moments of darkest hopelessness. But he was not very often,



fortunately for his reason, and for the comfort of his admirers, in such a ghastly state of mind. He would dash off a squib of the most whimsical kind on the same day that he would write one of his most desolate, most dolorous complaints. But even then he would avoid his best friends, and, unless under peculiar circumstances, would never go into a house whose inmates he did not know intimately. He would sometimes promise to go, and then regret it for weeks, and vow that it would never happen again. It is to be feared that his presence was sought at reunions—when it was sought at all, which was rarely enough at this time—rather for the purposes of curiosity than from motives of admiration, or sympathy. Still, there were a few people sincerely anxious to help in bringing him back to decent society.

Once, as I am informed by one who had the anecdote from William Carleton, the latter was invited with Mangan to a social party at the hospitable house of Mrs. Hutton, of Summerhill. Mangan, rather to the astonishment of his friends, accepted the invitation, and when Carleton arrived, was known to be in the house, but not with the party assembled. The novelist was asked to fetch Mangan out of the room to which he had retreated. "We cannot induce him to come into the drawingroom," said the hostess. Carleton—who knew Mangan and his ways very well, and who was in some sort a boon companion of his, though Mangan had no moral sympathy with his coarser nature, and hardly one single point in common with him—asked: "Is there any whiskey about?" "Yes," said Mrs. Hutton, "the butler will show you the supper-room, and you will find a decanter of whiskey on the sideboard there." Carleton proceeded to look for the poet, whom he eventually found hidden under cloaks, coats and wraps in one of the rooms. "What are you doing there?" queried Carleton. "Seeking an opportunity of escape," faltered the poet: "I had no right to come here—I don't know how I did come." "Well," said the novelist, "come and have a nip of something which will put courage and life in you." He gave Mangan a glassful of whiskey, and took one himself, and after a while the timid poet allowed his captor to introduce him to the hostess and her guests, whom he soon delighted by his brilliant talk, but whom he also gladly left.

It was in Father Meehan's "attic," or in the *Nation* office that he might sometimes be met by those who had



that privilege. The kind-hearted priest was always ready to welcome him to his humble fare. He had free ingress at all times to the presbytery in Lower Exchange Street. He was well known by appearance and name to the other dwellers in the house, and especially to the old servant-woman, who is reported to have said to him on one occasion when he presented himself with a more than usually woe-begone appearance:—

“Lord forgive you, Mr. Mangan, you might be rolling in your coach if you’d only keep from the liquor, and make ballads for Mr. Nugent in Cook Street”—

the said Mr. Nugent being the printer of countless street ballads and “come-all-ye’s,” which were, doubtless, the only “poems” the simple old woman cared to know anything about. Mangan, in his humble way, merely replied:—

“Likely enough, Essy, likely enough, but don’t be too hard on me.”

He was always changing his residence, and nobody knew at any given time where he lived. One summer evening, according to Father Meehan, an old crone brought him to his door, saying that she had given him a lodging in a hayloft in Copper Alley,\* but could not allow him to remain any longer, alleging that he actually wanted a candle at night.

“Sure, sir,” said she, “you might as well think of bringin’ a burnin’ sod of turf into a powder magazine. I’ll have no more to do with him—let him pay me, and he can have his tar-water (?) and the papers he was writing.”

Yet Mangan need not have lived his nomadic existence had he wished otherwise. James Duffy, the publisher, offered him board and lodging in his house, and the famous Father Kenyon, the most virile of the polemics of his day, would have been glad to carry him off to his home in Temple-derry in the South had the erratic poet allowed him. Mr. MacDermott, an eminent Dublin alderman and merchant, who admired his work, did once succeed in getting Mangan to stay with him and his family at his Glasnevin house for a while, but he soon escaped to his

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\* In Copper Alley, off Fishamble Street, Kane (or Kean) O’Hara, the celebrated author of “Midas,” “The Golden Pippin,” etc., was born.



old resorts. This MacDermott family was a very musical one, the alderman and his two brothers being admirable vocalists, while their sister, Miss Mary MacDermott, had a beautiful contralto voice. One of the brothers, Thomas Harris MacDermott, was an excellent composer, some of whose songs have been widely popular. It was while at Glasnevin in July, 1847, that Mangan wrote for MacDermott the additional verse for Bloomfield's "Welcome, Peace!" The composer was anxious to set the lyric to music, but there was only one stanza in the original: hence the following, which is as poetical, to say the least, as the verse of Bloomfield:—

"All around me liveth still,  
All, as in my childhood's hours ;  
Still flows on the tinkling rill,  
And still the dell is rich with flowers,  
Here again my heart lives o'er  
Its early golden dreams of joy,  
And now, amid these groves once more,  
I feel myself almost a boy."

Miss MacDermott was very prudish, and also a determined temperance reformer, and never forgave Mangan for baffling her efforts to reclaim him. That he was always "on the move" at this time may be gathered from his letters to Dr. Anster written in this and the following two years. They are all addressed from different lodgings. The translator of *Faust* was a generous man, and took a stronger personal interest in the poet than many others who knew him. Mangan acknowledges his kindnesses in a sketch of him which he wrote in 1849, where he says:—

"He did not introduce me on a sudden into all the halls of the great marble palace of his intellect, nor did I care to make him acquainted with all the nooks and corners of the little clay hovel of mine. At some other time I shall speak of his generous kindness towards myself personally—at a period, too, when few except himself would have said that I had the shadow of a claim to it."

The letter which follows is dated March 26th, 1847, and concerns, like almost all his correspondence, his personal affairs. Indeed, a large proportion of his letters, unrelieved by his fitful sparkles of wit, or his quaintness of expression, is anything but exhilarating. The theme is always the same—lack of pence and peace:—



"MY DEAR DR. ANSTER,

I do not know for which I ought to be more grateful to you—your delicacy or your generosity. God bless you! You needed not, however, have selected anybody as the medium of your bounties. From a purse-proud aristocrat I should certainly have resented anything of the kind as an insult—to you I have only to offer my humblest thanks. I hope to be able to wait on you soon, and make my acknowledgments in person. Meantime, allow me to assure you that I am at present placed beyond the necessity of trespassing farther on your kindness. I am still struggling, it is true, and struggling most strenuously, but I hope to be able to hold my head in society yet. As far, at least, as penitence for the past and exertion for the future can retrieve me, I will, and, with the help of the Living God, before many days, emancipate myself.

I fear I write very incoherently—for I have been in a very feverish state for the last week or so. I owe £5 to my landlord, and his forbearance towards me in not casting me into prison half maddens me. I see him almost once a day, and as I sneak by him, I feel as if I had lost a year of my existence. I have long wished to leave this neighbourhood for a healthier locality, but alas! in reference to him I am compelled to say, as Priuli remarks to Jaffier\*—

'Rent is our bond.'—

And of course I must respect this.

You perceive that, after all, I could not conclude without a very indifferent effort at a joke.

Ever yours faithfully and gratefully

J. C. MANGAN."

For Father Meehan Mangan reserved his warmest sentiments. He has not shown his feeling to the fullest extent in the personal account of him which he wrote before his death, that being intended for the public eye, but there is ample evidence of his affection for him in the recollections which I have heard from surviving friends of both, and even from those who did not know the priest at all. His well-known rough tongue notwithstanding, Father Meehan had the kindest of hearts, and would share his last meal or his last shilling with the needy. In the biographical account, or rather character-sketch, of Father Meehan which he wrote just before his death, Mangan gives, in his own quaint way, his on-the-surface opinion of him as an historian, an Irishman, and a man. But his regard for him was deeper than any newspaper reader would gather from such a sketch. A short extract will give a notion of the whole article:—

"I confess that, personally, I myself do not care much about the political history of my unfortunate country. Successful revolutions I

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\* These are characters in Otway's *Venice Preserved*.



like well enough to read of; but failures and defeats are matters too disagreeable for me to contemplate. The shy and shabby character of our pike, poker, and pitchfork rebellions is a thing that I cannot away with. As a matter of course, therefore, I was really altogether ignorant of the fact that a 'Confederation' had ever existed in Kilkenny\* until I met with Mr. Meehan's admirable volume. I had, however, hardly perused half-a-dozen pages of that volume before I became deeply absorbed by the interest which the narrative excited. . . .

The disposition and temper of Mr. Meehan are lively, quick, and bordering on choleric. His Milesian blood courses rather too hotly through his veins. He is carried away by impulse, and suffers himself to float, without rudder or oar, upon the tide of the sentiment that sways him for the moment. But he is a man of a lofty and generous nature. Anything like hypocrisy is as alien from his heart and soul as the snake from his native land. He needs no sounding board under the feet of his mind, either to deliver his sentiments or to transmit his fame to after-ages. Many a writer of the present day, who has managed to get and keep hold of the uppermost button of the *paletot* of the public, is, by a long chalk, his inferior, both as an author and as a man. Of unintellectual trickery and sleight-of-hand he understands nothing. He is a genuine human being, not a mere makebelieve, or a bundle of old clothes with a mop head at the top of them."

In the last months of 1847 clusters of poems by him, in instalments, entitled "Lays of Many Lands," appeared in the *University Magazine*, and a further cluster, with the same title, in January of the following year. In sending the last batch to M'Glashan in December, he thus writes, excusing himself, as was his wont, for his irregularity:—

"The year draws to a close. It has furnished me with grave and serious matter for reflection, and, as I should hope, sees me a better and a wiser man than at its commencement. Henceforth, and with the beginning of the new year especially, I lead a new life. I may be unhappy, but I shall no longer be imprudent or criminal. I am making the most strenuous efforts to retrieve myself. Henceforward I will labour with redoubled sedulousness. I enclose you a Polyglot Anthology, comprising translations from the Irish, German, Danish, Swiss dialect, French, Spanish, Welsh, and Persian. They are all *bona fide* ones; and I purpose, if you please, to send you also poems from the Servian, Romaic, and Turkish; but perhaps you might think these might lengthen the article too much. But, in truth, I must rise early and work hard, as I feel that I shall almost go mad if I have not constant employment both for my head and hands."

In several of his poems written in this year, Mangan paints with lurid effect the dread famine which was then

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\* One of Father Meehan's best books is *The Confederation of Kilkenny*.

Mangan's "St Columba's Hymn to St. Bridget"  
 (verses of from the *Liber Hymnorum*)  
 appears in Duffy's *Irish Catholic Magazine*  
 in April, 1848. In May, 1848 appeared



devastating the land. Looking upon the results of the dearth of food, as seen in Dublin, and from what he daily heard, Mangan struck a bolder, fiercer chord than usual in his poems, even urging his countrymen in some poems to rise in arms against England, and to extort their rights; but he especially preaches self-reliance:—

“ Sound the timbrel, wind the horn,  
 Arise to life at length, or never!  
 Show the world the hour is born  
 That breaks our country's chains for ever!  
 Ask America for nought,  
 Implore not France's proud protection,  
 Through yourselves, as true men ought,  
 Work out your country's resurrection!

Work but well, and Earth nor Hell  
 Can stay your country's resurrection!”

In a translation from the Greek which followed close upon the last quoted piece, he introduces an allusion to the famine, which was almost universal, and to which he himself and others in the city had not been altogether a stranger, in these terms:—

“ Gaunt Famine rideth in the van,  
 And Pestilence, with myriad arrows,  
 Followeth in fiery guise: they spare  
 Nor Woman, Child, nor Man!  
 The stricken Dead lie without burrows,  
 By roadsides, black and bare!

O God! it is a fearful sign—  
 This fierce, mad, wasting, dragon hunger!  
 Were there a land that could at most  
 But sink and peak and pine  
 Infant-like, when such Agony wrung her,  
 That land indeed were lost!

Were there a land whose people could  
 Lie down beneath Heaven's blue pavilions  
 And gasp, and perish—famished slaves!  
 While the ripe golden food  
 That might and should have fed their millions  
 Rotted above their graves—

That land were doomed!”



Finally, leaving aside many powerful verses on the same subject, we have these quaint lines, in a poem called "When Hearts were Trumps":—

"Spades are *now* trumps: far and near  
All seek out the sexton:  
What with cholera, famine, fear,  
Men ask what comes next on.  
No more marryings, no more cheer:  
All is dark and lonely:  
Town and country both appear  
One wide churchyard only."



Mangan had foreseen the terrible plague that was to depopulate the country, and had entreated the national leaders not to let the people starve in myriads without one blow in their defence. When too late, when the people had become spiritless and weak through starvation, a feeble effort was made to repair a lost opportunity, with the result that a partial and squalid insurrection was crushed with inglorious ease, and amidst the laughter of the world. Mangan wrote of it with bitterness:—

"We have fought, we have failed—  
We must now learn to bear—  
Our foe's flags are not nailed,  
As ours *were*, to the air!  
So, hurrah for the trampler!  
And hug we his chain—  
Till some battle-field ampler  
Lie bared for us twain."

And in a poem called "Consolation and Counsel" he lays the blame largely to the love of flattery, the readiness to believe what is pleasant to believe, which are such prominent characteristics of the Irish temperament. Here are the second and third verses of the poem. The allusion to O'Connell in the third is at once true and well expressed:—

"In sheer despair and dreariness of soul,  
I sometimes yield me to such thoughts of gloom;  
I sigh lest Innisfail has reached her goal,  
And be, indeed, the Isle of Doom!  
Her glories wane and darken, star by star;  
Her highest hopes turn out but swindling dreams;  
Her lamp of freedom, seen through clouds afar,  
Shines but by cold phosphoric gleams!"



Alas! we have vaunted all too much our past,  
Or fondly hearkened those who vaunted us!  
We have scarcely deigned to mark how creed and caste  
Divide us wide as Pole and Russ.  
Drinking, like wine, the flattery of that chief,  
Who rarely scourged us but with bulrush rods,  
We have waxed o'erwanton, till our own belief,  
If sane, would make us demi-gods! "



## CHAPTER XVII.

A TRIBUTE TO MANGAN'S RHYMING POWERS—THE NATIONAL FEELING OF MANGAN—THE "UNITED IRISHMAN"—LETTER TO MITCHEL—THE "IRISH TRIBUNE"—JOHN SAVAGE—JOSEPH BRENNAN ON MANGAN—MANGAN IN DAYLIGHT—MANGAN'S APPEALS TO ANSTER, DUFFY, AND JAMES HAUGHTON—HIS PROMISES—ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL—R. D. WILLIAMS—THE "IRISHMAN"—O'DONOVAN ON MANGAN—POEMS IN THE "IRISHMAN"—JOSEPH BRENNAN TO MANGAN—MANGAN'S REPLY—BRENNAN'S DESCRIPTION OF CLARENCE.

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"Tears darkened long thy bodily vision nightly;  
Yet then, even then, the Interior Eye saw brightly."—MANGAN.

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SEVERAL references have already been made to Mangan's incorrigible love of unusual and difficult rhymes and complicated metres, and it has been shown that the concoction of mere rhymes had been a favourite pastime with him from youth. He clearly found the early habit ineradicable, and abandoned it only in his last days, when he had themes which moved his very soul. Then the notes of the organ, the trumpet tones of his higher self would roll forth in majesty and power. So much of his poetical work is characterised, or, as may be held, defaced by intellectual jugglery, that of his eight hundred and more poems, about three hundred only are worthy of preservation. If he is never prosaic, he is too often eccentric. But his contemporaries liked him in any *role*, whether that of a great poet or mere wonder-worker in words. In 1847 an eminent bishop of the Church of Ireland, the Right Rev. William Fitzgerald, addressed him in a poem which was much commented upon at the time of its appearance in the *University Magazine*, chiefly, perhaps, by reason of its political flavour. Here are the opening lines of the piece, which has been erroneously attributed to Sir Samuel Ferguson in the



recent biography of that distinguished Irish poet written by his widow :—

“Various and curious are thy strains, O Clarence Mangan !  
 Rhyming and chiming in a very odd way :  
 Rhyming and chiming—the like of them no man can  
 Easily find in a long summer’s day !  
 For the true Irish metre is full of tricks and rogueries,  
 Slipping from your fingers at unawares ;  
 Sometimes full of fun, and frolicing and rollicking,  
 Sometimes pensive and full of cares.  
 For the Bards are the pulse of the big heart of Erin,  
 Throbbing wildly, now quick, now slow ;  
 Now ready to burst with good nature and good humour ;  
 Now ready to break with a load of woe.  
 Thou, too, art a Bard—and thy Spirit’s River  
 Is fed by each streamlet from her founts of Song ;  
 Pure thro’ her frowning glens it glides in darkness,  
 It sparkles in her sunshine pure and strong.  
 Go wander in thy strength thro’ the scenes of Erin’s history,  
 Pour thy glad waters round many an abbey’s walls ;  
 Let the fields of old triumphs be green again with verdure,  
 And awake the echoes of the princes’ halls.”

At the time this was written Mangan had boldly identified himself with the more extreme section of Irish politicians—Mitchel and his friends—and when the author of *Hugh O'Neill* seceded from the *Nation*, he carried not only Devin Reilly along with him, but Mangan also. The latter never went so far as Mitchel and Reilly in their hostility to Duffy’s paper, but for a time, at any rate, he deserted the *Nation*. Mitchel very erroneously says :—

“Clarence Mangan never wrote another line for the *Nation*, nor during the short career of the *United Irishman*, for any other publication than this.”

On the contrary, Mangan wrote several pieces for the *Nation* after the suppression of Mitchel’s paper, and contributed to the *University Magazine* during its existence, and though he certainly sympathised with Mitchel personally, he does not seem to have lost his esteem for Duffy. He wrote only three poems for the *United Irishman*, during its sixteen weeks of life ; namely, “A Vision,” “The Marseillaise,” and the “Irish National Hymn”—not one of which is up to his highest level. The last, “from one whom some have called a seer,” is the best-known, but its peculiarly unsuitable metre, so fantastic, irregular, and unconventional, rather injures it as a poem. It has not the



swing or the ring or the fine diction of his other national pieces. There is a letter of Mangan's at this period which, more than these poems, shows the strength of his political feelings. When after the fifth number of the paper, a prosecution of the editor was talked of, Mangan wrote promptly to Mitchel to express his sympathy and his resolve :—

"MY DEAR M.,—There is a rumour in circulation that the Government intend to commence a prosecution against you. Insignificant an individual as I am, and unimportant to society as my political opinions may be, I, nevertheless, owe it, not merely to the kindness you have shown me, but to the cause of my country, to assure you that I thoroughly sympathise with your sentiments, that I identify my view of public affairs with yours, and that I am prepared to go all lengths with you and your intrepid friend, Devin Reilly, for the achievement of our national independence. I mean to write you, in a few days, a long letter explanatory of the course which, I think, it becomes the duty of every Irish patriot to pursue at the present eventful epoch. Meanwhile, you are at liberty to make what use you please of this preliminary communication.

Yours in life and death,

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN."

The "long letter" never reached Mitchel, and the services of the poet in the imminent struggle of Mitchel and his friends with the Government were never availed of. The paper was suppressed, and Mitchel was deported to a penal colony, while Mangan continued his weary pilgrimage towards his not far distant goal. For the *Tribune*, one of the immediate successors of the *United Irishman*, he wrote "The *Tribune's* Hymn for Pentecost," and then, after its speedy suppression, returned to the *Nation* fold. John Savage, one of the promoters of the *Tribune*, has left us a not uninteresting, if badly-written, reminiscence of Mangan, as he saw him, which should be quoted at this point :—

"A crooked little street, called Trinity, off one of the greatest thoroughfares of the city. The principal propellers of the excitement which moves the city and country have their being in this crooked little street, famous in Irish history, in the shape of the two journals, the *Irish Tribune* and *Irish Felon*, both preaching the same creed and rivals only in their devotion to it. Out of either of these offices—they are side by side, like brothers in a fight—we perceive a strange-looking individual has glided, even as a shadow on a wall.

That shy, abstracted-looking man has held not the least powerful talisman by which a nation is moved. We must look at him more minutely. He is about the middle size, and glides more than walks, yet at that is but infirm. He stoops, and is abstracted. A threadbare





dark coat—is it brown or black?—buttoned up to the throat, sheathes his attenuated body. His eye is lustrously mild and beautifully blue,\* and his silver-white locks surround, like a tender halo, the once beautiful, and now pale and intellectual, face of the prematurely-aged man before us. He glides along and through the people, who are naturally attracted to his locality, as if he did not belong to the same earth with them. Nor does he. His steps seem as if they were not directed by any thought, but mechanically wended their way to his wretched abode."

Joseph Brenan, too, one of the truest of Irish poets, and a close friend of the writer just quoted and of Mangan, in an article written after the latter's death, thus alludes to the utter abandonment of Mangan during these, his last years :—

"What a life was thine, and alas, how suggestive of saddest, dreariest reflections !

Six months ago you were a homeless, houseless wanderer through the streets of the city, shunned by the opulent, who could have relieved you with the crumbs from their table, and utterly unknown, save in your deathless song, to those epicures of taste who banqueted on the rich repast your genius provided them in newspapers and periodicals. You were dubbed 'drunkard' by one and 'opium-eater' by another. The Pharisee whom you asked for alms gave you a homily—the Nice Scented Gentleman who admired your 'soul mated with song' fled all contact with your person, as though you were a pollution; and need we wonder that that soul of thine, sickened and disgusted at the unrealities of life—at this eternal cant about Christian charity and commiseration for human errors and failings—longed and pined for that shelter which God alone can give?"

So few and indifferent had his friends become, that Mangan might have exclaimed with Rowe,

"Where are my friends?

Ah ! where, indeed ! They stand aloof,

And view my desolation from afar—

When they pass by, they shake their heads in scorn !"

He had been known to many, but was befriended by few. Those who knew him slightly and saw him in his rare appearances by day were almost ashamed to stop and

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\* Mr. Martin MacDermott has made particular reference to Mangan's eyes : "He appeared to me just as he is described by Mitchel and Father Meehan, except that one peculiarity that struck me greatly appears to have escaped their notice—the intense blue of his eyes, which were of a deep ultramarine, like the waters of Lake Lemane. I have only seen in one other countenance eyes of the same brilliancy and depth of colour. The effect was startling in a face otherwise so wan."



speak to so weird a figure, and neither did Mangan care to be questioned or accosted in the streets. A passing word might be exchanged, but that was all. Generally he would take as little notice, in his abstractedness, of a friendly salutation, as of a stare of scorn or curiosity. Price speaks of him as, in those days,

“crawling through our streets, grotesque in figure, mean in attire, bread, a comb, pens, and manuscript sticking from his pockets, his hair long and unkempt, and with the dreamy enthusiasm of the opium-eater flickering at times across his sallow features,”

and D'Arcy McGee gives us a glimpse of him as he saw him just before his death :—

“Poor fellow ! I remember meeting him in the streets of Dublin as if it were yesterday, looking like one of his favourite German myths, ‘The Man Without a Shadow.’ He was standing in his bare brown coat, stooped and attenuated, bewildered at the whirl of life around him, like an anatomy new risen from the dead, with grizzled white hair bristling on his colourless and once handsome face, his cold, big blue eyes staring vacantly, and his thin hand clutching a walking-stick.”

Early in 1848, Mangan became very ill, and more distressed in circumstances than ever before—lacking the power of earning even the scantiest livelihood. He then wrote some despairing letters to Gavan Duffy, James Haughton, the philanthropist, and Dr. Anster. He was living at 61 New Street, when, in a moment of agitation, he wrote the following note to the last named gentleman :—

61 New Street,  
28th April, 1848.

“MY DEAR SIR,—My brother will convey this note to you. He is, like myself, in a very wretched and deplorable state. He is of opinion that you might, perhaps, be able to recommend him to some person who would give him employment. His trade is cabinet-making. If you could but grant him what he petitions for you would confer a great and lasting favour on him and me.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Ever yours faithfully and gratefully,

JOHN ANSTER.”

This epistle, now lying before me, is thus endorsed by the genial recipient :—

“This strange note is from Mangan; on being examined as to what the meaning of putting my name to it was, his brother replied, that he supposed it was nervousness.

J. A.”



When Father Meehan visited him at his lodgings about this time he found Mangan and his brother

“in a miserable back room, destitute of every comfort, a porter bottle doing duty for a candlestick, and a blanketless pallet for a bed and writing table. On expostulating with him, and giving him a sum of money—the gift of a sympathising friend—he vowed that he would endeavour to retrieve himself, and make amends for the past. But, alas for promises! they were broken as soon as made.”

To (I believe) James Haughton, who was an enthusiastic temperance advocate, he wrote as follows:—

“DEAR AND RESPECTED SIR,—Perhaps I may venture to hope that you have not altogether forgotten me. I, on my part, have never ceased to remember my promise to you. That promise has, if I may so speak, burned itself into my brain and memory. It is written on my heart, and chronicled on the tablets of my spirit. It forms my last thought before I lie down at night—my first when I rise in the morning.

Can you, or will you, dear sir, help me to fulfil it? I trust in the Almighty God that you will. In addressing you, I address no common man. I am aware that I appeal to, perhaps, the most distinguished philanthropist of our era. The stronger, therefore, is my confidence that you will not refuse me the aid I seek at your hands.

I write to you, dear sir, from a fireless and furnitureless room, with a sick brother near me, whom I have supported for years. My heart sinks within me as I contemplate the desolation around me. I myself have abstained from animal food for a long period; yet I regretted that I was unable to buy him more than an egg on Christmas Day. But this matter of diet is a trifle. Healthy persons require little nourishment, they can subsist on bread and water. It was the apothecary's bill which, on Christmas Eve, left us without a shilling, and has obliged me even to resort since to the pawnbroker.

I call on you, dear sir, with this note; but, perhaps, you may not have leisure to see me.

Your very obedient servant,

J. C. MANGAN.”

To Duffy he wrote still more agonising letters. He considered himself especially indebted to the editor of the *Nation* for frequent assistance, and had already said:—

“All that I have written belongs to you; do with it what you please.”

And in this time of supreme and indescribable necessity, he sent him the following heartrending summons:—

“MY DEAR DUFFY,—I am utterly prostrated. I am in a state of absolute desolation of spirit.

For the pity of God come to me. I have ten words to say to you.



I implore you to come. Do not suffer me to believe that I am abandoned by Heaven and man.

I cannot stir out ; cannot look anyone in the face.

Regard this as my last request, and comply with it as if you supposed me dying.

I am hardly able to hold the pen, but I will not, and dare not, take any stimulants to enable me to do so. Too long and fatally already have I been playing that game with my shattered nerves.

Enough. God ever bless you. Oh, come !—Ever yours,

J. C. MANGAN."

He gave him also the formal promise to give up stimulants, which is subjoined. Needless to say, it was broken ; but Mangan's friends were well aware that he really endeavoured, at the cost of much inward torture, to redeem his oft-repeated vows of temperance :—

"I, James Clarence Mangan, promise, with all the sincerity that can attach to the declaration of a human being, to dedicate the portion of life that may yet remain to me to penitence and exertion.

I promise, in the solemn presence of Almighty God, and, as I trust, with His assistance, to live soberly, abstemiously, and regularly in all respects.

I promise, in the same Presence, that I will not spare myself—that I will endeavour to do all the good within my power to others—that I will constantly advocate the cause of temperance, the interests of knowledge, and the duties of patriotism—and, finally, that I will do all these things irrespective of any concern personal to myself ; and whether my exertions be productive of profit and fame to me, or, as may happen in the troublous times that I believe are at hand, eventuate in sinking me still further into poverty and (undeserved) ignominy.

This declaration of my intentions with respect to my future purposes I give Mr. Duffy. I mean, with his permission, to send similar declarations to my other literary friends, varying the phraseology of them only as his prudence may suggest.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN."

The "troublous times" referred to by Mangan in his formal promise were not long in coming. Duffy and other sympathetic friends were imprisoned. Mitchel had been transported, while McGee, Brennan, R. D. Williams, Savage and others friends managed to escape to America with some difficulty.

His health at last became so thoroughly broken that in May, 1848, he was admitted to St. Vincent's Hospital, whence he wrote on the 18th to M'Glashan :—

"Here I am at last—here, where I shall have ample time for repentance, for I cannot leave for some months, and during all that time I shall be rigorously denied everything in the shape of



stimulants. My intellect is becoming clearer. As I shall have so much leisure on my hands, possibly you might wish for some contribution after my former manner. My general health is better than it has been for years, but my lower limbs are in a dreadful state. I write to you from bed, from which I have not risen since I came hither."

On the same date he wrote the following letter to John O'Daly, whom he addresses as "John Daly, publisher, Bedford Row"\*:—

St. Vincent's Hospital, St. Stephen's Green East,  
Thursday, May 1st, 1848.

"My DEAR DALY,—It is here that I am at last. I will take it as a great favour if you can pay me a visit at your leisure, and bring with you any poems you may wish to have versified. The usual days of admission are Sundays and Thursdays—from 12 to 1, but directions have been given to the attendants to admit all friends of mine on any day—only, however before 3 o'clock. You will forgive me for not having written sooner, but I have been dreadfully upset of late.

Don't be afraid to come—there is no fever in *this* hospital. Yours ever,

J. C. MANGAN."

He wrote comparatively little for the *University Magazine* or *Nation* during this year of 1847. The latter was suppressed in the summer directly after he left the hospital, where he would not stop sufficiently long to effect a complete cure. Mrs. Atkinson, in her admirable "Life of Mary Aikenhead" has recorded briefly but excellently a few points concerning his admission and stay in the institution:—

"One day there came another poet to St. Vincent's, not indeed, to pay his respects to Mrs. Aikenhead, but to seek rest and healing in her hospital with the poor and the ungifted. A pale, ghost-like creature, with snow-white hair tossed over his lordly forehead, and falling lankly on either side of a face handsome in outline, bloodless and wrinkled, though not with age. James Clarence Mangan was carried up to St. Patrick's Ward, and laid on a nice fresh bed. His weird blue eyes, distraught with the opium-eater's dreams, closed beneath their heavy lids, and his head fell back in sleep just as it is pictured fallen back in death by Frederick William Burton's magical pencil. The change from poor Mangan's wretched garret to the comforts of the hospital ward, was fully appreciated by the sufferer, who, however, did not pour forth his gratitude in a tide of song. 'Oh! the luxury of clean sheets!' he exclaimed. Nor, indeed, did the sisters recognise in their patient the charm of one who had drunk of Hippocrene. All they could discover of the poetic organisation in this

\* Bedford Row is a continuation of Anglesea Street.

*Lt. Col. Cath. Mag. for July 1848 thus is  
Mangan's beautiful translation of  
verses of Teyl of Mac Vard's Irish  
Lament for his visit to Scotland.*



Recd from John Dalg Esg. 100 For the  
Loan upon the Expulsion of the Franciscans.  
from Multfarnham.

Feb'y 1<sup>st</sup> 1848.

J. C. Mangen.

RECEIPT IN MANGAN'S HANDWRITING







strange, sad man, was the acutely sensitive and painfully restless temperament supposed to be a characteristic of genius. The author of the German and Irish anthologies was, in truth, a rather troublesome patient. One of the sisters, willing to excuse his peculiarity, simply remarked : ' These poets have nerves at every pore. ' "

Richard D'Alton Williams, the other poet referred to by Mrs. Atkinson, was a student at the hospital at the time Mangan was admitted, and there was a friendly rivalry between them in the translation of the " Dies Irae. " Their versions are characteristic of their authors, and that is all that needs to be said of them.

The suppression of the *Nation* left Ireland practically unrepresented by a national paper, and an effort was made by Bernard Fullam, ex-manager of the *Nation*, and some literary friends to supply its place. Duffy, who was in prison, was naturally wroth when he heard of this project to supplant his paper, and after his release a wordy war followed between the rival journals. Eventually the *Irishman*, the name chosen for the new enterprise, ceased publication after about eighteen months of existence. It began with the opening of the year 1849, and with Mangan, Brenan, Keegan, " Eva, " and others made a goodly show. Mangan wrote continuously for it. Nearly thirty poems and about a dozen prose sketches by him appeared in its columns. Meanwhile, he was writing for the *Dublin University Magazine* a number of poems attributed to Irish, French, German, Danish, Swedish, Turkish, Persian, Servian, Russian, Bohemian, Moldavian, Roumanian, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and other sources. Of these the Irish were perhaps the most numerous, forming part of the series called *Anthologia Hibernica*, but there are few of them of high merit. They are generally too long, or too topographical. Of them he says:—

" Of our own versions we shall say nothing, except that we believe they will be found, upon comparison with the originals, to possess the merit of fidelity—a merit, we admit, occasionally of a very questionable kind in translations. "

And, in another place, he indicates his intention to devote himself more and more to the study of Irish poetry :—

" Slender as our talents are, " he adds, " we have become exceedingly desirous to dedicate them henceforth exclusively to the service of our country. "



It is to be feared that, in the half-year that separated the suppression of the *Nation* from the starting of the *Irishman*, Mangan was in a parlous condition. A letter from O'Donovan to a friend, though unquestionably exaggerated, enables us to estimate the depth of Mangan's wretchedness:—

"I had a visit recently," he says, "from the poet Mangan, who is in a horrid state of destitution. He had no shirt, and had slept in a dirty hall the night before. He beats Dermody and Dr. Syntax hollow, and it is my opinion he will never get any good of himself. He cannot give up drinking, and, therefore, cannot attend to any description of business. Now and again he writes a short poem, which he composes as he moves like a shadow along the streets, and writes in low public-houses, in which he gets pens and ink *gratis*. One short poem of his exhibits *seven different* inks and seven different varieties of hands, good or bad, according to the number of glasses of whiskey he had taken at the time of making the copy. He never *inverts his style*, but transfers from the excited sensorium to the dirty piece of paper amid the din of drinkers. I feel ashamed of him, but still I think he should be prevented from dying of cold in the street. He seems to have no friends but the State prisoners, who seem to sympathise with the divine intoxication of his soul, but their subscriptions will not keep him in whiskey for one fortnight. He broke the pledge four or five times,"

O'Donovan has somewhat overstated the case in this instance. The present writer has autographs of Mangan belonging to various periods, and has seen many of this special period, and except in one instance, the writing is always admirable, every letter neat and well formed. The exception referred to is clearly due to haste rather than to unsteadiness of hand. And I have never seen any sign of more than one ink having been used. The *Irishman*, almost from its first number, as has been said, numbered Mangan among its contributors. Nearly all the poems he wrote for it are original—that is to say, they are not professed translations. They are mostly addressed to his countrymen, upbraiding them for their vacillation and other weaknesses. In his first contribution, "Look Forward," he asks why the old-time spirit of resistance has grown feeble, why "the wronger" waxes stronger, and he thus proceeds:—

" Or, have we of ourselves  
Sunken even to this,  
That the mine-slave who delves  
Finds no deeper abyss?



Are we self-swindled vaunters  
 Who deem ourselves bold,  
     Though in thrall to our keepers,  
     Like those royal sleepers,  
 The Moorish enchanters  
 Held captive of old ?

O ! not so, by our souls !  
 O ! forefend it, ye powers !  
 Bounding blood as yet rolls,  
     Through these blue veins of ours !  
 We are true men, not traitors !  
 We are stern malcontents !  
     But, schooled by ripe reason,  
     We bide a sure season :  
 The genuine creators  
 Of will are—Events !”

Following swift on this poem came “The Vision of Egan O'Reilly,” “Duhallow,” and “O'Daly's Keen for Owen Roe O'Neill,” poems well worthy of a place in any collection of his works. In “The Funerals” he describes a vision, which he used to see every night, of an unending line of hearses, containing his buried thoughts :—

“What was this mystery ? Years would seem  
     To have rolled away  
 Before those Funerals halted on their path—  
 Were they but mockeries of a dream ?  
     Or did the vision darkly say  
 That here were signs of coming wrath ?  
 I know not ! but within the soul  
     I know there lives  
 A deep, a marvellous, a prophetic power  
 Far beyond even its own control.”

“For Soul and Country” is another of these *Irishman* poems. The last verse is the most noteworthy :—

“My countrymen ! my words are weak,  
     My health is gone, my soul is dark,  
     My heart is chill—  
 Yet would I fain and fondly seek  
     To see you borne in Freedom's bark  
     O'er ocean still.

Beseech your God, and bide your hour—  
     He cannot, will not, long be dumb ;  
     Even now His tread  
 Is heard o'er earth with coming power ;  
     And coming, trust me, it will come,  
     Else were He dead.”



Again, in another poem, he exhorts mankind to "bear up":—

"Bear up ! even though thou be, like me,  
 Stretched on a bed of torturing pain  
 This weary day,  
 Though heaven and earth seem dark to thee,  
 And thine eyes glance around in vain  
 For one hope-ray !

Though overborne by wrong and ill—  
 Though thou hast drained, even to its lees,  
 Life's bitter cup—  
 Though death and hell be round thee, still  
 Place faith in God ! He hears ! He sees !  
 Bear up ! Bear up !"

And in the poem called "Consolation and Counsel," in very felicitous and telling words, he reminds his readers of the fatal results of overweening belief in oneself, of the evils of intolerance, and of underrating one's enemies:—

"Eye not arch, pillar, hall alone : but glance  
 At MANKIND'S mighty temple, roof to base ;  
 The Cloutzes, Dantons, Lafayettes of France  
     Were orators of the human race.  
 Not Celtic only. Praise be theirs,  
 Not seldom golden ! They had words for even the foes  
 They drew their steel on. Is't not somewhat sad  
 The niggard show WE make of those?"

Joseph Brenan, his friend and colleague, who was well aware of the contrast between Mangan's precepts and practice in certain directions, wrote "A Word to J. C. M." which, for its own sake, as well as for the sake of Mangan's reply, should be given here. Both were printed in the *Irishman*.

"Brother and friend ! your words are in mine ear,  
 As the faint toneing of a hidden bell  
 At one time distant—at another near—  
 Something between a joy-peal and a knell.  
 The hidden bell, the hidden meaning ; thus thy mind  
 Accompanies the undertone of rhyme,  
 As sylvan stream o'er flower and leaf will wind  
 Towards its goal, its murmur keeping time—  
 The brook notes which the Ancient Mariner  
 Heard whispered in 'the leafy month of June,'  
 Thy song is now ; again it thrills the air  
 Like the low crooning of a magic rune—



Each word is aerial at thy command,  
 Soothing the Castaway on Life's dark shore ;  
 Thou art the Prospero of ruthless wand—  
 King by the 'right divine' of mystic lore—  
 Dreamer of dreams, now gloomy as La Morgue  
 Thro' which, as thro' glass darkly, loom the Dead :  
 Now, like the angel-trance of Swedenborg,  
 When heavenly portals opened o'er his head.  
 Seer of Visions ! Dweller on the Mount !  
 Reader of Signs upon the future's sky !  
 Scholar of Deutschland ! Drinker at the Fount  
 Of old Teutonic awe and mystery !  
 Herr Mangan, listen !—live with Cahal Mor,  
 Sojourning in the wondrous 'land of Morn'—  
 Or, an thou wilt, with Kerner bow before  
 The air-born music of the marvellous horn !  
 Laugh the quaint laugh, or weep the bitter tear,  
 Be gay or sad—be humorous or sublime—  
 One thing remains—but one—Herr Mangan, hear !  
 TO LIVE THY POETRY—TO ACT THY RHYME !”

Mangan promptly replied in the following touching verses which are somewhat familiar to Irish readers :—

“ Friend and brother, and yet more than brother,  
 Thou endowed with all of Shelley's soul !  
 Thou whose heart so burneth for thy mother \*  
 That, like *his*, it may defy all other  
 Flames, while time shall roll !

Thou of language bland, and manner meekest,  
 Gentle bearing, yet unswerving will—  
 Gladly, gladly, list I when thou speakest,  
 Honoured highly is the man thou seekest  
 To redeem from ill !

Truly showest thou me the one thing needful !  
 Thou art not, nor is the world yet blind.  
 Truly have I been long years unheedful  
 Of the thorns and tares that choked the weedful  
 Garden of my mind !

Thorns and tares, which rose in rank profusion  
 Round my scanty fruitage and my flowers,  
 Till I almost deemed it self-delusion  
 Any attempt or glance at their extrusion  
 From their midnight bowers.

Dream and waking life have now been blended  
 Longtime in the caverns of my soul—  
 Oft in daylight have my steps descended  
 Down to that dusk realm where all is ended,  
 Save remeadless dole !

---

\* Earth.



Oft, with tears, I have groaned to God for pity—  
 Oft gone wandering till my way grew dim—  
 Oft sung unto Him a prayerful ditty—  
 Oft, all lonely in this throngful city,  
 Raised my soul to Him !

And from path to path His mercy tracked me—  
 From many a peril snatched He me,  
 When false friends pursued, betrayed, attacked me,  
 When gloom overdarked and sickness racked me,  
 He was by to save and free !

Friend ! thou warnest me in truly noble  
 Thoughts and phrases ! I will heed thee well ;  
 Well will I obey thy mystic double  
 Counsel, through all scenes of woe and trouble,  
 As a magic spell !

Yes ! to live a bard, in thought and feeling !  
 Yes ! to act my rhyme, by self-restraint,  
 This is truth's, is reason's deep revealing,  
 Unto me from thee, as God's to a kneeling  
 And entranced saint !

Fare thee well ! we now know each the other,  
 Each has struck the other's inmost chords—  
 Fare thee well, my friend and more than brother,  
 And may scorn pursue me if I smother  
 In my soul thy words ! ”

There is an admirable description by Brennan of Mangan as he was in his decadence, which will fittingly conclude this chapter :—

“ If you passed through Dublin any time these four years—if you were abroad when the twilight began to vanish and the shadows grew blacker on the walls, you might have noticed a middle-sized man, infirm-looking and stooped, moving on slowly with noiseless steps. His hair was white as new-fallen snow, which gave him the appearance of age before he was old . . . In thirty and some odd years, this man has lived long enough to become grey. His face is calm, though marked with thunder-scars. His eye is inexpressibly deep and beautiful, and centred therein, there is a union of quiet love and daring thought. The mouth had lost the charm which it once had ; but the forehead is unwrinkled and white as ever. His figure is wasted away : the sword is eating through the sheath. He moves seemingly with pain, and plainly his last hour is not far off—the earthworks of life have already been carried.

You *must* look at him as he passes. If he speaks you cannot choose but listen to his low, touching voice ; like the Ancient Mariner, he

‘ Holds you with his glittering eye.’

That man so meanly dressed, so weak, so miserable—that man whom you meet alone in life, seeking companionship in darkness, is James Clarence Mangan.”





## CHAPTER XVIII.

“A VOICE OF ENCOURAGEMENT”—MANGAN’S LAST POEMS AND SKETCHES—LAST LETTER TO ANSTER—“THE TRIBES OF IRELAND”—MANGAN ATTACKED BY CHOLERA—THE MEATH HOSPITAL—HERCULES ELLIS, JAMES PRICE, AND FATHER MEEHAN ON MANGAN’S LAST DAYS—ERRONEOUS ACCOUNTS—DR. STOKES—DEATH—AFTER DEATH—BURTON’S PORTRAIT—BURIAL—THE “IRISHMAN”—THE “NATION’S” COMMENTS—POEMS BY JAMES TIGHE, R. D. WILLIAMS, AND JOSEPH BRENAN—MANGAN’S CHARACTER—HIS OWN VINDICATION.

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“And now rejoice, thou Faithfullest and Meekest !  
It lies in sight, the quiet Home thou seekest !  
And gently wilt thou pass to it, for thou  
Art almost disembodied even now !”—MANGAN.

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MANGAN’S career was now nearly closed, and the only notable poems contributed by him to the *Nation* during the last year of his life were the “Dawning of the Day,” “The Testament of Cathaeir Mor,” and “A Voice of Encouragement: a New Year’s Lay.” In this last, he mournfully describes the gloom that had come over the land—the apathy, the supineness of the people. Addressing “Youths, compatriots, friends,” he exclaims that, though a man—

“unworthy to rank in your number,  
Yet with a heart that bleeds for his country’s wrongs and affliction,”  
would he—

“Fain raise a Voice too in Song, albeit his music and diction  
Rather be fitted, alas ! to lull to, than startle from slumber !”

He goes on—

“Friends ! the gloom in the land, in our once bright land, grows deeper ;  
Suffering, even to Death, in its horriblemst form aboundeth ;  
Through our black harvestless fields the peasant’s faint wail resoundeth—  
Hark to it even now !”



And he declares that the people—

“ Now not alone succumb to the Change and the Degradation,  
But have ceased even to *feel* them ! God ! *this* indeed is abase-  
ment ! ”

But the outlook is not altogether hopeless—

“ No ! there is always hope for those who, relying with earnest  
Souls on God and themselves, take for their motto ‘ Labour ’ —  
Such see the rainbow’s glory when Heaven lowers darkest and  
sternest,  
Such in the storm-wind hear but the music of pipe and tabor.”

And he concludes in a spirit of lofty imagery :—

“ Omen-full, arched with gloom, and laden with many a presage,  
Many a portent of woe, looms the impending Era,  
Not as of old, by comet-sword,\* Gorgon, or ghastly chimera,  
Scarcely by Lightning and Thunder, Heaven to-day sends its  
message  
Into the secret heart—down through the caves of the spirit,  
Pierces the silent shaft—sinks the Invisible Token—  
Cloaked in the Hall the Envoy stands, his mission unspoken,  
While the pale banquetless guests await in trembling to hear it ! ”

In the *University Magazine* for 1848-9, apart from  
“ The Fairies’ Passage,” “ The Time ere the Roses were  
Blowing,” and “ Gasparo Bandollo,” there is little to call  
for mention. And even his pieces in the *Irishman* show  
some falling off in merit, though not in personal interest.  
In one of them, entitled “ Have Hope,” he exclaims :—

“ I, too, have borne, unseen, alone,  
Mine own deep griefs, griefs writ on sand,  
Until my heart grew like to stone—  
I struck it, and it hurt my hand.  
My bitter bread was steeped in tears,  
Another Cain’s mark marred my brow—  
I wept for long my wasted years—  
Alas ! too oft I weep them now !

Yet I despair not ! Ill bodes good—  
And dark time bright eternity ;  
For aye the gay and mournful mood  
Turns on the spirit’s axle-tree.  
First grief, then joy—first earth, then heaven—  
This is the eternal all-wise law—  
Such law, by God Almighty given  
Let all revere with holiest awe ! ”

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\* See Defoe’s *History of the Plague of London*.



Among his last contributions to the *Irishman* were the sketches of "Illustrious Irishmen," which included Dr. Anster, Rev. C. R. Maturin, John O'Donovan, Father Meehan, Dr. Todd, Dr. Maginn, Dr. Petrie, and Gerald Griffin. Most of these have been already quoted from as opportunity offered. In one other, not yet mentioned, which is devoted to Miss Maria Edgeworth, there is a very characteristic passage, interesting as a further example of his curious trifling.

"Of Miss Edgeworth's 'Moral Tales,'" he says, 'I have little to say. It has been denied that they excel Marmontel's by one iota. They *do* excel Marmontel's—by one iota. An acquaintance of mine meeting another a few days back told him that Jack Smith had said that his (my acquaintance's) character was not worth a button. 'And what did you reply?' asked the other indignantly. 'Why,' said my friend, 'I replied, after some reflection, that *I* thought it *was!*'"

It was in reference to his sketch of Dr. Anster that the following letter, one of the last composed by Mangan, perhaps the very last, was written. It is the latest communication of his which I have seen—

11 Upper Abbey Street,  
22nd April, 1849.

"DEAR DR. ANSTER,—The enclosed appeared in Saturday's *Irishman*. Perhaps you may have seen it, but I rather think that you have not. I know that I shall not see you this evening, but perhaps I may be able to gain a sight of you towards the end of the week.

Ever yours faithfully,

JAMES C. MANGAN.

P.S.—If you do me the favour of a visit, pray turn into the doorway at the left side of the hall, and enquire for 'Miss Atkins.' The house itself you will recognise at once: there are pillars in front of it.

*Kennst du das Haus? Auf saulen ruht die Dach!*"\*

Much of Mangan's work during 1849 was done for John O'Daly. Besides translating various Munster songs, he put into English rhyme the famous satire by Ængus O'Daly known as "The Tribes of Ireland."† Mangan had

\* "Know you the house? On pillars rests the roof?" This is the opening line of the second stanza of "Mignon's song" by Goethe.

† Ængus O'Daly, the satirist, who lived in Elizabethan days, was employed by Sir George Carew, on behalf of the Government, which well knew the dreaded power of Irish satirists, to scourge the clans, and set them one against another. The venal satirist executed the work, girding at their customs, denying their notorious open hospitality, and wounding the chiefs in their inmost feelings. He was eventually stabbed to death by one of the O'Meaghers of Ikerrin.



a version by John O'Donovan before him when engaged in this task for O'Daly, and he has treated it in his usual airy way, by a considerable divergence from the author's meaning, and by pretty frequent interpolations. He has somewhat lightened such humour as was to be found in the original, and there is a good deal of his own clever wit and raillery in his version. The rhymes are of course inimitably well done. A few stanzas here and there will enable the reader to judge of this. The satirist's frequent references to buttered bread show, O'Donovan says, that it was the staple food of the people. Mangan's version runs to seventy-five stanzas, and he manages to introduce into them allusions (on his own account) to Shanagolden (where his father was born), potatoes (which he detested), and other matters upon which Ængus O'Daly says nothing. Here are some verses from different parts of the poem :—

“ These Roddys are niggards and schemers,  
 They are vendors of stories (odd dreamers)—  
 Who talk of St. Kallin's miraculous powers,  
 And how he continually showers wealth on their tribe ;  
 They are worse, in good sooth, than I care to describe.  
 Moreover, if you sit at their table,  
 You'll soon think the Barmecides' banquet no fable !

I called on them once, on Shrove Tuesday, at night,  
 But the devil a pancake, flour, oatmeal, or brancake,  
 In parlour or kitchen, saluted my sight.  
 I walked off. I'd have starved ere I'd pray to  
 One imp of the gang for a single potato !

Take Anamcha's\* clansmen away from my sight !  
 They are vagrants and varlets, whose jealous ill-star lets  
 Them do nothing, say nothing, think nothing right—  
 And they swear so, I'd count it a sin to  
 Abide with them while I had hell to jump into !

The Clan-Rickard I brand as a vagabond crew,  
 Who are speeding to wreck fast. Ask *them* for a breakfast ?  
 They march to Mass duly on Sundays, 'tis true :  
 But within their house portal,  
 To a morsel was ne'er yet admitted a mortal.

No lady below  
 The high rank of a princess, believe me, e'er winces  
 'Neath my poet's knout. Savage sometimes I grow,

---

\* The O'Maddens of Galway.



But with none but the tip-top,  
And them I do lash, as a stripling his whip-top !

The men of Fermanagh, though *certes* no fools,  
Are a race that search bread crumbs as ducks search the pools ;  
Of all shabby acts I know nothing forlorn  
Than their practice of hiding the cake in the corner.

You'll allow that I haven't much flattered the Clans :  
But there's one that I *will* praise—the doughty McCanns ;  
For if I didn't, *who* would ? I guess not a man on  
Earth's face—at least no one this side of the Shannon ?

One day feeling footsore and faintish, I made,  
By tardy approaches, my way to the Roches ;  
It relieved me, at least, to creep into the shade :  
I got bread, but my landlady shut her  
Old rat-haunted cup-board at once on the butter !

Poor little Red Robin, the snow hides the ground,  
And a worm or a grub is scarce to be found ;  
Still don't visit O'Keeffe—rather brave the hard weather !  
He'd soon bring your breast and your backbone together !

The pinch-bowel Clan of McMahon the Red  
Give you just on your dish the bare shadow of bread—  
An ant put in harness, I think, would be able  
To drag their best cake and their biggest from table ! ”

Mangan's last months of existence were spent in unparalleled wretchedness. He had no home, and could not be seen by anyone. He ceased paying even the few visits to those friends and protectors whom he knew to be anxious about him—nobody knew what had become of him. Joseph Brenan certainly obtained an occasional glimpse of him, and he records that at their last meeting, the mind of the poet reverted to his dismal experience in the attorney's office.

“The very last night we saw him,” he says, “he spoke with disgust of the dark crib, smoke-discoloured, wherein curses and blasphemies were hourly heard.”

And he adds with truth :—

“his own thoughts haunted him, Actaeon-like, to ruin. His genius was a Midas gift, which came saddled with a curse.”

There is little need to probe the details of his life during the last two or three months of his career. Some time be-



fore, he had a serious accident by falling at night into the foundations of a building in an unfamiliar locality, and there is reason to believe that he had met with other mishaps. At all events, his health was deplorable, and he had lost also the free use of his limbs, from weakness and lack of nourishment. He became a ready prey to the cholera, then raging in the city. Early in June, 1849, according to Father Meehan, Mangan's condition became known. When it was discovered that he was suffering from the dread disease—to which he had previously declared he would inevitably fall a victim—he was removed to the temporary sheds at Kilmainham, but was allowed to leave after a few days—when he was thought to be nearly well. But his system had received too rude a shock, and on the 13th he was discovered dying in a deplorable lodging—a cellar—in Bride Street. John O'Daly implies that he was the person who found Mangan in this place :—

“On his recovery” (from the attack of cholera), he says, “we found him in an obscure house in Bride Street, and at his own request procured admission for him to the Meath Hospital.”

Father Meehan, however, distinctly says that he was removed thither

“by the advice of the late Dr. Stokes, who pronounced his case hopeless.”

James Price, who was in a very good position to know the truth, tells a somewhat different tale :—

“He had been discovered, we believe, by Dr. Wilde,\* during one of his antiquarian researches among our poorest districts—discovered in a state of indescribable misery and squalor, occupying a wretched hovel where he had retired to die. Humanity could not have sunk lower. Misery, more than disease, had reduced him to a pitiable condition.”

This was written in 1849. A year later, a very sensational, and mostly erroneous, account was published by Hercules Ellis (an Irish barrister, author of various poems, and editor of *Songs of Ireland*), in his *Romances and Ballads of Ireland*, in which he states that he obtained the facts from the house-surgeon of the Meath Hospital at the time of Mangan's death.

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\* Afterwards Sir William Wilde.



"In the month of June, 1849," he says, "the cholera morbus raged in Dublin; temporary hospitals were erected by the Board of Health for the reception of pauper sufferers from this district, and servants of the Board were despatched with carts to all parts of the city for the purpose of bringing to those hospitals the persons attacked by this dreadful epidemic. While searching for this purpose in an obscure portion of Dublin, the servants of the Board of Health were informed that the tenant of a single room, in one of the most wretched houses of the neighbourhood, had been for some time confined to his bed, and was supposed to be suffering from cholera morbus. They ascended to the lodging thus indicated, and there, stretched on a wretched pallet, and surrounded by proofs of the most squalid misery, they found the wretched form of a man, insensible from exhaustion. Believing that he was reduced to this state by cholera, the servants of the Board of Health placed the sufferer in their cart, and conveyed him to the North Dublin Union cholera sheds. In this miserable wreck of hunger and misery the attendant physicians recognised James Clarence Mangan. Upon examination it was found that his disease was not cholera, but absolute starvation. He was immediately transmitted to the Meath Hospital, where everything that skill and kindness could suggest for the purpose of reviving the expiring spark of life was attempted—and attempted in vain. This unfortunate child of genius sank hourly, and died shortly after his admission to the hospital, exhibiting, to the last, his gentle nature, in repeated apologies for the trouble he gave, and constant thanks for the attentions and assistance afforded to him."

There is, of course, some truth in the above narrative, but when, many years later, it was repeated with embellishments, in *Time*, a now extinct English magazine, Father Meehan indignantly denied it. He says Mangan was

"taken from Bride Street by directions of the late Dr. Stokes to Meath Hospital. I was at his bedside there; and he received Extreme Unction from the then chaplain to Meath Hospital. Mangan did not die unknown. Dr. Stokes and Burton the painter watched over him. Burton painted his portrait in the *morgue* of the hospital. Cholera was his victor. The statement about the cart and the Liberties is a wretched invention."

Father Meehan himself is wrong here in one or two minor details—as, for example, in saying that Burton watched over Mangan, but he is evidently correct in the essential points.

Miss Margaret Stokes, the distinguished Irish artist and antiquarian author, in a letter to the present writer, says:—

"My father watched over him lovingly for three days, till he died. One morning he turned on his pillow and said to him, 'You are the first man who has spoken a kind word to me for years.'"



The poet's happy release from an intolerable life occurred on the 20th, seven days after admission. James Price says:—

“An affecting instance of ‘the ruling passion strong in death’ was furnished by poor Mangan. The only article he possessed when brought to the hospital was a well-worn volume of German poetry. Over this he pored frequently while consciousness remained, and it was found after death with him in the bed. . . . All the officials paid him unremitting attention, but on the seventh day, without a trace of suffering, without a pang to tell the moment his spirit passed away, he died. . . . His last words contained an expression of fervent gratitude to Mr. Parr, the resident apothecary, for his kindness.”

This last incident is corroborated in *Saunders' Newsletter* of June 22nd, 1849—the only notice of the actual death in the Dublin papers of the time. It is brief, and worth quoting:—

“Clarence Mangan is no more. A few days ago he was found by one of the few friends that remained to him in a most wretched lodging, from whence he was removed to the Meath Hospital, where, under the kind care of Dr. Stokes, he appeared to make a slight rally. About ten o'clock on Wednesday night he had just expressed his gratitude to one of the officers in the institution for the kindness which he received, when he turned round in his bed and expired, apparently without a struggle.”

So ended the earthly career of one of the most gifted and most unfortunate of men. The inexpressible sadness of it must appeal to all, Irish or otherwise. Price describes his appearance in the bed at the hospital thus:—

“There in that pauper ward, on that pauper bed, a shrunken and attenuated form, a wan, worn, ghastly face arrests your attention. You read instinctively in the fearful emaciation and the pallor before you, in the glassy eye, almost fixed with the last glaring look upon this world, that life and the present are no more for him who lies there, a sad human wreck, but Death and the Hereafter.”

It was Dr. Stokes who told Father Meehan that Mangan earnestly wanted to see him.

“On taking a chair at his beside,” says the priest, “the poor fellow playfully said, ‘I feel that I am going, I know that I must go, “un-housel’d” and “unannealed,” but you must not let me go “unshriven” and “unanointed.”’ The priest in attendance being called, heard his confession and administered the Last Unction; Mangan, with hands crossed on his breast, and eyes uplifted, manifesting sentiments of









PORTRAIT OF MANGAN AFTER DEATH



most edifying piety, and, with a smile on his lips, faintly ejaculating, 'O Mary, Queen of Mercy.'"<sup>\*</sup>

Mitchel adds the information that

"At his own request, they read him, during his last moments of life, one of the Catholic penitential hymns." "In his hat," says Hercules Ellis, "were found loose papers, on which his last efforts in verse were feebly traced by his dying hand."

In Mr. John McCall's little sketch of Mangan's life, an incident, obtained from one who claimed to know the facts, is told, which may be summarized here. It would seem that one of the physicians, noticing that his patient was much given to writing in bed, using such scraps of paper as came within his reach, gave directions that scribbling materials should be placed near the bed, in order that Mangan might write what he pleased. The nurse was also instructed that the poet should not be disturbed whenever so engaged. When, after Mangan's death, the papers upon which he had written were asked for by the physician, the nurse replied that she had burned them all, as she had previously got into trouble for allowing pieces of paper to lie about the ward. While Mangan's body was in the *morgue* Dr. Stokes obtained a cast of his face, and Burton drew his incomparable portrait. Price and all who saw it state that the poet's face was restored by death to its natural beauty. Price's words are these:—

"Those who remember Clarence Mangan of late. . . . could have no idea of how beautiful, yes, absolutely beautiful, he looked in death. Nor physical pain nor mental anguish left a trace on his intellectual face. Unwrinkled was his domelike forehead, fit temple for the soul that had dwelt therein."

Sir Frederick Burton, happily still alive, then a young and rising artist, known widely to his countrymen by his "Blind Girl at the Holy Well" and other paintings, and in later days distinguished as the Director of the National Gallery in London, and for an unrivalled knowledge of art, has kindly given me an account of the circumstances under which he made the beautiful and universally admired drawing of Mangan after death, and it is subjoined:—

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<sup>\*</sup> One of his best German translations is that of Simrock's "O Maria Regina Misericordiæ."



"I did not know Mangan personally, and think I met him but once when he was alive—so that it is out of my power to give you any information concerning him.

The occasion of my making a drawing of the poor fellow's features came about in this way. One morning at breakfast time my friend, the late Dr. Stokes, called upon me, and told me that Mangan, who had died the day or night before, was lying in a mortuary of one of the Dublin hospitals, and suggested that I should make use of the opportunity to preserve some record of the poet's appearance. There was no time to be lost. The day was a sultry one in summer or early autumn, and interment could not be long deferred. I went at once to the hospital, and made the drawing\* which, at a later period, and at the request of Mr. Henry Doyle, I presented to the National Gallery of Ireland.

The sight of poor Mangan, as he lay in the mortuary, with head unsupported, and the long, partially grey hair fallen back from the fine and delicately shaped forehead, was intensely interesting and pathetic.

I recollected that when I had seen him living some years before, his forehead was completely hidden by an unkempt-looking mass of hair† like a glibb, so that its beautiful structure was a surprise to me when I finally saw it. . . .

I remember having seen or heard read, very shortly before Mangan's death, a very touching letter of his to Mr. Haughton, at that time an ardent apostle of temperance, in which he was implored by the writer to save him as he had lost all power even to make an effort to save himself. One was reminded of Coleridge's helplessness about opium."

Father Meehan explains that the burial would have taken place more promptly, but that, owing to the extensive mortality, coffins were only procurable after some delay. On Friday, the 23rd, he was buried in Glasnevin, only five people, according to Brennan, (Father Meehan says three) following his remains to the grave. Father Meehan does not name the three, but they were apparently Michael Smith, uncle of the poet, Bernard Fullam, of the *Irishman*, and himself. He points out, however, that Mangan's best friends were at this time scattered over the earth. Not a single Dublin paper noticed the funeral in any way, except the *Irishman*, which, in an indignant article, denounced the absence of some of those who had professed much sympathy and friendship for the unfortunate poet, but did not pay his memory the small tribute of attendance at his funeral :—

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\* Lady Ferguson, in her life of her husband, mentions (Vol. I., p. 308), a portrait of the Emperor Nicholas of Russia, which they saw at the castle of Hohenschwangen, which closely resembled "Burton's drawing of Mangan."

† This was really a wig.



"Where were these 'sympathisers,'" it asks, "from his funeral? *Five* friends who knew the man and appreciated him—who were not lip-friends, but heart-friends—attended him to his grave. *Five* humble individuals formed the burial *cortege* of one who, in another country, would have been attended by a royal following; *five*, out of all to whose pleasure and instruction his genius ministered for years—a small number, passing small! Where were the 'friends' of former days, who made money of his mind?"

And so on. It must be said that, while the indignation of the *Irishman* was to some extent justified, the general apathy regarding Mangan's death and funeral may be partly attributed to the epidemic then depopulating the city, to the indifference to death of all classes who had passed through the dreadful years of the famine and its attendant calamities, and also to the fact that his admirers did not then know of his death. But, with all reservations and excuses, Mangan's small funeral, in a country like Ireland, where "a good funeral" is one of the consolations of the people, is almost inexplicable.

Although his contemporaries in general regarded Mangan as almost the first of Irish poets, and men like Duffy, Brenan, Mitchel and others put him absolutely first, there was surprisingly little comment in the Press upon his death. A few paragraphs and a few poems were all that such a calamity elicited. Not one of these last was quite worthy of the subject. But they may be worth quoting. His early acquaintance, James Tighe, in some feeling lines upon his death, wrote:—

"Beside the turf that wraps thy clay  
Shall kindred memory fondly wake,  
And spite of all thy foes can say,  
Shall love thee for the Muse's sake.

And Pity, with a beaming eye  
Forget the cause that laid thee low,  
O'er thy low grave shall deeply sigh,  
And mourn thy pilgrimage of woe.

Still, redbreast, o'er the tuneful dead,  
That sweetly soothing dirge prolong:  
For *his* who owns this earthly bed—  
*His* was as sad, as sweet a song."

And D'Alton Williams, true to the memory of his old comrade of the *Nation*, intoned a long sounding dirge over the dead poet. Here are some of the verses:—



"Yes ! happy friend, the cross was thine—'tis o'er a sea of tears  
 Predestined souls must ever sail to reach their native spheres.  
 May Christ, the crowned of Calvary, who died upon a tree,  
 Bequeath His tearful chalice and His bitter cross to me.

The darkened land is desolate—a wilderness of graves—  
 Our purest hearts are prison-bound, our exiles on the waves :  
 Gaunt Famine stalks the blasted plains—the pestilential air  
 O'erhangs the gasp of breaking hearts or stillness of despair.

No chains are on thy folded hands, no tears bedim thine eyes,  
 But round thee bloom celestial flowers in ever tranquil skies,  
 While o'er our dreams thy mystic songs, faint, sad, and solemn, flow,  
 Like light that left the distant stars ten thousand years ago.

Thou wert a voice of God on earth—of those prophetic souls  
 Who hear the fearful thunder in the Future's womb that rolls,  
 And the warnings of the angels, as the midnight hurried past,  
 Rushed in upon thy spirit, like a ghost-o'er-laden blast.

If any shade of earthliness bedimmed thy spirit's wings,  
 Well cleansed thou art in sorrow's ever-salutary springs ;  
 And even bitter suffering, and still more bitter sin,  
 Shall only make a soul like thine more beautiful within.

'Tis sorrow's hand the temple-gates of holiness unbars :  
 By day we only see the earth, 'tis night reveals the stars.

Alas, alas ! the minstrel's fate ! his life is short and drear,  
 And if he win a wreath at last, 'tis but to shade a bier ;  
 His harp is fed with wasted life—to tears its numbers flow—  
 And strung with chords of broken hearts is dreamland's splendid woe."

Joseph Brenan also, in a poem entitled "Compensation," paid tribute to the ill-fated poet, but it is not by any means up to his usual level. Only a verse or two need be quoted :—

"There was a man who walked this earth of ours,  
 Engirt with misery as with a shroud ;  
 Gathering, with eager hand, the wayside flow'rs,  
 Flinging the roses to the expectant crowd—  
 But every rose had thorns. Men cried aloud  
 When they beheld the hand which blessed them red  
 With its own blood, which trickled, rich and proud,  
 From that great heart. 'Behold, he bleeds !' they said—  
 Yet no one stanch'd the wound, although for them he bled.

And still he plucked the roses—though he knew  
 That none beheld him with a loving eye ;  
 To his belief, and to his mission true,  
 He wove rich garlands for Humanity.



And he is dead ! the solemn rites are done !  
 The few who bore the coffin look their last—  
 The human clay is clay—the friends are gone—  
 He's sleeping with the worms and with the Past.  
 No flowers of love upon his grave are cast ;  
 No legend tells his tale ; the earth is dumb ;  
 The Cloud, the Sunshine, and the Tempest-blast—  
 These are the only pilgrims to his tomb."

The poems by Tighe, Williams, and Brennan appeared in the *Irishman*. The *Nation*, which was revived a couple of months later, devoted a long critical article to Mangan's writings in one of its early numbers, but did not print any elegiac verses. It cannot be said that the article referred to is specially sympathetic or indulgent ; allowing no extenuating circumstances, it seems to adopt too literally the worst view of his transgressions, as expressed in his lines :—

" Weep, weep, degraded one, the deed,  
 The desperate deed was all thine own !  
 Thou madest more than maniac speed  
 To hurl thine honours from their throne ! "

Its allusion to Mangan's personal career is exceedingly brief, and perhaps unnecessarily crude :—

" Of Mangan's personal history we have no heart to write. To be meting out pity or blame, now when neither can avail him, were a sad as well as useless chapter. Nor will we join in the common cry about neglected talent and the world's ingratitude. It is a terrible but most certain truth that him who will not save himself, all mankind banded together cannot save. It is enough upon this to say that Mangan, a man of great gifts and great attainments, lived a pauper and a drudge, and died in an hospital. To most he was but a voice which has now ceased for ever . . . . To death he had long looked forward."

Mangan's chief and indeed only failing having been the effect of years of untold misery, of physical and mental troubles without number, of bitter disappointments, of acutely-wounding disillusion, all of which had predisposed him to what is now recognised as a disease and treated accordingly, the *Nation* writer, who undoubtedly knew the facts, seems somewhat harsh in his allusions to the ill-starred poet's weakness. The rest of the article is couched in a very captious vein, presenting a remarkable contrast to all the *Nation's* previous references to Mangan, and one may be, possibly, not far wrong in assuming that the fact of his close connection with the chief rivals of the *Nation* during his last year or so, and especially to the *Irishman*, may have had something to do with the change in tone. However,



this is of no moment. The hypercriticism of the *Nation* notwithstanding, those who knew him best were the readiest to acknowledge and to insist that though he had sinned, he had been grievously sinned against, and that his sufferings deserved warmest consideration and sympathy. No other vice than that of excess in taking stimulants has ever been alleged against him. He was admittedly weak—terribly weak—in yielding so constantly to the allurements of opium or spirit, but the new generation which grew up in the great wave of temperance that swept over Ireland in the forties treated him with too scant consideration ; it saw only effects, and finding him unable or unwilling to throw off his habits, gave him up completely for lost.

Father Meehan with full knowledge of the facts, says :—

“ Poor fellow ! he did occasionally take what he ought not to have taken,” and he goes on ; “ Be his faults what they may have been, he was a *pure* man, never lowering himself to ordinary debaucheries or sensuality of any sort . . . He prayed and heard Mass almost every day, and occasionally knelt at the Altar rail.”

“ The late Father Stephen Anster Farrell, S.J. (cousin to Dr. Anster, the translator of *Faust*), mentioned to me,” writes the Rev. Matthew Russell, editor of the *Irish Monthly*, “ that Mangan (whom he knew intimately) told him that, with all his wild excesses, he had kept himself free from the vice of impurity. His writings are ethereally pure.”

Both Father Meehan and James Price, who necessarily knew more of Mangan’s inner life than anyone else, were emphatic in their refusal to consider his failing as deserving of the severest condemnation. They, knowing all the circumstances, and being aware of Mangan’s innate refinement and excellent disposition, defended him to the utmost against the shallow observers and superior persons who may have seen him in one of his more pitiable moments. Mangan has, in his own manner, defended himself from many charges which the unthinking or unsympathetic might be inclined to bring against him. Not a few of his indirect appeals to the consideration of future generations have already been utilised in this work. Twelve years before his death, in a poem more remarkable for its personal nature than for its merit, Mangan described himself as he admittedly was. He saw the future with all its misfortune and possible obloquy :—

“ ’Twere unavailing now to examine whence  
The tide of my calamities may flow—  
Enough that in my heart its residence  
Is permanent and bitter—let me not,



Perhaps rebelliously, arraign my lot.  
If I have looked for nobleness and truth  
In souls where Treachery's brood of scorpions dwelt,  
And felt the awakening shock as few have felt,  
And found, alas ! no anodyne to soothe,  
I murmur not : to me was over-dealt  
No doubt the strong and wrong romance of Youth.  
Less blame I for each lacerating error,  
For all the javelin memories that pierce  
Me now, that world wherein I willed to mirror  
The visions of my boyhood, than the fierce  
Impulses of a breast that scarce would curb  
One ardent feeling, even when all was gone  
Which makes Life dear, and ever frowned upon  
Such monitors as ventured to disturb  
Its baleful happiness. Of this no more.  
My benison be on my native hills !  
And when the sun shall shine upon the tomb  
Where I and the remembrance of mine ills  
Alike shall slumber, may his beams illumine  
Scenes happy as they oft illumed before,  
Scenes happier than these feet have ever trod !  
May the green earth glow in the smile of God !  
May the unwearying stars as mildly twinkle  
As now—the rose and jessamine exhale  
Their frankincense—the moon be still as pale—  
The pebbled rivulets as lightly tinkle—  
The singing-birds in Summer fill the vale  
With lays whose diapasons never cloy !  
May Love still garland his young votaries' brows !  
May the fond husband and his faithful spouse  
List to the pleasant nightingale with joy !  
May radiant Hope, for the soft souls that dream  
Of golden hours, long, long continue brightening  
An alas ! traitorous Future with her beam.  
When in forgotten dust my bones lie whitening !  
And, for myself, all I would care to claim  
Is kindness to my memory—and to those  
Whom I have tried, and trusted to the close,  
Would I speak thus—Let Truth but give to Fame  
My virtues with my failings : if this be,  
Not all may weep, but none will blush for me :  
And whatsoever chronicle of good,  
Attempted or achieved, may stand to speak  
For what I was, when kindred souls shall seek  
To unveil a life but darkly understood—  
Men will not, cannot, write it on my grave  
That I, like myriads, was a mindless clod,  
And trod, with fettered will, the course they trod,  
Crouched to a world whose habitudes deprave  
And sink the loftiest nature to a slave—  
Slunk from my standard and renounced my God."





## CHAPTER XIX.

1849—MANGAN ON ECCENTRICITY—HIS ISOLATION—NEGLECT BY HIS COUNTRYMEN—LORD CARNARVON AND SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN—THE "SPECTATOR" ON MANGAN—HIS POSITION IN IRISH POETRY—MANGAN AND MOORE—HIS CULTURE—POE AND MANGAN—GILBERTIAN FLAVOUR OF MANGAN'S LIGHTER VERSE—CONCLUSION.

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"Oh, Death! a welcome friend thou art  
 When Youth, and Health, and Hope depart!  
 And a wondrous power in thine icy touch lies,  
 To heal the brokenest heart!"—MANGAN.

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THE year 1849 is a fateful one in the sad history of literary genius. It saw the melancholy close of the lives of Edgar Allan Poe, Thomas Lovell Beddoes, Hartley Coleridge, and—as an accomplished Irish writer has termed him, "our higher and nobler and vastly more gifted Hartley Coleridge"—James Clarence Mangan, with whom the rest had at least some points in common. The lives of Poe and Coleridge especially recall that of Mangan, but neither led so unmixedly wretched an existence as he, who, from his earliest years, was alone without hope. To none did Death come in so welcome a guise as to poor Mangan. If the final miseries of his career were in any degree a punishment for his transgressions, heavy indeed was the retribution. Yet, with all its gloom, his was not altogether a life made up of disappointments. From childhood he had apparently foreshadowed the end of his hopeless and helpless career. He had few illusions, and no great ambitions. He never looked for reward of any kind, never expected the homage of mankind, and was too keen an observer, too extensive a reader, to indulge in any wild imaginings, as so many smaller minds have done, as to the privileges of genius.

"Humbly to express  
 A penitential loneliness,"



was an abiding characteristic of his, and his gentleness and humility with all men was due as much to his profound knowledge of the shortcomings of those endowed with genius as to inherent mildness of disposition. His early errors were hardly of themselves sufficiently serious to have brought down upon him all his subsequent sufferings. Once started on the downward slope, however, his irregularities brought with them ample affliction. But it must be repeated that Mangan's wretchedness was largely owing to the unfortunate physical conditions of his childhood. "Infirmity and misery," as De Quincey well says, "do not necessarily imply guilt." And Mangan's earliest excesses were aimed rather at the bare relief of pain than at what the English opium-eater calls "the excitement of superfluous pleasure." The severe moralist will perhaps not the less severely condemn him; average human nature must, however, look upon the case more sympathetically. Once caught in the snare of the opium fiend, so weak a will was bound to surrender. His was not the nature to withstand such temptation, and the time speedily came when, like a certain Waterford opium-eater, who had been told that an early death was inevitable, he would reply:—

"I care not how soon the lamp of life is extinguished, provided that while it lasts I can cause its flame to burn the brighter."

He has been greatly misunderstood—mainly, no doubt, through the lack of information about him. In some degree, what he says of Maturin will apply to his own case:—

"He, in his own dark way, understood many people, but nobody understood him in any way."

Even his most harmless eccentricities have been harshly described, both during his life and subsequently. His whimsicalities are, of course, not matters for praise, but neither do they call for severe comment. Quaintly enough, Mangan has made a characteristic defence of eccentricity. He contends that the eccentric are the only people who can claim to have genuine opinions. Thus:—

"It is a senseless charge to bring against any eccentric gentleman who prefers health to fashion, and comfort to custom, that he sets at defiance the opinions of society. Society, as at present constituted,



has usages, but not opinions. The eccentric gentleman is clearly the monopolist of such opinions as are at all to be got at. It is society that sets *his* opinions at defiance."

Although Mangan in his later years believed that there was no escape for him from a life of unvarying woe, he fully appreciated that there is a time for men of choosing which path they will take. He says somewhere:—

"Inner light and outer darkness—or outer light and inner darkness—take thy choice, O mortal! but remember that thou chusest for eternity."

And he notes that while the genius of the Arabian tales makes his first appearance in smoke, the poetical genius ends in it. Reading between the lines, one can detect in almost everything he wrote a sense of abandonment, a personal loss of friendliness and companionship, a feeling that though he was in the world, he was not of it. His world, he tells us often enough, was "all within." He was neglected during his life for reasons which are obvious to every reader of it—the most obvious of all, perhaps, being his morbid feeling of shyness and timidity. But no good reason has ever been given for the strange neglect of his writings, the strange indifference to his fame which has characterised the generations which have grown up since his death. Nothing has ever been done to commemorate his genius in his native city. The miserable headstone over his grave\* is an eyesore to lovers of Irish literature, and his birth place is still unmarked by tablet or other memorial, though the project of placing one there has often enough been talked of. Most Irishmen have heard his name, and there are many who know something of at least one poem of his. But even the inadequate collections of his poems now before the public do not excuse the ignorance of his writings which prevails among too many Irishmen. Several incidents might be recalled to illustrate the extent of this ignorance. For example, when the late Lord Carnarvon was Viceroy of Ireland, he had occasion to visit one of the most important schools in Dublin, and among other questions which he put to one or two pupils was one about Mangan's poetry. To his astonishment, the pupils whom he questioned knew nothing whatever of Mangan or his writings, a result largely

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\* Placed there many years after his death by his uncle.



attributable to what officialism doubtless considered to be the very politic and wise action of the Government in all but banishing him from the national school-books.\* It was only a little while before the incident just referred to happened that Mr. (now Sir George) Trevelyan, then Chief Secretary, was heckled in the House of Commons as to the reason why Mangan was unrepresented in the Irish school-books. The Chief Secretary returned the proverbial soft answer, acknowledging that there was no reason that he could allege, except, perhaps, that Mangan was above the heads of the scholars, endorsing the eulogy passed upon the poet by one of the Irish members, and adding that he himself had only recently developed "a strong feeling for Mangan's poetry."

The high opinion of Mangan's verse formed by so distinguished a writer as the biographer of Macaulay and Fox must have puzzled not a few of the members of Parliament—perhaps, even one or two of those who sat for Irish seats.†

Quite recently an incident occurred which shows that if some educated Irishmen, or those who are supposed to be such, are ignorant of Mangan's name and works, many humbler individuals are in the same position. A friend of the writer, while engaged in photographing a house in which Mangan had occupied a garret for a week or two, got into conversation with a respectable looking, but not busily-occupied, man of the workman type, who was standing near. As this onlooker was obviously curious as to the reason for taking a photograph of such a mean looking house, the friend in question thought he would explain his object, which he did by saying:—"Didn't Clarence Mangan live in that house?" To which the other replied, with the characteristic resolve of the Irishman not to be caught napping in the matter of local knowledge: "Faith, he did that, and a good business he done there, too!"

It is to be feared that even many Irish people, to whom his name is familiar, are ignorant of Mangan's claims upon their admiration. But there are signs of a welcome revival of interest in his life and works, and it is pleasant to note that English and Scotch critics are awaken-

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\* He is represented to a small extent in one of them.

† Especially when one remembers the story which is current that a well-known Irish member wonderingly asked, not so long ago:—"Who was Thomas Davis?"



ing to a sense of his literary importance. He has been worthily represented in several recent collections of modern verse, and the *Spectator*, in an article on Irish poetry, printed in January of the present year, uses these words of praise:—

“Mangan was a true poet, and, in our opinion, a great one. Put the harp of his country into his hands, and he could make it sound a note so dolorous, so mystical, so full of wild and dim imaginings that it seems incredible that the poet was a man inhabiting a Dublin slum only fifty years ago.”

Mangan's position in Irish poetry is a matter of difference of opinion among Irishmen. Even many of those who admire his work extremely are not altogether disposed to place him above Moore. Yet in lyrical power and range, vigour of expression, variety of treatment, originality of form, mastery of *technique*, keenness of perception, and in other qualities, Mangan seems to be quite unapproached by any Irish poet. Some of these qualities are possessed in a greater degree by other Irish poets, but in none are they combined in such perfection as in Mangan. Some attributes there are which Mangan lacks, or possesses only in a slender degree, and his perverseness in certain directions has been to no small extent detrimental to his reputation; but, with all deductions, it is perfectly certain that no other Irish poet is his peer in sheer imaginative power or fertility of invention. Those who admire his writings at all must admire them warmly; indifference is impossible in such a case. Direct comparison between him and other Irish poets is hardly possible or serviceable, but an interesting, if not very close, parallel which has been drawn between him and Moore by Mr. William Boyle, a clever Irish writer, in a recent lecture upon Mangan, is well worth transcribing here:—

“The two men,” he remarks, “in their lives and works, are characteristic of the two extremes of Irish character—its brightness and its gloom; for while the wine and fragrance of the poet's cornucopia fell abundantly to the one, the portion dealt out to the other smacks of gall and wormwood. . . . Of equal birth . . . to one, the dignified society of all the great and brilliant of his time, the sweetest bowers on the world's sunniest slopes; to the other, the reeking slum, the evil-smelling taproom, the garret and the lazar-house. To Moore, the loving admiration of all men, high and low; to Mangan, the pitying approval of the few. . . . Though the general level of his performances is by no means equal to that of the author of the ‘Irish Melodies,’ yet at times he blazes into an Oriental splendour unsur-



passed in 'Lalla Rookh,' and at other moments soars to pure, unsullied heights, as far above his brother-poet, as dazzling, as icy, as prismatic, as Mont Blanc towering above the flowery vales of Italy."

Mangan is certainly curiously unequal, but there is this strange feature about his inequality—that it is when surveyed as a whole, and not in detail, that his work is most clearly unequal. When he adopts the banjo strain, he does it with the most unquestionable deliberation. He does not begin a poem at a high level and unconsciously decline to bathos. Even Moore, like many other Irish poets, often falls below the level of his opening lines, and quite a number of his lyrics finish very weakly. Mangan, on the other hand, always remains on the level he has chosen, and if a poem of his is bad, it is always because he has struck too low a key, or perversely moves towards anti-climax. He is the most subjective of all Irish poets. His curious personality is in all he wrote. What a wide knowledge of human nature is in his writings! The extent of his "profound and curiously exquisite" culture—the circumstances being considered, must excite wonder. He, to use his own words—

"bee-like, at a hundred sources  
Gathered honeyed lore."

But his opportunities of acquiring knowledge, until he entered the employment of Trinity College, were very few. James Price states, however, that even at the scrivener's and attorney's offices he was noted for his passionate desire for knowledge:—

"He was then a diligent German, French, and Italian student, every unoccupied moment in his office—every hour that ought to have been spent in recreation—being devoted to his darling pursuit of language acquirement . . . He has been frequently seen to pull a dog's-eared German volume from his pocket, and in an instant to become so deeply absorbed in its study that time and place were alike forgotten."

The question of the similarity of his genius to Poe's has often been mooted, and while several writers (notably Joseph Skipsey, in his edition of Poe), have suggested that the latter was indebted to Mangan for the recurrent refrains and rhymes which are so characteristic of both poets, others have implied that Mangan must have known of Poe's work. The probabilities are, however, entirely against the latter theory. Mangan was unquestionably first in point of time, and even if Poe had invented his haunting refrains



years before Mangan, the latter could hardly have known of them. On the other hand, Poe must have been acquainted with some of Mangan's writings, for in his time the *Dublin University Magazine* was frequently pirated, and constantly quoted from in the United States, and his journalistic opportunities would have brought it under his notice. But, of course, there could be no foundation for any charge of plagiarism against either poet. Each was sufficiently endowed with genius to be independent of outside suggestion. If, as is possible, Poe was the better artist, Mangan possessed indubitably the truest inspiration, and it will be probably found that his human insight was deeper and the instinct of the poet more firmly rooted. There is far more versatility in the Irish poet, and the prophetic gift, which is only allied with the highest poetical genius, was one of Mangan's surest and most abiding possessions. He was the Banshee of the famine period. He is not without the rhetorical gift which Irish poets inevitably develop, but his finest work is not in the least rhetorical. One critic has called him "the most Pindaric writer in the English language." And his humour and quaintness must not be forgotten. His versatility is illustrated by the fact, already noted by Miss Guiney, that he had the Gilbertian gift before W. S. Gilbert was born. Many passages might be quoted in proof of the presence among his writings of verses with the touch of the author of the "Bab Ballads" and the Savoy opera *libretti*. Here are a few hurriedly chosen and not too favourable examples of this peculiar flavour in Mangan's lighter effusions.

"Holidays these in which everyone cruises  
Over what Ocean of Pleasure he chooses ;  
Business is banished and Idlesse pursues his  
Fancies unchecked in the Days of Nourooziz.  
Raise the glad chorus in praise of Nourooziz !  
Allah be blessed for the Days of Nourooziz !  
Base is the niggard who counts what he loses  
While he enjoys the gay Days of Nourooziz !

O ye dull doctors, who, shrouded like Druses,  
Blind yourselves writing what no one peruses,  
Drowsy-eyed chymists and poet-recluses,  
Come and rejoice in the smiles of Nourooziz !  
Raise the glad chorus in praise of Nourooziz !  
Allah be blessed for the Days of Nourooziz !  
Chill is the cell where Philosophy muses,  
Therefore be fools in the Days of Nourooziz !"



Again—

“ That one brief glance full of love for another,  
 Sped daggers and death to the heart of the Pole :  
 In vain his philosophy strove to smother  
 The serpents that jealously bred in his soul :  
     As backward he staggered,  
     With countenance haggard,  
 And feelings as acid as beer after thunder,  
     ’Twas plain that the dart  
     That had entered his heart,  
 Was rending his physical system asunder ! ”

Or this—

“ *Et moi*, I like various contrarious  
 Assemblies—both punch-drinking bawlers  
 And sighers of sighs—both your grinners and grumblers,  
     Grumblers, grumblers,  
     Your grinners and grumblers.  
 I have grins for your grinners and growls for your grumblers ! ”

And finally—

“ I’m a humdrum soul until treated to a cup,  
 And my visage has a puttyish color ;  
 But hand me the decanter and I soon flare up,  
 Till you’d swear old Democritus was duller ;  
 For I laugh and I quaff to the wonderment and awe  
 Of my purple-beaked entertainer,  
 Who never in his time either listened to or saw  
 Such guffaws from a pottle-drainer.  
 O what, after all, were this planet, let me ask,  
 But a stupid concern and a meanish,  
 If we couldn’t now and then get our fingers round a flask  
 Of that jolliest of beverages, Rhenish ? ”

This is in somewhat startling contrast to the sweeping fire and trenchant sword of his loftiest utterances. But the whimsical side of things appealed to him just as often as the more dignified part. Mr. Frank Mathew quaintly remarks in the sketch of Mangan which he has introduced into one of his books, that his life was not useless, “ if it saved others from the curse of being poets.” So far as Mangan himself was concerned, life could not possibly have been a more hopeless failure, but literature, and especially Irish literature, is immeasurably the richer for his having lived, and possibly for his having lived in such misery. It will be fully recognised yet that he was one of the few poets of the period between



1830-'50 who can be said to have been really and splendidly endowed with the highest attributes of genius. He was, in the eloquent words of the writer who prefaced the *Nation* supplement of his poems in 1852,

"a poet whose brilliant and elastic imagination had tried 'each mode of the lyre, and was master of all;' whose touch adorned the grave and gay alike; the prophetic fire of whose political odes was not more striking than his vivid and picturesque skill of dramatic description, his passionate pathos, his weird ghoul-like melancholy, or his quaint and fantastic humour; and the arabesque graces of whose language invented for themselves an exquisite accompaniment in the magical melody of his versification."

His fame is secure, though he cared for it as little as maybe. He was perfectly indifferent to popular appreciation, and one is sometimes tempted to believe, in observing its effects, that his perversity was more or less due to a deliberate wish to injure his literary reputation. His lack of craving after fame is, as usual, acknowledged by himself, for he says:—

"Selber's toploftical disdain of human applause is the only great thing about him except his cloak."

He has also said, and the words may serve as his epitaph:—

"Farewell! the world may mock, may rave;  
Me little move its words or ways;  
Men's idle scorn *he* well can brave  
Who never wooed their idler praise."



# APPENDIX







## APPENDIX.

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THE following poems, not included in any collection of Mangan's work, are given either because they have been specially mentioned in the previous pages, or for their personal interest.

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### LAMENTATION OF JEREMIAS OVER JERUSALEM.

(A PARAPHRASE FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE.)

“ And it came to pass, after Israel was carried into captivity, and Jerusalem was desolate, that Jeremias the prophet sat weeping, and mourned with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and with a sorrowful mind, sighing and moaning, he said ” :—

How doth she sit alone  
The city late so thronged, how doth she sit in woe,  
Begirt with solitude and graves !  
Oh ! how is she that from her Temple-throne,  
Ruled o'er the Gentiles, now become  
A widow in her dreary home !  
How have her Princes fallen low,  
And dwindled into slaves !

She weepeth all night long,  
Forsaken and forgot : her face is dusk with tears ;  
Her heart is rent with many throes.  
Not one of all the once-admiring throng  
That sued and wooed her night and morn  
But looketh down on her with scorn !  
Her fondest friends of other years  
Have now become her foes !

Her dwelling-place is dark :  
Her palaces lie waste : she feareth even to pass  
Their bass-courts desolate and bare.  
She hath become a byword and a mark  
Among the nations : lorn and lone,  
She seeketh rest and findeth none.  
Her persecuting foes, alas !  
Have caught her in their snare !



Gloom shroudeth Sion's halls,  
 And trodden in the dust lie silver lamp and bowl.  
 Her golden gates are turned to clay,  
 Her priests are now the godless Gentiles' thralls.  
 Her youths walk wan and sorrow-worn;  
 Her silent virgins droop and mourn.  
 In hopeless bitterness of soul  
 She sigheth all the day !

Behold the sad Bereaven !  
 Her enemies have grown to be her pitiless lords,  
 And mock her in her sore disgrace !  
 Her sins have risen in black array to Heaven ;  
 Therefore the Lord Jehovah hath  
 Rained on her head His chastening wrath ;  
 Therefore her sons go bound with cords  
 Before the oppressor's face !

How hath her glory fled !  
 The beauty is out-blotted as a fallen star  
 Of her that whilom looked so fair !  
 Her stricken Princes cower for shame and dread  
 Like wandering sheep, that seek in vain  
 Their pasture ground o'er hill and plain,  
 They stray abroad, they flee afar,  
 Guideless, and in despair !

. . . . .

Oh ! lost Jerusalem  
 Where now be her mad hours of wantonness and wine ?  
 Her leprousness is on her hands,  
 So lately pranked with pearl and golden gem !  
 A captive Queen she sits, cast down  
 From Heaven to Earth, without her crown !  
 O Lord, my God, what grief is mine  
 To see her thus in bands !

She lieth overthrown,  
 Smitten of Thee, O Lord ! and shrinking in her fear  
 Before the alien Gentile powers,  
 Since Thou hast cast away Thy Church, Thine own !  
 They violate her sanctuary,  
 Of whom command was given by Thee,  
 That they should ne'er adventure near  
 Her Temple and its towers !

Woe for the fallen Queen !  
 Her people groan and die, despairful of relief.  
 They famish and they cry for bread !  
 No more her nobles walk in silken sheen !  
 Their gauds and rings, their precious things,  
 Are pawned for food ! Oh, God ! it wrings  
 My soul to see it ! Through my grief  
 I lie as one half dead !

Oh, ye who travel by !  
 All ye who pass this way, stop short awhile, and see  
 If Earth have sorrow like to mine !  
 Judea's dark iniquities belie



The faith she vaunteth in her God ;  
 And therefore are her people trod  
 In dust this day, and men tread *me*  
 As treaders tread the wine !

O, most mysterious Lord !  
 From Thine high place in Heaven Thou sendest fire and flame  
 Into my dry and withered bones !  
 Thou searchest me as with an angry sword !  
 Thou spreadest snares aneath my feet !  
 In vain I pray, in vain entreat,  
 Thou turnest me away with shame,  
 And heedest not my groans !

Thus waileth she aloud,  
 The God-forsaken one, in this her day of dole.—  
 “ My spirit faileth me ; mine eyes  
 Are filmèd o’er with mist ; my neck is bowed  
 Beneath a yoke the live-long day,  
 And there doth lie a weight alway,  
 An iron hand, on my spent soul,  
 That will not let it rise !

• • • • •  
 The Lord, the Lord is just !  
 His wrath is kindled fierce against me for my ways.  
 I have provoked the Lord, my God,  
 Therefore I make my darkling bed in dust.  
 Pity me, ye who see me, all !  
 Pity my sons, who pine in thrall !  
 Their spirit wastes, their strength decays,  
 Under the Gentile’s rod.

I sought my friends to tell  
 The story of my woes ; alas ! they would not hear !  
 Disease drank up my princes’ blood,  
 For Famine’s hand lay black on them as well.  
 My priests, too, fainted on their feet ;  
 They feebly crawled from street to street,  
 Seeking all day afar and near,  
 A morsel of coarse food !

Behold, O Lord ! —behold !  
 Behold my wretchedness ! For I am overcome  
 By suffering—almost by despair !  
 My heart is torn with agonies untold !  
 The land expires beneath Thy frown ;  
 Abroad the red sword striketh down  
 Its tens of thousands ; and at home  
 Death reigneth everywhere !

My groanings are not hid.  
 All they who have hated me regard me with disdain !  
 They see the darkness of my face,  
 And mock it, for they know Thou hast forbid  
 My nearest friends to help me now.  
 But Thou wilt yet avenge me, Thou !  
 They shall lie low where I have lain  
 Who scoff at my disgrace !



Then shall their evil fall  
 On their own heads—for still 'tis evil in Thy sight,  
 And they shall mourn as now I mourn,  
 And Thou, Lord, shalt make vintage of them all,  
 And tread them down even as they see  
 Thou, for my sins, hast trodden me,  
 They who to-day deride and slight  
 The afflictions I have borne ! ”

—*Irish Catholic Magazine*, 1847.

### KHIDDER.

[This poem is founded on the same idea as that of “The World’s Changes.” *Khidder* is supposed by Mangan to be the prophet Elias, whom the Persians or Arabs, or both, believe to revisit the earth from time to time for the purpose of ascertaining the condition of mankind.]

Thus said or sung  
 Khidder, the ever-young :  
 Journeying, I passed an ancient town—  
 Of lindens green its battlements bore a crown,  
 And at its turreted gates, on either hand,  
 Did fountains stand,  
 In marble white of rarest chiselling,  
 The which on high did fling  
 Water, that then like rain went twinkling down  
 With a rainbow glancing in the spray  
 As it wreathed in the sunny ray.  
 I marked where, 'neath the frown  
 Of the dark rampart, smiled a garden fair ;  
 And an old man was there,  
 That gathered fruit. “ Good father,” I began,  
 “ Since when, I pray you, standeth here  
 This goodly city with its fountains clear ? ”  
 To which that aged man  
 Made answer—“ Ever stood  
 The city where it stands to-day,  
 And as it stands so shall it stand for aye,  
 Come evil days or good.”

Him gathering fruit I left, and journeyed on ;  
 But when a thousand years were come and gone,  
 Again I passed that way, and lo !  
 There was no city, there were no  
 Fountains of chiselling rare,  
 No garden fair  
 Only  
 A lonely  
 Shepherd was piping there,  
 Whose little flock seemed less  
 In that wide pasture of the wilderness.

“ Good friend,” quoth I,  
 “ How long hath the fair city passed away,  
 That stood with gates so high,  
 With fountains bright, and gardens gay,



Where now these sheep do stray?"  
 And he replied—"What withers makes but room  
 For what springs up in verdurous bloom—  
 Sheep have grazed ever here, and here will graze for aye."

Him piping there I left, and journeyed on :  
 But when a thousand years were come and gone,  
 Again I passed  
 That way, and see ! there was a lake  
 That darkened in the blast,  
 And waves that brake  
 With a melancholy roar  
 Along that lonely shore.  
 And on a shingly point that ran  
 Far out into the lake, a fisherman  
 Was hauling in his net. To him I said :  
 " Good friend,  
 I fain would know  
 Since when it is that here these waters flow ?"  
 Whereat he shook his head,  
 And answer made, " Heaven lend  
 Thee better wit, good brother ! Ever here  
 These waters flowed, and so  
 Will ever flow :  
 And aye in this dark rolling wave  
 Men fished, and still fish,  
 And ever will fish,  
 Until fish  
 No more in waters swim."

Him  
 Hauling his net I left, and journeyed on,  
 But when a thousand years were come and gone,  
 Again I passed that way, and lo ! there stood,  
 Where waves had rolled, a green and flourishing wood—  
 Flourishing in youth it seemed, and yet was old—  
 And there it stood where deep blue waves had rolled.  
 A place of pleasant shade !  
 A wandering wind among the branches played,  
 And birds were now where fish had been ;  
 And through the depth of green,  
 In many a gush the golden sunshine streamed ;  
 And wild flowers gleamed  
 About the brown and mossy  
 Roots of the ancient trees,  
 And the cushioned sward so glossy  
 That compassed these.

Here, as I passed, there met  
 Me, on the border of that forest wide,  
 One with an axe, whom, when I spied,  
 Queth I—" Good neighbour, let  
 Me ask, I pray you, how long hath this wood  
 Stood,  
 Spreading its covert, broad and green,  
 Here, where mine eyes have seen  
 A royal city stand, whose battlements  
 Were like the ancient rocks ;  
 And then a place for shepherds' tents,



And pasturage of flocks ;  
 And then,  
 Roughening beneath the blast,  
 A vast  
 Dark mere—a haunt of fishermen ? ”

There was a cold surprise  
 In the man's eyes  
 While thus I spoke, and, as I made an end,  
 This was his dry  
 Reply—  
 “ Facetious friend,  
 This wood  
 Hath ever stood  
 Even where it stands to-day ;  
 And as it stands, so shall it stand for aye.  
 And here men catch no fish—here tend  
 No sheep—to no town-markets wend ;  
 But aye in these  
 Green shades men felled, and still fell,  
 And ever will fell  
 Trees.”

Him with his axe I left, and journeyed on,  
 But when a thousand years were come and gone,  
 Again I passed  
 That way ; and lo ! a town—  
 And spires, and domes, and towers looked proudly down  
 Upon a vast  
 And soding tide of life,  
 That flowed through many a street, and surged  
 In many a market-place, and urged  
 Its way in many a wheeling current, hither  
 And thither.  
 How rose the strife  
 Of sounds ! the ceaseless beat  
 Of feet !  
 The noise of carts, of whips—the roll  
 Of chariots, coaches, cabs, gigs—(all  
 Who keep the last-named vehicle we call  
*Respectable*)—horse-trampings, and the toll  
 Of bells ; the whirl, the clash, the hubbub-mingling  
 Of voices, deep and shrill ; the clattering, jingling,  
 The indescribable, indefinable roar ;  
 The grating, creaking, booming, clanking, thumping,  
 And bumping,  
 And stumping  
 Of folks with wooden legs ; the gabbling,  
 And babbling,  
 And many more  
 Quite nameless helpings  
 To the general effect ; dog-yelpings,  
 Laughter, and shout, and cry ; all sounds of gladness,  
 Of sadness,  
 And madness,—  
 For there were people marrying,  
 And others carrying  
 The dead they would have died for to the grave—  
 (Sadly the church bell tolled



When the young men were burying the old—  
 More sadly spake that bodeful tongue  
 When the old were burying the young)—  
 Thus did the tumult rave  
 Through that fair city—nor were wanting there  
 Of dancing dogs or bear,  
 Or needy knife-  
 Grinder, or man with dismal wife,  
 That sang deplorably of "*purling groves*  
*And verdant streams, all where young Damon roves*  
*With tender Phillida, the nymph he loves,*  
*And softly breathe*  
*The balmy moonbeam's wreath,*  
*And amorous turtle-doves*"—  
 Or other doleful men, that blew  
 The melancholiest tunes—the which they only knew—  
 On flutes, and other instruments of wind ;  
 Or small dark imps, with hurdy-  
 Gurdy,  
 And marmoset, that grinned  
 For nuts, and might have been his brother,  
 They were so like each other ;  
 Or man,  
 That danced like the god Pan,  
 Twitching  
 A spasmy face  
 From side to side with a grace  
 Bewitching,  
 The while he whistled  
 In sorted pipes, all at his chin that bristled ;  
 Or fiddler, fiddling much  
 For little profit, and a many such  
 Street musics most forlorn  
 In that too pitiless rout quite overborne.

Now, when as I beheld  
 The din, and heard the din of life once more  
 Swell, as it swelled  
 In that same place four thousand years before,  
 I asked of them that passed me in the throng  
 How long  
 The city thereabouts had stood,  
 And what was gone with pasture, lake, and wood ;  
 But at such question most men did but stare,  
 And so pass on ; and some did laugh and shake  
 Their heads, me deeming mad ; but none would spare  
 The time, or take  
 The pains to answer me, for there  
 All were in haste—all busy—bent to make  
 The most of every minute,  
 And do, an if they might, an hour's work in it.

Yet as I gave not o'er, but pertinaciously  
 Plied with my question every passer-by,  
 A dozen voices did at length reply  
 Ungraciously :  
 "What ravest thou  
 Of pasture, lake, and wood ? As it is now



So was it always here, and so will be for aye."  
 Them, hurrying there, I left, and journeyed on—  
 But when a thousand years are come and gone,  
 Again I'll pass that way.

—*Dublin University Magazine*, August, 1845.

### GASPARO BANDOLLO.

AN ANECDOTE OF THE SOUTH OF ITALY.  
 (1820.)

[This is Mangan's last poem in the *Dublin University Magazine*—  
 May, 1849.]

Once—twice—the stunning musquetry  
 Peals echoing down the dark ravine.  
 Sevrini's blood wells forth like wine.  
 Weak—foresore—faint as faint may be,  
 And powerless to resist or flee,  
 He drags him to a peasant's hovel.  
 "Ha! Giambattista!—thou, good boy?  
 One short hour's shelter! I can grovel  
 Unseen beneath yon scattered sheaves.  
 So—there! Departing daylight leaves  
 This nook dark; and, methinks, the spot  
 Is safe if thou betray me not.  
 Let me but baffle those base hounds!  
 If *mine* plead not, Italia's wounds  
 May—that Italia *they* destroy!"  
 —He speaks, and crouches down, and gathers  
 Around his limbs the light, loose litter,  
 With one deep groan—O, God, how bitter!  
 Given to the lost land of his fathers.

Hark! his pursuers follow after,  
 On by the bloody track they follow.  
 Rings their fierce yell of demon laughter,  
 Upon the winds, adown the hollow,  
 Rings loud exulting yell on yell.  
 "By Heaven!—see!—here the miscreant fell  
 And rose again!—and, if these black  
 Leaves mock us not, here fails the track!  
 Ha, so!—a hut! The hunted rebel  
 Hath earthed him here! Now, comrades, treble  
 Your care! A thousand gold *zecchini*  
 Are on the head, alive or dead,  
 Of the outlaw Vascolo Sevrini!"

Half loth alike to leave or linger,  
 In burst the slaves of Alien Law—  
 O ruefullest of sights to see!  
 Mute stands yon trembler, but his finger  
 Points to the blood-bèdabbled straw,  
 That blushes for his perfidy.  
 Ill-starred Sevrini, woe for thee!



God be thy stay, thou Doomed One, thou !  
 Strong hands and many are on thee now—  
 Through the long gorge of that steep valley  
 They drag thee up Mount Bruno's brow ;  
 And thy best bravery little skills !  
 O ! stood'st thou on Calabria's hills,  
 With naught beside thine own good sword,  
     With nothing save the soul that slumbers  
 Within thee now, to quell this horde !—  
     But, bleeding—bound—o'erborne by numbers,  
 Thy day is by to strike and rally !  
 Thou fallest by the hands of cravens  
     Rock-hardened against all remorse ;  
 And Morn's red rays shall see the ravens  
     Fleshing their foul beaks in thy corse !

But Heaven and Earth are hushed once more.  
 Young Giambattista's eyes are bent  
 In fearful glances on the floor.  
 But little weeneth he or weeteth  
 Of the deep cry his land repeateth  
     In million tones of one lament.  
 Nought pondereth he of wars of yore,  
 Of battling Ghibelline and Guelph,  
     And broken fights and trampled lands,  
     And Gallic swords and Teuton chains—  
     His eye but marks yon dark-red stains.  
 Those red stains now burn on himself,  
 And in his heart, and on his hands !

But sky and sea once more are still.  
 The duskier shades of Eventide  
 Are gathering round Mount Bruno's hill.  
 The boy starts up, as from a dream ;  
 He hears a low, quick sound outside.  
 Was it the running valley-stream ?  
 No ! 'twas his father's foot that trod.  
 Alas ! poor, nerveless youth ! denied  
     The kindling fire that fires thy race  
 Dost thou not weep, and pray thy God  
     That Earth might ope' its depths, and hide  
     Thee from that outraged father's face ?

The eye is dark, the cheek is hollow  
 To-night, of Gasparo Bandollo ;  
 And his high brow shows worn and pale—  
 Slight signs all of the inward strife  
     Of the soul's lightning, swift to strike  
     And sure to slay, but flashing never !  
 For Man and Earth and Heaven alike  
     Seem for him voiceful of a tale  
     That robs him of all rest for ever,  
 And leaves his own right hand to sever  
 The last link binding him to life !  
 Calm even to marble, stern and sad,  
 He eyes the spots of tell-tale hue,  
 Then, turning to the cowering lad,  
 With stirless lips but asks him, "*Who ?*"



"Oh, father!" cried the boy—then, wild  
 With terror of some dreadful doom,  
 He gasped for breath—"Speak, wretched child!  
*Who* sought my asylum, and from *whom*?"  
 "O God! Sevrini!"—"From?"—"The Sbirri."—  
 "The fugitive was wounded, weary?"  
 "O father! I—this dreary room—"—  
 "And thou betrayedst him?"—"O Heaven!"—  
 "And thou betrayedst him?"—"I—only"—  
 "And thou betrayedst him?"—"O! hear me,  
 My father! I watch here so lonely  
 All day, and feel, Oh! so bereaven,  
 With not a sight or sound to cheer me!

My mind—my—but I only pointed—  
 I spake not!"—And with such disjointed  
 And feeble phrases, the poor youth,  
 Powerless to gloss the ghastly truth,  
 Sank on his knees with shrieks and tears  
 Before the author of his years.  
 And *he*? What throes his breast might stifle  
 Were hidden as beneath a pall,  
 He merely turned him to the wall,  
 And with closed eyes took down his rifle.  
 "Go forth, boy!"—"Father! father! spare!"—  
 "Go forth, boy! go! Now kneel in prayer!"  
 "My God!—my father!" "Ay, boy, right!  
 Hast now none other!"—"There is light  
 Enough still for a deed of blood.  
 Stern man, whose sense of nationhood  
 So vanquishes thy love paternal—  
 And wilt thou, then, pollute this vernal  
 And virgin sod with gore even now,  
 And a son's gore? What answerest thou?  
 —"Kneel down!" Ay, he will kneel, and fall,  
 Will kneel, and fall to rise no more;  
 But not by thee shall thus be sped  
 The spirit of yon trembling thrall!  
 Didst thou dream nought of this before?  
 Fate slayeth him. Thy child is dead!

The child is dead of old Bandollo,  
 And he, the sire, hath scarce to follow  
 His offspring to the last dark barrow,  
 So much hath grief's long-rankling arrow  
 Forestalled for him that doom of Death  
 Which takes from suffering nought save breath—  
 And grief that speaks, albeit untold,  
 And lives, where all seems dead and cold,  
 And finds no refuge in the Past,  
 And sees the Future overcast  
 With broader gloom than even the Present.  
 Better that thou, unhappy peasant,  
 Hadst died in youth, and made no sign,  
 Nor dreamt Life's Day must have an Even.

Better thy child's fate had been thine—  
 The best lot after all! for Heaven  
 Most careth for such weakling souls.—



Downwards in power the wide flood rolls  
 Whose thunder-waves wake ever more  
 The caverned soul of each far shore,  
 But when the midnight storm wind sweeps  
 In wrath above its broken deeps,  
 What heart but ponders darkly over  
 The myriad wrecks those waters cover?  
 It is the lonely brook alone  
 That winds its way with music's tone  
 By orange bower and lily-blossom,  
 And sinks into the parent wave  
 Not as worn Age into its grave,  
 But as pure Childhood on God's bosom.




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### EPITAPH ON LEEH REWAAN.

[This, like the following short pieces, are pretended translations from Ottoman and other poets.]

Rests within this lonely mausoleum,  
 After life's distractions and fatigue,  
 Leeh Rewaan, a man to hear and see whom  
 Monks and Meerzas journeyed many a league.  
 Yet not Leeh Rewaan himself, but rather  
 Leeh Rewaan's worn-out and cast-off dress,  
 He, the man, dwells with his Heavenly Father  
 In a land of light and loveliness.  
 Shah of Song he was, and fond of laughter,  
 Sweet Sharaab \* and silver-spangled shawls.  
 Stranger! mayest thou quaff with him hereafter  
 Life's red wine in Eden's palace-halls!

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### ADVICE.

*Traverse* not the world for lore! the sternest  
 But the surest teacher is the heart.  
 Studying that and that alone, thou learnest  
 Best and soonest whence and what thou *art*.  
*Time*, not travel, 'tis which gives us ready  
 Speech, experience, prudence, tact and wit.  
 Far more light the lamp that bideth steady  
 Than the wandering lantern doth *emit*.  
*Moor*, Chinese, Egyptian, Russian, Roman,  
 Tread one common downhill path of doom:  
 Everywhere the names are Man and Woman,  
 Everywhere the old sad sins find *room*.  
*Evil* angels tempt us in all places.  
 What but sands or snows hath Earth to give?  
 Dream not, friend, of deserts and oases,  
 But look inwards and begin to *live*.

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\* Shrub or Sherbet.



## PHILOSOPHY.

Make the round world thy Book of Examples !  
 Man and his mind are a study for sages :  
 He who would mount to the firmament tramples  
 Under his feet the experience of ages.

Love what thou hast with a willing devotion !  
 Drink of the stream, if thou meet not the fountain !  
 Though the best pearls lie low in the ocean,  
 Gold is at hand in the mines of the mountain.

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Though Laughter seems, it never is, the antithesis to Tears :  
 The gayest births of Circumstance or Fancy  
 But minister in masquerade to Sovereign Grief, who rears  
 His temple by that moral necromancy  
 Which fuses down to one dark mass all passions of Life's years :  
 And as from even adverse facts Vallancey  
 Proved us mere Irish to be Orientals,  
 Nature makes Grinning Schools turn men out Sentimentals.

## RELIC.

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Slow through my bosom's veins their last cold blood is flowing,  
 Above my heart even now I feel the rank grass growing.  
 Hence to the Land of Nought ! the caravan is starting—  
 Its bell already tolls the signal of departing.  
 Rejoice, my soul ! Poor bird, thou art at last delivered !  
 Thy cage is crumbling fast ; its bars will soon be shivered.  
 Farewell, thou troubled world, where Sin and Crime run riot,  
 For Shahi henceforth rests in God's own House of Quiet !



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