

THE CURSE OF HISTORY.

The malady of Ireland is history. That seems a strange thing to say of a science which ought to broaden the mind, but it is true that history, as taught, has been a curse to Ireland. Ireland, North and South, Catholic and Protestant Ireland, broods over the past, and it is an unhappy past, full of wrongs and violence, of racial and sectarian strife. The evil power of the past is felt even in Canada. We fight out our domestic questions with far less bitterness, with far more good-nature, than those which we import from older lands.

Even our **immigration** problems are heritages from the past and from the old world. An "undesirable" immigrant means a man who has been oppressed or neglected in the old world.

There is very little doubt that if Irishmen, Protestant and Catholic, could throw aside their inherited hatreds and bigotries and prejudices, they could make Ireland prosperous and united, and give it a distinctive and proud place in the world. That is the real basis of home rule. It is not a desire to be free from England. England does not want to oppress Ireland. It is nonsense to hold the English workman of to-day, the man who rules, or can rule, England, responsible for what was done in Ireland in the days of Elizabeth or Cromwell. Irish Nationalists and English representatives of labor are now working and fighting side by side. Irish Nationalists have helped to pass laws which have immensely improved the condition of workmen in England, Wales, and Scotland.

Nationalism does not mean hostility. Mazzini, a champion of Italian unity and nationality, and also of the brother-

hood of nations and the unity of the human race, spoke of a nation as having a certain capacity and genius fitting it to do a certain distinctive work in the world. Such capacity and genius are the products partly of geography and environment and partly of racial origin. Ireland has that capacity and genius, but it has been retarded by race and sectarian quarrels, and by a kind of history, that it were best to forget. The world needs the work that can be done by a united, harmonious Irish nation. Home rule will be useful mainly as it will develop the distinctive qualities of the Irish race and make them contribute to the progress of humanity.