

CHATTERTON LECTURE ON AN ENGLISH POET

OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY

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I HAVE chosen for this lecture the work of a man whose name does not appear in the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, whose work is not mentioned in the histories of recent literature, who has been largely avoided by anthologists,¹ and who has not, as far as I know, afforded any New Critics opportunity for pedantry. My immediate personal reason for choosing this occasion is that I have very pleasant memories of a meeting in Oxford one sunny afternoon with the founder of this series of lectures, the late E. H. W. Meyerstein, when we talked of, amongst other Irish poets, Gogarty. But there are other reasons besides a desire to continue, as it were, that conversation here this afternoon, the main one being that, though Gogarty's poetry has perhaps been lucky, so far, in that it has been allowed to speak for itself as all good poetry ideally should, the reason why it has not been accorded serious treatment is worth exploring; and in the process I want to make a case for the enjoyment which I believe Gogarty's poems can provide.

Maurice Headlam in his *Irish Reminiscences* remarked that Lord Dunsany said there is no 'typical Irishman' but that he himself thought Gogarty 'a type of contradictory qualities',² which is as far as the civil service caution of Headlam's book would allow him to go in the direction of saying that Gogarty seemed to him a typical Irishman. The reasons he gives for this are not very satisfactory: 'his fluent witty speech, his stories good, bad and indifferent, his brilliant professional reputation, his wide knowledge of literature and the classics.' All that Headlam said of Gogarty is true: the fluency and wit, the brilliant professional reputation, the wide knowledge of literature and the classics, all are there at work in his poetry; but these are not

¹ Notable exceptions are Lennox Robinson, *A Golden Treasury of Irish Verse*, 1925 (3 poems); W. B. Yeats, *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, 1936 (6 poems); and D. MacDonogh and Lennox Robinson, *The Oxford Book of Irish Verse*, 1958 (5 poems).

² Maurice Headlam, *Irish Reminiscences*, 1947, p. 54.

exclusively Irish qualities, they are the kind of qualities we might equally well posit in, say, an Elizabethan Englishman. They would fit Sir Walter Raleigh, would they not? Provided, of course, that we remember that both Sir Walter Raleigh and Gogarty had also an abundant appetency for life, for beauty and bravery.¹ Or, if we look for another parallel we might say the terms fit another poet known for fluency and wit, Herrick, a man with wide knowledge of literature and the classics, but less known, perhaps, for a brilliant professional reputation: for Herrick is a man after Gogarty's poetic heart, though he did not have the worldly good fortune of the Irish poet in his (perhaps perforce) unworldly role in the church. No, wit and fluency, brilliant professional reputation, and knowledge of the classics and literature are not necessarily typically Irish qualities (nor indeed are they necessarily recognized as typically poetic qualities any more).

What then are the Irish elements? Perhaps we can approach these through knowing something of the man behind the poems: an ear, nose, and throat specialist with an ear for melody, a nose for the ridiculous, and a throat unashamed of emotional speech and song. Born in 1878, the son and grandson of doctors, he was taught at his English school² to compose Latin verses:

like jigsaw puzzles irrespective of ear. We used a *gradus* to check the quantities of the vowels. The result of our work was futility. Hexameters meant nothing to the teacher; there was no appeal to the ear, for he was deaf to 'The stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man'.³

He read Xenophon in Greek but by the time he was ripe for "the sweet and pleasant reading of old authors" the sparks of fervent desire for learning were extinct with the burden of grammar'.⁴ He had, however, by this time realized that words can be selected and bent to very different purposes; he had also begun to stock his memory with a vast repertoire of poetry; and he had been inducted into the classical tradition of imitation. When he left school he had a year at the old Royal University

¹ Since writing this I noticed in W. B. Yeats, *Letters on Poetry to Dorothy Wellesley*, 1940, p. 151 a comment on Gogarty's *As I was going down Sackville Street*: . . . 'One can say much of it, as somebody said I think of Raleigh, it is 'high insolent and passionate.'

² He went initially to the Christian Brothers' School at Richmond Street, then to a boarding school on the Shannon, next to Stonyhurst, and finally to Clongowes Wood College.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, *It Isn't This Time of Year At All!: an unpremeditated autobiography*, 1954, p. 27.

⁴ *Ibid.*

in Dublin before the prospect of entering Dublin University seemed more attractive. He was admitted to Trinity College, Dublin, and thus began the tension which made him uneasily amphibious between the heady airs of Ascendancy and Castle Society and the troubled waters of the Sinn Fein movement.

Trinity, however, set its mark firmly on Gogarty: he was there in a golden period of scholarship and late in life he wrote:

Often the thought strikes me, Have I ever left Dublin University? Certainly I have never sought to improve on the universal outlook on life. With Lachesis I sang of the Past, with Clotho of the Present and, thus equipped, I can look, as I do now, at the Future with assurance.¹

Trinity believed that its medical students should not study merely medicine, and so Gogarty took his compulsory Bachelor of Arts degree in the midst of his work for a medical one. Of the dons, he admired and especially liked Macran the philosopher, and Yelverton Tyrrell the classic, 'that gowned man who loved to foster/My waking wits',² to whom he said he owed 'all of the little acquaintance I have of the classics and all my love of the plangent word or unalterable line'.³ Gogarty liked to praise his friends, and his 'Elegy on the Archpoet William Butler Yeats Lately Dead' is a good example of this genre:

We might as well just save our breath,
There's not a good word to be said for Death
Except for the great change it brings:
For who could bear the loveliest Springs
Touched by the thought that he must keep
A watch eternal without sleep?
But yet within the ends
Of human, not eternal things,
We all resent the change it brings:
Chiefly the loss of friends:
Tyrrell, Mahaffy and Macran,
The last the gentlest gentleman, . . .⁴

However, it was a generous pupil's praise which he sang in memory of Tyrrell in 'Aeternae Lucis Redditor':

Too seldom on this world of ours
Unwrackt the eternal radiance pours.
Again we shall not see it pour

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, 'Perennial', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 56.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, *It Isn't This Time Of Year At All!*, 1954, p. 131.

⁴ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 205.

As in the days and nights before
 We lost the wide Virgilian calm;
 Days when we sought to earn the palm—
 Through the endowment of a wit
 Which made us eligible for it—
 From you who were Wit's arbiter,
 Aeternae lucis Redditor.¹

The endowment of a wit made his early reactions to Mahaffy less appreciative. While Mahaffy's wit (Gogarty particularly valued his reply to a lady who asked him for the definition of an Irish bull: 'a male animal, Madam, that is always pregnant') and scholarship were recognized in Dublin for their brilliance and breadth, he himself was also renowned for his travels and king-hunting, and was on one occasion given a dog by the niece of the king of Greece which died on its way to Ireland. Gogarty parodied Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* and Mahaffy's lisp together in *The Death of Diogenes, the Doctor's Dog*. The Doctor [Mahaffy] laments the death:

When I wambled aound
 In the gwound that was Gweece
 I was given that hound
 By the King's little niece,
 And had rather be fined e'er I found him to gaze on
 His saddest surcease.

The Chorus of Scholars of the House adds its deadpan deadly comment:

He was given that hound
 By the seed of a King
 For the wisdom profound
 Of his wide wandering.

But was it the owner, or donor, or dog that was led by a string?²

Mahaffy, who richly deserves a biography himself, set Gogarty, and probably Oscar Wilde before him, an example of intellectual arrogance,³ which was fed by Gogarty's own skill in parody. This developed in competition with an even greater parodist.

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 199.

² Text from 'Threnody on the Death of Diogenes, the Doctor's Dog', *Secret Springs of Dublin Song*, 1918, p. 40. The poem originally appeared in *Dublin University Magazine*.

³ In an 'Ode to the Bicentenary' Gogarty wrote for *The Festival of the Bicentenary of the School of Physic* (Dublin, 1912) he included his expression of this: 'Before this public rape began / And Peasant grew to Overman.'

In his year at the Royal University he had become friendly with Joyce (who, four years younger, had also been a pupil at Clongowes Wood College) and this friendship continued after Gogarty went to Trinity. At the National Library he frequently met Joyce (and other students, such as John Elwood, celebrated in their different ways in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* and in Gogarty's poems).¹ There was an Oxford interlude during Gogarty's Trinity days (1898-1907)—two terms at Worcester in 1904 where the highlights were failing the Newdigate, buying an Indian motor bicycle from William Morris, meeting Compton Mackenzie, successfully drinking a scone, and realizing conduct was more in demand than scholarship—but when he returned to Dublin Joyce lived with him in the famous Martello tower he rented at Sandycove, outside Dublin. Here there was a good deal of rivalry:

We quoted and parodied *all* the poets. Joyce could parody every prose style and get an equivalent sound for every word.²

This desire for parody was perhaps particularly strong in the heyday of classical studies in Dublin and the Trinity classical dons themselves produced many brilliant parodies in their Greek and Latin verses.³

Of Gogarty's parodies, however, Dublin still remembers English versions, particularly that witty echo of Keats's 'Silent, upon a peak in Darien' as 'Potent, behind a cart, with Mary Ann' in his poem 'On first looking through Kraft Ebbing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*'. And this bawdy element in Gogarty, of course, must not be glossed over. His medical-student days were set in a Dublin of slums, of tough conditions, in the tradition of ribaldry which often acts as a safety valve for the sensitive. But Gogarty had a zest for getting to know men and women of all classes. His family had frowned upon his prowess in bicycle racing, which was regarded as 'low', his friends from his Royal University days were considered vulgar, and he was regarded as keeping 'low company' at a restaurant and public house called

¹ By Gogarty in 'To Citizen Elwood in South America', *Secret Springs of Dublin Song*, 1918, p. 11. I am indebted to Mr. Ulick O'Connor who told me of this volume's existence and to Mr. Walsh of Hodges Figgis, Dublin, who supplied a copy of it with identifications of the authors which were confirmed by M. J. MacManus and Seamus O'Sullivan; these attributions were originally made by Gogarty himself at his son's request.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *It Isn't This Time Of Year At All!*, 1954, p. 70.

³ See, for instance, the various volumes of *Kottabos* published in 1874, 1877 and 1881. A second series began in 1888 and ended in 1895.

the Bailey; but then he relished the lively speech which characterized 'low' Dublin pub life as much as it did, in different, more refined vocabulary, the dining and drawing rooms of Dublin society. As a medical student and doctor Gogarty was automatically thrust face to face with appalling social conditions in the Dublin slums and formed in the process an outlook on life not unlike that of another Trinity medical graduate, Goldsmith. While extracting what fun he could from the ignoble crowding 'That leads to the Commune' he denounced it too:

Break down the tenement
Walls that surround them;
Lead out from festering
Lane and back garden
The Heirs to the Kingdom,
To sunlight, to highland,
To winds blowing over
Green fields; and restore to
The sons of a City,
By seafarers founded,
The sight of white clouds on
An open horizon.¹

And so he recorded in unpublished verses (some of these still remembered at convivial students' parties in Dublin, perhaps much as Goldsmith's ballads were sung in the streets when Goldsmith was still an undergraduate), the affairs of fresh Nellie, of Mrs. Mack, and other lively ladies of Dublin's Night-town. Several long poems, limericks, parodies, and prose anecdotes have passed into medical and other Dublin folklore, the most absurdly Aristophanic an account of how a king's detective was pursued by one of these intoxicated ladies and fled before her advances.² Like the Australian poet A. D. Hope in our time, his reputation as a wit and writer of rabelaisian verses was created through oral tradition long before he emerged more respectably in print.³ All that there is in print to hint at these wildly boisterous fits of comic invention⁴ are poems like 'To a Cock'⁵ or a

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, 'Angels', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 64.

² W. B. Yeats mentions this in an unpublished letter to Mrs. Shakespear which is in the possession of Mrs. W. B. Yeats.

³ Cf. M. Bryn Davies, 'The Verse of A. D. Hope', *Australian Letters*, vol. ii. 2, August 1959, p. 42. See also in the same issue 'Literary Criticism. A. D. Hope'.

⁴ A very late poem continues the strain, 'To his friends . . .' *Contemporary Poetry*, Spring 1943, vol. iii, i, p. 10.

⁵ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 16.

Villonesque poem from the Irish, 'The Old Woman of Beare'¹ with its introduction of how

*. . . some old Abbey's shelf
Kept the record of herself,
Telling to men who disapprove
Of Love, the long regrets of Love.*

or the sophisticated poem 'Ringsend' written after reading Tolstoi:

I will live in Ringsend
With a red-headed whore,
And the fan-light gone in
Where it lights the hall-door;
And listen each night
For her querulous shout,
As at last she streeles in
And the pubs empty out.
To soothe that wild breast
With my old-fangled songs,
Till she feels it redressed
From inordinate wrongs,
Imagined, outrageous,
Preposterous wrongs,
Till peace at last comes,
Shall be all I will do,
Where the little lamp blooms
Like a rose in the stew;
And up the back-garden
The sound comes to me
Of the lapsing, unsoilable,
Whispering sea.²

Gogarty was, as he frequently remarked, an accessory before the fact of *Ulysses*:³ but he was also a Dubliner who knew more than the aspect Joyce presented of the city: Gogarty was able to move within an established society, to have friends who were wealthy and cultured as well as friends who were poor and bitterly clever. He was himself sophisticated and cosmopolitan. After his marriage in 1907 came a period of work in Vienna, which was to assist his medical reputation when he returned to Dublin in 1908 to put up his plate and to live beside George Moore in Ely Place:

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

² *Ibid.*, p. 102.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, 'James Augustine Joyce', *The Times Herald* (Dallas, Texas), 3 April 1949.

George Moore kept the garden and I gazed out on its greenery and composed verses while I waited for patients.¹

What these verses were it is hard to discover. They may have continued the whimsical note struck by 'To the Maids not to Walk in the Wind'

When the wind blows walk not abroad,
For maids, you may not know
The mad, quaint thoughts that incommode
Me, when the winds do blow.

What though the tresses of the tress
In double beauty move,
With silver added to their green,
They were not made for love.

But when your clothes reveal your thighs,
And surge around your knees,
Until from foam you seem to rise
Like Venus from the seas . . .

Though ye are fair, it is not fair!
Unless ye will be kind,
Till I am dead *and changed to air*,
O walk not in the wind!²

and 'The Ship'³ a Fleckeresque poem ending with a characteristic piece of self-mockery:

A ship from Valparaiso came
And in the Bay her sails were furled;
She brought the wonder of her name,
And tidings from a sunnier world.

O you must voyage far if you
Would sail away from gloom and wet,
And see beneath the Andes blue
Our white, umbrageous city set.

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *It Isn't This Time Of Year At All!*, 1954, p. 83.

² *Secret Springs of Dublin Song*, 1918, p. 35. The poem was composed in 1904 (information from Mr. Ulick O'Connor).

³ Neither poem appeared in print until 1918 but some of the poems written by Gogarty about George Moore in *Secret Springs of Dublin Song* (1918) dealt with Moore's departure from Dublin in February 1911, so that there is precedent for assuming that the poems in Gogarty's *The Ship and other Poems* (1918) and *Secret Springs of Dublin Song* were written over the period of twenty years before 1918, that is, from his entry into Trinity College onwards.

But I was young and would not go;
 For I believed when I was young
 That somehow life in time would show
 All that was ever said or sung.

Over the golden pools of sleep
 She went long since with gilded spars;
 Into the night-empurpled deep,
 And traced her legend on the stars.

But she will come for me once more,
 And I shall see that city set,
 The mountainous, Pacific shore—
 By God, I half believe it yet!¹

Mockery was not reserved for himself, however: there is a witty 'Lament for George Moore' written at the time of Moore's departure from Dublin to London:

Lonely, O Moore, your old friends are;
 We miss you; and, forgive the banter,
 We miss the generous cigar,
 The coy decanter.

We miss the nights when you were here—
 All Ely Place a catacomb,
 Where we sat solemn and severe
 Denouncing Rome.

We were the Stellar Zodiac
 You took your part in:
 Virgo Magee, Leo Æ,
 And Edward Martyn,

Who hailed your firstlings as they grew
 Chapter by chapter;
 And when we showed our Muse to you
 You did adapt her!

Guidance from thoughts thus crowding thick
 Was what you needed
 You were the grandest Catholic
 That e'er seceded.

Thus through a window shines your ray
 All polychrome,
 For 'still the light that led astray
 Was light from' Rome.

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 96.

We miss Les Dames aux Temps jadis,
 And all whose Christian names would fall so
 Ingenuously of living ladies—
 We miss them also.

Now Yeats suggests (with Goethe) here
 The likeliest measure of a mind
 Is—what we can't find anywhere—
 The girls it leaves behind.

O bad gray head good women knew,
 There comes a thought unmixed with sadness,
 In that the worst that you could do
 Was hardly badness!

O hazardous and harmless lover,
 Come back to Ireland, come back and bring
 (What though your writings are all passed over)
 In your person a Playboy unguessed at by Synge!¹

Gogarty did not have long to wait for patients. And hospital appointments followed. He was able to indulge good taste in motor-cars: he bought a Rolls Royce Silver Ghost in 1909, 'to drive himself into a practice'² and later he acquired a Mercedes-Benz to indicate the speed with which he achieved the success at which he had aimed. As well as contributing to his dashing reputation these cars were a means of reaching rapidly into the countryside: just to be in it, to look at it, to get out of the man-made city, for to shoot, to ride, and to fish (with unbaited hook) were merely occasional and luxuriously unnecessary pretexts for enjoying its changing beauty. His poetry records exuberantly the emotional fullness of this life, records the moments of intense perception that charged his batteries for facing the solemnities of life and death as cavalierly as possible.

Many of his poems praise the seasonal return of blossom:

I thank the gods who gave to me
 The yearly privilege to see,
 Under the orchards' galaxy,
 April reveal her new-drenched skin;
 And for the timeless touch within
 Whereby I recognise my kin.³

But this is a more classically restrained note than is common

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Secret Springs of Dublin Song*, 1918, p. 47.

² A phrase used by Gogarty, which I owe to Mr. Ulick O'Connor.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, 'The Eternal Recurrence', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 54.

in these poems. 'Perennial' conveys the energy and gusto of the poet. When Mr. Eliot was watching

The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet,
And newspapers from vacant lots¹

Gogarty watched

By an old lot a cherry tree,
An old wild cherry blooming brightly,
A sight of joy in the unsightly.
It sprayed the air with April snow
As merrily as long ago
When every little wind that blew
Could bend it, and with blossoms strew
The garden or the shaven lawn.
The lot was bare, the house was gone;
And yet the brave old tree bloomed on.

and his conclusion has no metropolitan misery about it:

You'd think that Orpheus found his girl;
Or that this old daft heart of mine
Improved, as it grew old, like wine.
I feel the soul within me sing:
By God, I'm grateful for the Spring
That makes all fading seem illusion;
The foam, the fullness, the profusion;
For every lovely thing misplaced;
The bloom, the brightness and the waste!²

There were other interests besides attending to private and hospital patients, besides writing verse, and enjoying the country. Gogarty made public speeches against recruiting in the early nineteen hundreds and from as early as 1905, when he received a reproof from Mahaffy for these activities, Gogarty was a member of the Sinn Fein movement.³ He was not a believer in physical violence: that is to say, he carried no gun. He did, however, on one occasion assist prisoners to escape from Mountjoy jail. During the First World War he did not approve of John Redmond's recruiting campaign (though he also did much on behalf of wounded soldiers). His great friend in the Sinn Fein movement was Arthur Griffith and his later dislike of Mr. de Valera was probably originally caused by the late entry of

¹ T. S. Eliot, 'Preludes', *Poems 1909-1925*, p. 21.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, pp. 56-57.

³ I owe to Mr. Ulick O'Connor my information about Gogarty's political activities.

de Valera into the independence movement, late, that is, in comparison with Griffith's earlier 'labouring in a grey dawn when the sun seemed distant'. This dislike was not unnaturally exacerbated by the civil war which occurred after the Treaty of 1922. Whatever the complexities of Gogarty's political career between 1916 and 1923, there is no doubt that his interest in politics (and possibly his ambitions) eventually waned. He was a member of the first Senate of the Irish Free State (from 1923-36): but his seventeenth-century country house at Renvyle in Connemara, which he bought in 1917, was burnt down in the troubles; he very narrowly escaped death at the hands of an execution squad of gunmen in the civil war; and he was not, perhaps, as effective as he had hoped to be as a Senator. Like Yeats he disliked the murderous mob; he found it difficult to take politicians seriously. Perhaps, as Yeats had found Lady Gregory an impressive exemplar of the virtues of aristocratic life when that life was directed to literature, he was similarly influenced through his friendship with Lord Dunsany—and with Talbot Clifton—from innate radicalism into detachment. He had, however, managed to keep his politics and his friendships skilfully apart during times which were, as Marvell put it in a similarly difficult period, 'something critical'.

He took up archery¹ and aviation. When the Irish Aero Club was formed in 1922 he became a pilot² and flew frequently over Dublin and occasionally to Renvyle where his house was rebuilt by the Irish Government and then converted into a hotel. Accompanied by Lady Heath, a skilled amateur pilot who was a passenger on this occasion, he crashed at Tullabawn Strand where they had flown to swim; her sudden emergence in bathing costume from the plane which was stuck in the sand added to the D'Annunzio-like legend which collected about Gogarty. Gogarty, as well as appearing in the pages of George Moore's *Hail and Farewell* and Joyce's *Ulysses*, was always inside Dublin's literary life, though his first published contributions to it had been made discreetly—in 1905 in *Dana*, the magazine edited by John Eglinton (W. K. Magee); in a volume celebrating the bi-centenary of the School of Physic in Ireland; and in his first book *The Ship and Other Poems* published in 1918 when he was forty. Many of his poems appeared the same year in *Secret Springs of Dublin Song* and while Susan Mitchell's preface to this collection of anonymous poems gives the reason for their anonymity

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Intimations*, New York, 1950, p. 196.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *As I was going down Sackville Street*, 1936, pp. 48 seq.

as not being due to any modesty on the part of the authors who were merely wishing 'to avoid each other's jealousy or spite', the comparative quiet of Gogarty until his middle age may perhaps also have been due to his knowledge of the sharp-tongued milieu within which he lived. He was to bring that knowledge into the light in 1937—when he published *As I Was Going Down Sackville Street*. He could be caustically cruel to his enemies: his desire to be witty often dominated over kindness, as his set pieces sometimes crushed conversation. It was not surprising that this lively book set Dublin by the ears and led almost immediately to a libel action. Disgusted by this, Gogarty, who had been practising in both Dublin and London during the thirties, withdrew to London, intending from then on to spend most of his time writing. He finished *I Follow St. Patrick* (1938) and *Tumbling in the Hay* (1939) two of his best and most original books, then the war found him in America where he did not practise as a doctor and, having changed his earlier political views,¹ volunteered to join the R.A.M.C. for which he was not accepted (he was then 67). He wrote more reminiscences, two novels, various journalistic pieces, and more poetry and only returned on brief visits to Ireland before his death in 1959.

His *Collected Poems* appeared in 1951, the volume containing 184 poems. Gogarty's revisions, though not on the scale of those of George Moore or Yeats, do present bibliographical problems and so he is best read in this volume containing groupings which differ from the divisions made in earlier books—*Odes and Addresses*, *Earth and Sea*, *Satires and Facetiae*, *Love and Beauty*, *Life and Death*, and *Elegies*.

This would be considered a dangerous spread of subject by some of our contemporary critics, who confuse solemnity with seriousness, and yet memorable poetry does emerge from these apparently disparate *Collected Poems*. It is, perhaps, best not to discuss it here under his different headings, or even chronologically, but to consider it under three other divisions. First of all, there are the poems which we look for in any Irish writer: descriptions of actual places in Ireland. From Goldsmith to Allingham, from Yeats to Patrick Kavanagh this vein runs deeply through Irish poetry. Gogarty knew that this, however, though it be an elemental, innate part of an Irish writer's personal emotional equipment, is but one face of the coin:

¹ Cf. *A Farewell to the Senate*, anonymous pamphlet in National Library, Dublin, probably by H. Dixon [1935?] replying to an article by Gogarty in the *London Evening Standard*.

Truth to tell, there are two Irelands. One is a geographical land of beauty, the other is a state of mind. And what is so annoying is that they are for the native inextricably that.¹

In the second category of his poetry he captures a good deal of that elusive state of mind. It is probably because he writes much of his poetry in order to portray Irish scenery and his own delight in it, and much of it to represent Irish temperament through his own ebullient *persona* that he is, to English eyes, a minor poet of the kind Yeats would have been had he ceased writing in 1899. Up till then Yeats wrote upon Irish scenery and upon beauty as seen through mists of symbolism by a sensitive but self-defeated idealistic lover. Then after 1900 he turned to the opposite extreme: political hatred, the coarse cynicism and bare negativity of a bitterly disappointed lover. But he came into his major strength once he began to combine both sides of his poetic character into the poetry written after 1917 up to his death in 1939. But Gogarty, on the contrary, began from a position of balance: he wrote of places he loved, he wrote out of sensitivity or coarseness as he pleased: but like Yeats he wrote in part out of gesture, and, like Yeats, his truth came into focus when he achieved simplicity and knew rather than explored or poetically exploited himself.

Poetry written thus forms the third division of Gogarty's poetry and ultimately it is the most important. It weds a tension in its author. It has the direct speech and economy of classicism, yet it captures romantic awareness of the immediacy of life. Its basis is the realization that 'Man is in love and loves what vanishes'. It says this, but does not add, 'What more is there to say?': its romantic vocabulary, sometimes carried easily, sometimes very uneasily indeed by its classical syntax, served both the poet's objective mind as well as the emotional impulses and instincts of his human heart.

Poems of the first kind, then, are basic, and they depend, as does so much Irish poetry, upon visualization. Gogarty recounted an early experience in school which relates to this:

There was an essay to be written about a country fair during the writing of which I had a vision of sorts: I could see a plain with banners and many coloured pennons waving over white tents; some dim association perhaps with the sign of the Brian Boru [Inn]. I saw, although I did not realize it then, that all writing depends on seeing and then projecting the scene graphically.²

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Going Native*, 1940, p. 14.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *It Isn't This Time of Year At All!*, 1954, p. 21.

This power of visualizing informs all his poems of place. Many of them deal with water, they reflect their subject succinctly, they are deceptively easy. Many of them people their places with the Danish invaders who were finally defeated by Brian Boru at Clontarf in 1014. Gogarty had gone to school with Tom Kettle who regarded himself as a descendant of those Danes, but as one who had come in and stayed. As a boy Gogarty himself imagined the arrival of these invaders along the banks of the Liffey and the Tolka near his home Fairfield, originally Daneswell, at Glasnevin: later in his poetry they become symbolically part of the general corruption of the land which comes with city dwelling. 'Liffey Bridge' catches this mood graphically:¹

I gazed along the waters at the West,
 Watching the low sky colour into flame,
 Until each narrowing steeple I could name
 Grew dark as the far vapours, and my breast
 With silence like a sorrow was possessed.
 And men as moving shadows went and came.
 The smoke that stained the sunset seemed like shame,
 Or lust, or some great evil unexpressed.
 Then with a longing for the taintless air,
 I called that desolation back again,
 Which reigned when Liffey's widening banks were bare;
 Before Ben Edair gazed upon the Dane,
 Before the Hurdle Ford, and long before
 Finn drowned the young men by its meadowy shore.²

Dublin, the town of the Ford of the Hurdles, is well sited for such a poem, for as you look down along the Liffey—away from the city set neatly and colourfully along its grey quays—to the east you see Howth, Ben Edair, the headland stretching away out into the clear distance of the unsoilable sea. The connexion between Howth and Dublin is stressed again in 'Fog Horns'³ a poem which moved between contemporary steamers working slowly from the bay into the Liffey Mouth and those historic Danes who 'Took a very great prey/Of women from Howth'. In 'High Tide At Malahide' he again casts before his imagination

¹ It also appears in 'Just One Glimpse', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 45, where he wants to see

The windy oak, the wilding rose,
 Rocks, and the springs that gushed before
 The streets connected slum and store.

Cf. also 'A Double Ballad of Dublin', *Secret Springs of Dublin Song*, 1918, p. 4.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 52.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

(fed with his reading for his book on St. Patrick) the dramatic problem of the identity of the ships entering this estuary north of Howth:

Oh, look at the ships
 With their sails coming down
 And the wonderful sweeps
 That are steering them still
 To the little grey town
 On the green of the hill!
 Are they Norman or Norse,
 Or descendants of Conn
 Returning in force
 From a lost British town,
 With women and loot now the Roman is gone?
 They are Norse! For the bugles are wild in the woods,
 Alarms to the farms to look after their goods:
 To bury their cauldrons and hide all their herds.
 They are Norse! I can tell by the length of their swords—
 Oh, no; by their spears and the shape of their shields
 They are Normans: the men who stand stiff in the fields
 In hedges of battle that no man may turn;
 The men who build castles that no one may burn;
 The men who give laws to the chief and the kern.
 Salt of the earth,
 Salt of the sea,
 Norman and Norse
 And the wild man in me!¹

His poems of place are often historically peopled, and 'Glenasmole',² the Irish name of this valley of the thrushes outside Dublin, moves from description of the mild bends of the river in the valley to an ancient battle ambush. Again, 'New Bridge'³ describes a Liffey bridge at Droichead Nua but moves into imaginings of 'The long grey lines of steel' which crossed there long ago, all colours and caparison. This poem links up with 'Portrait with Background' describing Dermot who brought Strongbow and Henry to Ireland:

Brought rigid law, the long spear and the horsemen
 Riding in steel; and the rhymed, romantic, high line;
 Built those square keeps on the forts of the Norsemen,
 Still on our sky-line.⁴

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 84.

² *Ibid.*, p. 70.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 157. Cf. E. Curtis, *A History of Ireland*, 1936, p. 48:

The dominant genius of the 'Franks' was feudal, military and romantic.

Gogarty, of course, like Yeats some five years before him, had bought his Norman castle in 1920 and described with a similar admiration its limestone and accompanying water:

The castle by the shallow ford:
 In ruin, but the upright line
 Above the tangle keeps its word:
 In death the unbroken discipline!
 And O, what great well-being went
 To build the enduring battlement!¹

This poetry in part is an exercise of digging into his inherited past: each image of the past has gone to his making, and peopling these places is part of a continuous process which probably owed much to Yeats's rediscovery of his own ancestors and Anglo-Irish history. Gogarty, 'the wild man' in him cut off from a fully Anglo-Irish ascendancy background or a fully native tradition, seeks kinship with Norse as well as Norman images of the past.

Within the general category of descriptive poetry Gogarty has range and flexibility. 'Sub Ilice'² catches echoes of Browning's talking aloud; 'Fresh Fields'—

I gaze and gaze when I behold
 The meadows springing green and gold.
 I gaze until my mind is naught
 But wonderful and wordless thought!
 Till, suddenly, surpassing wit,
 Spontaneous meadows spring in it;
 And I am but a glass between
 Un-walked-in meadows, gold and green.³

—gives us the excitement and clarity of Marvell's 'green Thought

They belonged to the older feudalism, which found its best expression on the borders, but which in England was bridled by the masterful genius of Henry II. In Wales they could conquer as widely as their swords, carry on private war, invade the Welsh mountaineers and divide the spoil among the barons. This was to be their spirit in Ireland. But it was something the Gaels could understand, and such men before long were to become almost as Irish as the Irish. The feudal class lived also in the tradition of the minstrels and the great *chansons de Geste* of Charlemagne, Arthur and Godfrey; it was no great step for them to delight in the music, language and ancient epics of Ireland. Nationalism was scarcely known to these men, who had come over a century ago as Frenchmen and had not yet become English. Adaptability was their genius, and proud as they were of their own blood, speech and traditions, they were ready to treat as equals any race that they could respect and freely intermarry with it.'

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 73.

² *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

in a green Shade' while the mind is equally withdrawn into its happiness. 'The Phoenix' carries exuberantly lyrical Elizabethan echoes; 'The Waveless Bay'¹ has the sure simplicity of Browning's 'Parting at Morning':

A long cape fades beyond the azurite
 Of one calm bay to which the pastures lean.
 The rounded fields are warm, and in between
 The yellow gorse is glaring stiff and bright.
 It matters little what distraction drives,
 Clouds through my mind and breaks the outer day.
 For all I know that distant water strives
 Against the land. I have it all my way:
 Through budding oaks a steadfast sun survives:
 Peace on the fading cape, the waveless bay.²

'Between Brielle and Manasquan', a romantic picture of old sea-dogs, is paralleled by the Australian poet Kenneth Slessor's poems on retired sailors by the shores of Sydney Harbour, by Dylan Thomas's Captain Cat in *Under Milkwood*. And Gogarty cannot resist an applied poem, 'The Isles of Greece':

Marble was her lovely city
 And so pleasant was its air
 That the Romans had no pity
 For a Roman banished there;
 Lesbos was a singing island
 And a happy home from home
 With the pines about its highland
 And its crescent faint with foam.
 Lady make a nota bene
 That Love's lyric fount of glee
 Rose in marbled Mytilene
 Channelled by the purple sea.
 Sappho sang to her hetairai,
 And each lovely lyricist
 Sappho's singing emulated;
 And this point must not be missed:
 Women were emancipated
 Long before the time of Christ.
 Then not only were they equal
 To their men folk but themselves;
 And the lovely lyric sequel
 Lives on all our learned shelves.

¹ Mr. Ulick O'Connor has told me of Gogarty's remark to A. E. during a burst of sniping in Dublin: 'Don't wave at the Bay window or you may find yourself in the Waveless Bay'.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 89.

Yes: we may be fairly certain,
 As results of this release,
 Sappho's was, with all its Girton
 Girls, the fairest Isle of Greece.¹

Two poems of place bridge the gap between his descriptive poems and poems of attitude, of the Irish state of mind. 'To the Liffey with Swans'² commemorates a famous incident in Gogarty's life as a senator of the Irish Free State during the civil war which followed the signing of the 1922 Treaty between those who accepted the treaty's creation of the twenty-six county Free State and the extreme Republicans. Gogarty was kidnapped from his home at gunpoint in January 1923 and taken to a house by the Liffey near Chapelizod to be shot. He threw his coat over two of his captors in the darkness and hurled himself into the river, emerging lower down on the same side and, thus escaping, dedicated to the Liffey a brace of swans which he afterwards released upon the river.³ He did his best in the creation of the new state:

I, who must daily at enactments look
 To make men happy by legality
 Envy the poet of that baitless hook.⁴

But there were moments, no doubt accelerated by the burning of Renvyle (and with it his books and papers and a portrait of his mother) in the Civil War, when he wondered how much had been lost in the change. But the nearest he allows himself this reflection is 'The Dublin-Galway Train'⁵ where the towns come sharply into focus across the central plain, and the train's dignity is contrasted favourably with the change brought by the closer community enforced by a joltingly democratic bus which symbolizes levelling change at work in Irish life.

It is time to leave these two descriptive categories and watch Gogarty in his classico-romantic poetry, in particular in his relations to man—and woman. To the latter he is Herrick but, as George Russell suggested, perhaps more than Herrick:

The Julia of the English poet is a lovely piece of girlhood. That is much, but she will never be more to our imagination. There is some aristocracy of vision in the Irish poet. He sees the lovely girl, but he suggests,

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 87.

² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³ Cf. O. St. J. Gogarty, 'They Carried Caesar', *A Week End in the Middle of the Week* (New York), 1958, pp. 65-73.

⁴ O. St. J. Gogarty, 'Anglers', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 173.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

however remotely, the psyche within the flesh. In an instant, she might be transfigured in the imagination and become the dream stuff out of which goddesses, naiads and nymphs were fashioned. That is, the images he depicts, however modern in outward fashion, are still in the divine procession and set us travelling with them to

‘The Perfect, the Forbidden City,
That’s built—Ah, God knows where.’¹

His love poems (he said ‘the best poets are they who praised women best’)² have the ease of Horace and the same amount, perhaps, of sincerity. His Ninde, Lydia, Hermione, and the rest have Horatian identity: but some poems, such as ‘Back from the Country’,³ please with an affectionate note of genuine domesticity, others, like ‘Golden Stockings’,⁴ retain the Wordsworthianly pleasure-filled poignancy of a moment’s visual experience, and others again catch a deeper note from Yeats; ‘Thinking Long’, for instance, echoes ‘When You are Old and Grey’.

These two Irish poets offer many interesting parallels. Yeats’s superb ‘Lullaby’, a poem of three stanzas of six lines each, deals with Paris, Tristram, and the Swan: Gogarty’s ‘Good Luck’ deals in its three similar stanzas with Atalanta, Iseult, and the poet himself. The first stanzas of each poem use images of gold and red, the second both deal with the effect of the magic potion, though the third part company.

Such minor resemblances are more than fortuitous: Gogarty and Yeats were, after all, close friends. Gogarty had removed Yeats’s tonsils and returned to the nursing home at frequent intervals to suggest suitable dying speeches; Gogarty was responsible for Yeats becoming a Senator; Gogarty lauded Yeats’s Nobel Prize, teased ‘Yeats who says that his Castle of Ballylee is his monument’; Gogarty brought Yeats to see *his* tower; even persuaded him to fly with him but not to get on horseback. It was Gogarty who in 1937 arranged with James A. Farrell the munificent American benefaction which removed financial worries from Yeats’s last years.⁵ Gogarty’s vitality and gay outrageous speech struck a responsive chord from the older poet who saw in him a swashbuckling cavalier, learned in the classics yet a man of action: gay, stoical, and heroic.⁶ And from Yeats Gogarty said he had learned something of poetry.

¹ A. E., Preface to O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. xii.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *Intimations*, 1950, p. 152.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 138. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁵ Cf. W. B. Yeats, *Letters on Poetry to Dorothy Wellesley*, 1940, p. 140.

⁶ Mr. Vivian Mercier comments in ‘Oliver St. John Gogarty’, *Poetry*,

Small wonder, then, that phrases constantly echo between their work in the twenties and thirties. Dublin literary gossip has long held that Yeats rewrote many of Gogarty's poems (Johnson's reputation towered over Goldsmith's in a similar way and it was not at first thought that Goldsmith's poetry was his own), but Professor Giorgio Melchiori is shortly publishing a book on Yeats which argues that Gogarty supplied ideas which Yeats developed in several poems.¹

For instance, Gogarty developed a strong interest in the myth of Leda and the swan after his dedication of the swans to the Liffey. That dedication—and the poem—had had a touch of D'Annunzio. The poem ended:

As fair as was that doubled Bird,
By love of Leda so besotten,
That she was all with wonder stirred,
And the Twin Sportsmen were begotten!²

But Gogarty's 'Leda and the Swan', delicately witty, whimsically ironic, extends this idea:

When the hyacinthine
Eggs were in the basket,
Blue as at the whiteness
Where a cloud begins;
Who would dream there lay there
All that Trojan brightness;
Agamemnon murdered;
And the mighty Twins?³

According to Professor Melchiori, this is derived from Yeats's 'Leda and the Swan':

a shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead.⁴

vol. xciii, i, Oct. 1958, p. 35, that Yeats when describing Gogarty's work as 'heroic' seemed 'unaware just how much Gogarty traded in Greek and Roman cliché'. Yeats was content to search through many careless verses for what was excellent because he saw in Gogarty a living and articulate hero. Robert Gregory became a hero in Yeats's private mythology, but by dying in action; whereas Gogarty succeeded him by, like Horace, escaping to live and talk. Gregory had been 'our Sydney'; Gogarty had equally Elizabethan 'pride and joy'.

¹ Mr. Ulick O'Connor thinks that Gogarty returned to classical sources in the twenties; he certainly discussed mythology with Yeats when he was immersed in writing *A Vision*.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 49.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁴ W. B. Yeats, *Collected Poems*, 1933, p. 241.

But Gogarty's long, tender, yet satiric portrait of an innocently tomboyish 'Europa and the Bull'¹ seems only to have touched off two lines in Yeats: 'Great Europa played the fool/That changed a lover for a bull.'² Again, there are links between the last stanza of Gogarty's 'With a Coin from Syracuse'³ (the whole poem is itself related subtly to Yeats's poem 'Parnell's Funeral'⁴ with its Sicilian coin image) and Yeats's 'To a Young Girl', where

. . . the wild thought
That she denies
And has forgot
Set all her blood astir
And glittered in her eyes.⁵

Gogarty recreates the idea in

Straight in the back and bone,
With head high like her own,
And blood that, tamed and mild,
Can suddenly go wild.

'Limestone and Water' achieves the dignity of Yeats's simple yet majestic descriptions of his own tower; and there are many other verbal echoes, and images shared. Because the men were friends; because, too, Dublin had the essential requirement for a literary renaissance. It was a society small enough for knowledge and skill to be shared among the elect, where literary personality could prevail within its own right: an appreciative yet critical audience which knew and was known by its writers. It appreciated rhetoric used as gesture, and this, ultimately, was what Gogarty shared with Yeats.

'Myself must I remake' cried the older poet, as an old man. This malleability of character, arising in part from a desire for privacy of personality, begot Yeats's theory of the masks about 1909. But it was no new theory. More than a century earlier Goldsmith had put it to the test: he chose the mask of laughing at himself, and so others took him at his own valuation, failing to realize his loneliness, his seriousness of purpose, and the thwarted and paradoxical fear of being thought to take himself too seriously. Yeats's greatness lay in his taking himself as poet

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 112.

² W. B. Yeats, 'Crazy Jane Reproved', *Collected Poems*, 1933, p. 291.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 153.

⁴ W. B. Yeats, *Collected Poems*, 1933, p. 319.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

entirely seriously¹ and learning to project himself in this role. Gogarty, however, followed Goldsmith: both men, perhaps because of their medical education, did not share Yeats's need to strike throughout his life self-encouraging gestures in the face of death. Both lived perhaps more in the present than Yeats: whose muse was old when he was young, whose body aged before his desires. Both, moreover, believed in meeting life half-way, and in putting a gay face upon the mask with which they met it. Gogarty defended such an attitude strongly:

if you take life too seriously it will make you serious about everything, trivialities included. Life is plastic: it will assume any shape you choose to put upon it. It is in your power to take things cheerfully and be merry and bright even though you are surrounded by melancholics who cannot imagine anyone being good unless he is unhappy. They equate goodness with unhappiness as some ladies in great cities equate culture with seriousness.²

Gogarty has probably eluded serious critical attention because of this habit of being gay about matters in which he feels deeply. He was not solemn: he hated to run the risk of boring by portentousness. The solution lay for him in a quicksilver mind, in a cavalier attitude: it naturally demanded that he write with ease:

No wonder Pegasus cast a shoe
When I succumbed to the English curse
Of mixing philosophy up with verse.
I can imagine a poet teaching;
But who can imagine a poet preaching?³

Nothing there to indicate a man who strove for his patients, exercised his ingenuity in providing unusual hospitality for his guests, put his energies into entertaining and amusing his fellows—a role understood by Goldsmith but perhaps not yet generally appreciated as one demanding personal sacrifice on the part of the entertainer and the wit. Nothing to indicate the man who tried incessantly, though without the success he would have liked, to educate what he called the 'mounted-beggar' race of Dublin into the supreme delight of generosity, of recognition of genius.

¹ His comment on Gogarty's poetry in his Introduction to the Cuala Press edition of Gogarty's *Wild Apples*, 1930, indicates the difference he saw between their work, perhaps that between the professional and the amateur: 'Oliver Gogarty is a careless writer often writing first drafts of poems rather than poems but often with animation and beauty.'

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *It Isn't This Time of Year At All!*, 1954, p. 11.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, 'The Forge', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 35.

All that is to be taken for granted. Then only will we realize that Gogarty would have wished to operate surgically on his losses when he advised having nothing to do with those to whom you will always seem to be bad:

and its no use trying to appease them . . . Have nothing to do with them if you want to lead a good life that is a merry one: 'For only the good are merry'.¹

This attitude may sometimes have concealed only too successfully the very real generosity in the man who writes with Elizabethan ease and appreciation 'To A. E. Going to America':

Dublin transmits you, famous, to the West.
 America shall welcome you, and we,
 Reflected in that mighty glass, shall see,
 In full proportion, power at which we guessed:
 We live too near the eagle and the nest
 To know the pinion's wide supremacy:
 But yours, of all the wings that crossed the sea,
 Carries the wisest heart and gentlest.
 It is not multitudes, but Man's idea
 Makes a place famous. Though you now digress,
 Remember to return as, back from Rome,
 Du Bellay journeyed to his Lyrè home;
 And Plutarch, willingly, to Charonea
 Returned, and stayed, lest the poor town be less.²

It is an attitude which permits much flexibility, which allows him to write with metaphysical casualness 'To the Fixed Stars':

Even the primordial Dark that once
 Engendered light, nor growth debars,
 Is phosphorescent with dead suns,
 And pregnant with the dust of stars.³

It is an attitude, too, which encouraged him to construct strong lines:

Then do not shudder at the knife
 That Death's indifferent hand drives home,
 But with the Strivers leave the Strife,
 Nor, after Caesar, skulk in Rome.⁴

His classical training had taught him to watch his endings; his cadences are often superb; his architectonic skill can be forced into giving scope for discursive playing with his subject in

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, *It Isn't This Time of Year At All!*, 1954, p. 11.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 25.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

longer poems like 'Leda and the Swan', 'Europa and the Bull', and 'The Mill at Naul'. This wit can successfully adopt the tone of earlier poets, as in the seventeenth-century wit of 'Begone, sweet Ghost, O get you gone!/Or haunt me with your body on'.¹ And all because he saw his poetry as a gesture. Count Mirabel in Disraeli's *Sybil* was equally careless of the dullards with his gay *Vive la Bagatelle*, his advice to take care of the circulation. We need a sympathetic biography which will show Gogarty walking the wards as well as Sackville Street (and here Mr. Ulick O'Connor's forthcoming *Life* should be most welcome). Only thus will his serious outlook on life emerge and this is the real justification for taking his poetry equally seriously, with all the virtues which can emerge when this kind of versatile renaissance man speaks directly out of sentiment, not sentimentality. The proper parallel is with Goldsmith's realization in *The Deserted Village* that he would never achieve his desire of returning home to Ireland; for this poem allows the essential Goldsmith to speak out of heartfelt sentiment. Yeats achieved this kind of clarity in the last few poems he wrote in which he simply saw the actions and ideas of his life clearly and finally before him, asked himself the point of it all, and said he knew no answer to what lay beyond his approaching death. What is interesting in Gogarty is that this, the testing kind of clarity, has an innate gentleness. This is what he would have wished as epitaph, to be considered as his intimates described him: 'A gentle man on Earth / And gentle 'mid the Shades.'² This quality emerges very clearly in the poem 'Death may be very gentle':

Death may be very gentle after all:
 He turns his face away from arrogant knights
 Who fling themselves against him in their fights;
 But to the loveliest he loves to call.
 And he has with him those whose ways were mild
 And beautiful; and many a little child.³

It is not altogether unexpected, if we concede that ultimately, beneath the persiflage, and permitting its airy heights, there was, and had to be, as basis, a bedrock of belief. This is what causes Gogarty to rise above mere cliché when he advances the equable acceptance of death; it encourages him to applaud and

¹ O. St. John Gogarty, *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 137.

² O. St. J. Gogarty, 'Palinode', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 186.

³ O. St. J. Gogarty, 'Death May be Very Gentle', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 192.

appreciate, and in so doing to seem (even in an angry age) a very memorable minor poet indeed:

I, as the Wise Ones held of old,
Hold there's an Underworld to this;
And do not fear to be enrolled
In Death's kind metamorphosis.

More wonderful than China's halls
To Polo; more than all the West
That shone through the confining walls
When great Magellan made the quest.

Enlarged and free, the wings of Rhyme
Cannot outreach its purple air;
The generations of all Time
And all the lovely Dead are there.¹

¹ O. St. J. Gogarty, 'Sunt apud infernos tot milia formosarum', *Collected Poems*, 1951, p. 190.