

πούτταιρ νάδούρτα φείν αν Ἰαεὸεαλζ, ποὸ ἀτά κοῖν φολαιζτεαδ, κοῖν
 μύττα ριν, ναδ μόρ νά δεαδαιὸ ρί αρ cuiῖνε να ποδοιμε: Δ μίλλεάν
 ρο—ιρ φείοιρ Δ κύρ αρ αν δοιρ εαλαδαν ποὸ ιρ υζοαιρ το' η τεανζαιν,
 το κύρ ι ρά ρόρ-ὄορκαδτ Δζυρ κυαρ ροκαλ, τὰ ρζρίοδαὸ ι μοδαιὸ
 Δζυρ ι ἔφοκλαιὸ διαῖαμα πορκα το-κυιζρεαντ; Δζυρ νί ρυιλιὸ ραορ
 μόρῶν τ'άρ ποδοιμοὸ υαιρλε, ποδερ ι τεανζα ούτταιρ
 νάδούρτα(ποὸ ἀτά φοιρτιλλ ρυιριτε οηόραδ ροζλαμτα ζευρ-κύρεαδ
 ιηητι φείν) ι οταρκαρνε Δζυρ ι νεαῖ-κίον, Δζυρ κάιτεαρ Δ η-αιηρρ
 Δζ ραοτρυζαὸ Δζυρ Δζ ροζλαιμ τεαντα κοῖναιζτεαδ ειλε.

OUR NATIVE LANGUAGE.

FR. THEOBALD STAPLETON—PREFACE TO HIS CATECHISM.

There is no nation throughout the world that does not think it
 honourable to esteem its own language, and to read it and write it.
 The Romans gave so much esteem and honour to the Latin language,
 although they were well learned in the Greek language, which was in
 esteem at that time—nevertheless they did not think it fitting to
 answer the envoys or letters of the Greeks but in the Latin language;
 and moreover, after the Greeks were [brought] under them and under
 their rule, they (the Romans) pretended that they did not understand
 the Greek language, though they understood it very well. For it is not
 only in Rome that this [language] was [spoken], but throughout Asia
 [Minor] entirely, and also over the whole of Greece; and this in order
 that there might be great respect for the Latin language. Moreover,
 to verify this, as Dion Cassius has written, the Emperor Claudius
 punished very severely a Roman senator for not speaking Latin,
 although the Emperor delighted in Greek verses, sayings and
 proverbs.

In these times, likewise, the ambassadors, *i.e.*, the messengers of
 the kings, do not speak their business but in the natural language of
 their won king; after this they make their meaning understood
 through an interpreter. Cicero was very censorious towards those who
 took pleasure in the Greek language and in other foreign languages,

and who despised their own natural language (of) Latin, saying:—‘I cannot help wondering very much at a thing so extraordinary that it is against all reason, *i.e.*, that every one should not esteem his own native natural language.’

For this reason, it is right and fitting for us, the Irish, to be full of esteem, love and honour for our own native natural language, the Gaelic, which is so much in the background, so stamped out, that it has almost gone out of the people’s memory: the blame of this may be laid on the learned, who are the authors of the language, who have buried it under obscurity and difficulty of vocabulary, writing it in mysterious, obscure and unintelligible idioms and words; and many of our gentry are not free [from blame] who regard their native natural language, which is forcible, ready, dignified, cultured, and exact in itself, with contempt and with disregard, and who spend their time labouring and learning other foreign tongues.