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TIMOTHY EGAN. *The Immortal Irishman: The Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016. Pp. 368. $28.00 (cloth).
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In *The Immortal Irishman: The Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero*, a popular history of the career of Thomas Francis Meagher (1823–1867), a major figure in the narrative of Irish America, Timothy Egan uses an extraordinary life story to make connections between major global events in the mid-nineteenth century. It is aimed at the well-informed general reader willing to engage with a detailed account of the background and embrace an often-speculative personal saga. Readers are carried along swiftly by the confident and flowing style, never slowed by complexities or footnotes. Egan makes decisions seamlessly about which evidence to select and what to trust. But this is not to say that sources are ignored. Informal notes to each chapter are provided at the end of the book, showing that Egan has consulted a range of contemporary memoirs, letters, and newspapers, as well as secondary material. His own engagement with the story is recorded in his travels in Meagher's footsteps to locate primary evidence and absorb meanings from the observation of key locations.

One of the strengths of the book is that it illuminates the extraordinary spread of the Irish diaspora and the processes by which it developed. Meagher's family was already deeply involved in transatlantic mobility over several generations, and indeed this gave him the class position from which his political ambitions could be realized. In the late eighteenth century, his grandfather had left a tenant farm in Waterford in southeast Ireland to find work as a tailor in St. John's, Newfoundland. He moved up to become a merchant in the cod fishery, taking his son, also Thomas, into the trade, and returned to Waterford a wealthy man. Young Thomas Francis, born in 1823, was sent to Catholic boarding schools, first Clongowes, County Kildare, and then to that frequently overlooked diasporic destination, England, where he attended Stonyhurst College in Yorkshire. These elite institutions provided networking opportunities throughout his life. They also placed him firmly, but ironically, in the tainted Anglo-Irish stratum of society: Egan reports that "Thomas was often mistaken for an Englishman. Something about the accent, proper and upper class" (26).

Back in Dublin, the highly educated young man was drawn to the anti-British Young Ireland movement, especially through the poetry of Thomas Davis, poetry that helped him develop further the oratorical skills for which he became famous. Captured in 1848 for fomenting failed uprisings against British rule, Meagher found himself convicted of sedition, but his death sentence was commuted to transportation for life to Tasmania, where he briefly joined the convict colonization of Australasia. He escaped in 1852 and found a ship crossing the Pacific that eventually took him to New York. Here, the third diasporic connection became the one for which he is most remembered.

The largest section of the book is devoted to the final ten years of Thomas's relatively short life, the period in which he became, in Egan's words, "an American hero." The arrival of the Young Irelander was hailed with great celebrations, illustrating the huge impact of political exiles and famine refugees in the very Irish city of New York. However, English influence remained powerful in the city, its extreme wing represented by the Know-Nothings whose mission was to destroy Catholics. Meagher was always a political animal. At first, he focused on the political education of his fellow Irishmen, establishing the *Irish News*, which rapidly gained a large circulation. But according to Egan, he began to see that America also offered a more positive model of a society free from British rule. He extended his global reach, spending a year traveling in Central America, but returned in 1861 to a country preparing for civil war. Meagher called for volunteers by selling support for the Union to the Irish population as preparation and training for an eventual fight against the British in Ireland. What followed was a series of bloody battles in which the 69th Irish Brigade suffered terrible losses. Opinion is divided about Meagher's leadership: according to Rory Cornish's entry in

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the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, he was "courageous," as indeed his own memoirs record, but emigrant newspapers were less generous, angered according to Kerby Miller in *Emigrants and Exiles* (Oxford, 1985, p. 343) by "senseless battles" and "incompetent officers such as Meagher." In 1863, Meagher was forced to rein in his ambitions and reverted to his first loyalties by joining the Fenian Brotherhood.

The last chapters describe Meagher's move to a new life in the American West, where Egan suggests he hoped to find riches for himself as well as a better life for Irish slum dwellers in New York in a "New Ireland." However, the reality was lawlessness and extreme violence by vigilante groups who had no intention of accepting the rule of the newly appointed acting governor of Montana. Within months, Meagher was dead, apparently drowned in a fall from a moored steamboat, a mystery that Egan invites us to believe was murder.

This is not an academic book but part of a rich vein of popularizing histories that feed myths while entertaining an enquiring public. As its title suggests, it celebrates, largely uncritically, the contribution of an unusually privileged political leader who helped to set in aspic a nationalist belief, especially in the United States, that the ills of Ireland stemmed from British cruelty in the Famine. Other writers question the heroic label and see self-serving ambition behind the actions of such "professional ethnics." Whatever the motivation, a powerful Irish-American sense of grievance has continued to play a significant role in Irish nationalism into the present day. Egan's biography feeds into this foundation myth of Irish-American identity, providing a highly readable romantic saga. Meanwhile, Ireland is only beginning to acknowledge the importance of the diaspora as its other history, mainly now for economic support in difficult times.

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MARC FLANDREAU. *Anthropologists in the Stock Exchange: A Financial History of Victorian Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Pres, 2016. Pp. 421. $105.00 (cloth).
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In his new book, *Anthropologists in the Stock Exchange*, the economic historian Marc Flandreau revisits the heavily discussed history of Victorian anthropology. His aim is to remap a familiar story about the anthropological schism of the 1860s by showing that the debates between anthropologists and ethnologists were not simply about ideological differences, as previous scholars have argued, but also about socioeconomic priorities. Flandreau believes that in order to fully represent the history of Victorian anthropology, one needs to understand how economic and financial interests shaped the activities of researchers. In principle, such an approach seems to offer a fresh perspective on a well-known tale. After all, Peter Kjaergaard's recent focus section in the journal *Isis*, "Follow the Money" (2012), convincingly showed how an emphasis on money sheds important new light on the history of science. Yet despite its promising historiographical focus, what emerges in Flandreau's book is nothing more than a crude misunderstanding of the subtleties of Victorian anthropology.

In the introduction Flandreau sets out to establish a new framework for understanding Victorian anthropology. Flandreau calls it the "stock-exchange modality" (8)—the idea that one cannot separate the disciplinary formation of British anthropology in the nineteenth century from the larger economical context of the British Empire. The ups and downs of the stock market, he argues, had a direct impact on the development of British anthropology, leaving a deep imprint. Flandreau states that anthropology benefited greatly from the expansion of

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