

**A GRAND TRIBUTE.**

T. P. O'Connor on Edward Blake, M.P.  
T. P. O'Connor's paper, the London Sun, speaks of Edward Blake M.P., as follows:

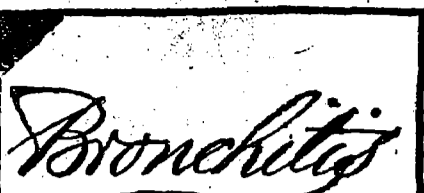
The Irish party did honor to itself last night in doing honor to Mr. Blake. Of all the illustrious recruits which the Irish party have received since 1880, when it was first really organized he is the most remarkable and the most valuable. And it is only his friends and colleagues who can fully appreciate, either all the sacrifice it cost him to give that service. A man of the keenest family affections—happiest when surrounded by children and grandchildren—he has consented to lead for months the sombre and lonely life of a dweller in a land far removed from those nearest and dearest to him. And to a man of affections so ardent—of emotions so keen—such a separation must have brought many an hour of sadness and loneliness. Holding in his own country a position of unquestioned eminence, high in the respect and honor of all men, undisputed chief of a great party for many years, he left it all to begin at the beginning, and take his place in the rank and file of the Irish party.

Mr. Blake's own nature is too fine and too lofty to appreciate at its full value all there is of dignity in these sacrifices. But what he may not feel about himself others are privileged to do and to note. His presence in the Irish party has not been notable only as a mere accession of another honorable name. Mr. Blake is essentially a man of active and most restless intellectual energy; a mind, keen, subtle and highly trained, is ever at work analyzing with its extraordinary promptitude and eagerness all the questions of the hour. His fine and supple intellect has had the additional advantage of long training in official life and in Parliamentary institutions, and thus Mr. Blake brought to the service of the Irish party not merely very great, but also very high-trained talents. All these he has placed freely at the service of his colleagues and the land of his fathers. It adds to the generosity of the gift that the giver has known how to do all this unostentatiously—with no claim for special recognition—often with that spirit of self-effacement which is perhaps a higher, as it is often a more difficult, testimony of patriotism than even the most eloquent speech.

In the private councils of the Irish party Mr. Blake's judgment, knowledge and genius have been especially valuable. I confess for myself that it was during an exposition by him I first grasped how there could be that distribution of powers which would leaven Imperial Parliament.

Indeed, I can imagine few intellectual enjoyments keener—more delightful—than to listen to a constitutional exposition by Mr. Blake. His ideas and thoughts are written large on the great settlement of the Irish question which is now approaching its final stage in the House of Commons. In the long discussion which took place on the form and framework of the settlement, Mr. Blake took a part more momentous than the annals of contemporary history will probably ever reveal. In the House of Commons he has spoken when it was necessary, and has been silent when silence was required in the interests of the Bill. It was not a session—as I have already indicated—when an Irish member was required to advance the cause by his eloquence, but silence was often the most potent and most patriotic of Parliamentary weapons. But on the occasions when he did speak, Mr. Blake rose to the level of the great hour, and few who heard will ever forget the admirable, the crushing, the overwhelming reply which he made to an elaborate speech of Mr. Chamberlain, without a moment's preparation.

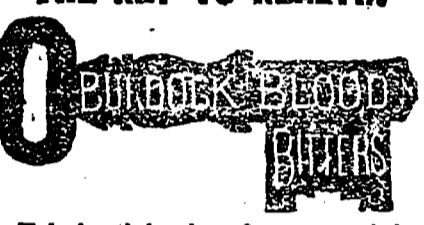
Finally, on all those questions of tactics, of policy and of personal claims, which are to be found inside every party, Mr. Blake's breadth and serenity as well as kindness of judgment—his detachment by natural temper and by training from narrowing or personal views—have made him in hours of stress a most valuable and efficient, as well as generally accepted arbiter. On Saturday next he sails for a brief visit to his native land and to his home and family. The good wishes, the honour, and the affection of his colleagues, follow him there, and their welcome will be as enthusiastic and as kindly when he brings back to the Irish cause the inestimable service of his gifts and his character.



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