

justice to his fatherland. In one, the great Wexford speech, pronounced in the town where his boyhood had been spent, and which was listened to—with what pride we can imagine—by his aged father, he is reported to have said to the Government—"Treat Ireland as you have treated Scotland—consider her feelings and respect her prejudices—study her history and concede her rights—try equal justice to all—practice the golden rule. Then will Irishmen in Ireland resemble Irishmen in Canada—where the Celt is not envious of the Saxon, and the Saxon is not supercilious to the Celt."

But he also took occasion to denounce in scathing terms the truculent attempts of adventurers from the neighbouring Republic, to wreak, by invasions of our own soil, their vengeance upon Great Britain. He could not, as he himself said, "stand still and see our peaceful, unoffending Canada invaded and deluged in blood, in the abused and unauthorized name of Ireland." And so he joined, to his appeals for justice to Ireland, denunciations, fiery and powerful, of the faction which sought to embroil us in war. Needless for me to tell you that the words which he spoke gave deep offence to the Fenians, and thenceforward no malediction was too horrible for McGee, no fate too terrible.

I should here say, in order to follow out the sequence of my narrative, that McGee did not enter the first Confederation Government, waiving his claims to consideration in favor of a distinguished fellow-countryman from Nova Scotia. The excitement and acerbities of the memorable election contest between him and the late Mr. Devlin, with other causes, laid Mr. McGee low, with an illness from which he slowly recovered, and he never seemed completely to regain that gaiety of demeanour which made his presence so delightful and his manners so engaging. Perhaps, too, the violent way in which he was continually attacked, the consciousness that a section of his countrymen wilfully misunderstood him, and intentionally misconstrued his conduct, weighed upon his mind. To a nature such as his was, accusations that he was unfaithful to Ireland, that he was a traitor to her cause, and to hear his name coupled with those of Judas Iscariot and Benedict Arnold, must have been bitterly galling, though in his soul, he knew, as we to-day know, that the charges were as false as Satanic malignity or diabolic hate could invent. Yet all this preyed upon him, and McGee was not himself. Still he was not wholly silent, and though the spirit of the old days did not colour his diction with the wonted fancy and humour, what he did say was as eloquent as of yore.

On the night of the 6th of April, 1868, he spoke from his place in the House of Commons, words of prophetic import. In defending a colleague from a charge which had been brought against him, he said: "Sir, I hope that in this House mere temporary and local popularity will never be made the test by which to measure the worth or efficiency of a public servant. He who builds upon popularity builds upon shifting sand. He who rests