

and reverence this ancient contemporary of the founder of their town, but alas! on the 6th September, 1845, during a strong gale from the north-east, one of the three stems into which this beautiful and memorable elm was divided, broke just at the place of its connection with the main trunk, and it became necessary to fell the remainder for fear of accident. A fragment of the trunk, three feet in height, was deposited in one of the rooms of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, where it perished in the fire of 1854.

There was also in Quebec another relic of the forest primeval, namely—the oak of the Ursulines, preserved within the enclosure of the monastery since the arrival of those ladies in 1639. It fell from old age on the 10th June, 1850.

Whereupon it became a saying that the old oak of the Ursulines had died a Catholic, while its contemporary, the elm of the Recollets, became the property of the Anglican Cathedral, had died a Protestant!

LORRAINE.

THE FORSTER TRAGEDY IN IRELAND.

Mr. Wm. O'Brien, M.P., contributes to the September number of the *Westminster Review* a powerful article on "The Forster Tragedy in Ireland." "If I were asked," he says, "the readiest means of converting thoughtful Englishmen to Home Rule, I should be disposed to answer by placing Mr. Wemyss Reid's two volumes in every English home. So I should advise Irishmen who are sore with experiences of the follies of English misgovernment to study Mr. Forster's bruised life as it is here revealed to us, and learn how much of pitiable misunderstanding there may be in the quarrels of nations. The acerbities of the story are gone. The infinite human pathos remains. However the physicians may describe his fatal illness, Mr. Forster died of the scars he received in Ireland in as real a sense as he would have died if he had not caught an early train the evening the Invincibles were searching the railway carriages in Westland Row for him. From chapter to chapter of the second volume one can almost see his hair whitening and the stoop coming over his rugged shoulders, and the stout heart within him dying down as the omen of hopeless failure thickened around him. There are few things in the all too insincere records of statesmanship so touching as his daughter's description of his attempt to persuade himself that he felt happy the evening he lined up at the back of the Ladies' Gallery to hear Mr. Gladstone's announcement of his resignation of the Irish Secretaryship."

Mrs. Vere O'Brien's diary notes, "but a curious feeling of excitement, and as though the tears were not very far off one's eyes." "Well," said father, "I think you might all drink the health of the right hon. gentleman the member for Bradford, as Gladstone called me to-night." The tears would not have been far off most Irish eyes if they could have rested on that melancholy festivity. One touch of human nature such as this would have had more influence in the Government of Ireland than all his police patrols and his 900 arrests. But Mr. Forster would have died rather than confess his softness. Herein you have the key to Mr. Forster's failure in Ireland, as well as to Mr. Balfour's failure on a totally opposite system. Mr. Forster was ashamed to show emotion as the ruler of an emotional race. Mr. Balfour would be ashamed to feel it. If Mr. Forster had gone to Ireland, as Mr. Balfour has gone, to "stand no nonsense"—that is to say, to trust to the policeman's horn-book for information, and simply to knock on the head whatever he could not understand—there would have been nothing specially instructive in his fortunes. Some thirty generations of English governors went that way before him. They came back each after his appointed time, and, according to his temperament, either heart-sick, like Sir Ralph Abercrombie, or as gaily as Sir Walter Raleigh would have returned from a raid for Red Indian scalps. It used to be plain sailing enough for "silken aristocrats with hearts of steel." There were no questions asked. The poor Irish woodkerns had no Mr. Parnell to move the adjournment of the House. The English common people had not the dimmest suspicion that their representatives were sending presents of poisoned wine to Shane O'Neill from Dublin Castle and wiling the chiefs of

the O'Moore county into the Rath of Mullaghmast to slay them after supper. The folk in the English shires knew no more of what was passing in Ireland than of what was passing in the country of the Anthropophagi and the men with two heads. Now it is wholly different. There would have been fifty Mitchelstown fusilades last winter only that the one fusilade was heard the next morning in every home in Britain, and every ex private of the Cape Mounted Rifles who now gives orders to fire on an Irish crowd in the remotest mountain village feels that millions of keen English eyes are fastened on his doings. That has a dampening effect upon Chief Secretaries as well as upon their subordinates.

There are, of course, multitudes of hot blooded Tory youths who will applaud the Chief Secretary all the more rapturously the freer he has been with his bullets and sarcasms. But a man of Mr. Balfour's keenness cannot help feeling that approval of this character is a mere *succes d'estime* which can only be secured at all from a specially-invited public, fenced around with lordly park walls, and kept in a good humour with slices of roasted ox and with merry-go-rounds. The average British father of a family, observing these things over the park wall, does not think that is the most judicious way of conquering ancient prejudices and appeasing a high spirited race of many millions, and it is a mere question of time how soon and with how much brusqueness he will step in and astonish the merry-go-rounders by telling them so. It was just because Mr. Forster represented the seriousness, the sincerity, the deep determination to be just, of the average citizen that he was so much more formidable a governor of Ireland from the Nationalist point of view than Mr. Balfour is. That was also why his failure was a matter of such acute anguish to himself. It is easy to imagine Mr. Balfour intensely annoyed when, for example, Mr. Goschen confessed the collapse of his boast of six months that the National League in "the suppressed" districts was "a thing of the past," but who can conceive of Mr. Balfour bursting into that heart cry of Mr. Forster's (heard only by his daughter), "I can never do now what I might have done for Ireland." His disappointments would be of the order that one associates less with tears than with fretfulness. It is easy to imagine him frowning at Dr. Bar's *betises* at the Rid'ey inquest. It is impossible to imagine his appetite failing because his Bann Drainage Bill miscarried. When he quits Ireland it may be with regrets for Mr. Arthur James Balfour, but for Ireland—ridiculous. In his view what Ireland requires is not so much governing as whipping. If he is not allowed to complete the job, it will be all the fault of the absurd squeamishness of the British workman in sparing the rod.

Mr. O'Brien then goes on to point out that Mr. Forster was made of more painstaking materials, and refers at length to his early connection with Ireland to show how wholly different a man he was from Mr. Balfour.

Says Mr. O'Brien: These are elements of failure congenital if I may so say, with every masterful Englishman, no matter how gracious his intentions, who, not content with pulling friendly with Irishmen in common concerns, will insist upon dictating the Irishman's inmost household arrangements. But I do not think it is difficult to place one's hand upon the two special and (perhaps) avoidable errors which brought Mr. Forster's administration to ruin, though with these Mr. Wemyss Reid's book acquaints his readers but slightly. They are—first, the failure to estimate the reality of Mr. Parnell's power; and, secondly, the failure to throw upon the House of Lords the responsibility of governing Ireland without the Compensation for Disturbance Bill which they rejected. Before the Bill was sent up to its doom in the House of Lords Mr. Forster not obscurely intimated that he nailed his colours to it as the very mainmast of his policy in Ireland. Had he either insisted upon his colleagues sending it up again with a peremptory message, or, failing Mr. Gladstone's compliance, compelled him to seek another Irish Secretary, he would either have saved Ireland from the horrible aftermath of trouble that followed the famine of 1879-80, or he would have placed upon