

THE REBELLION OF '98.

WHAT a sad history has been that of Ireland! It is too well known to permit of a rehearsal. Ireland, if speculation on such a topic be not considered the vainest of occupations, might to-day rank among the foremost nations of the world, had she been allowed to develop untrammelled, the resources placed at her disposal. She might have been the glory and the light of the universe, not alone in material prosperity, but in all its usual accompaniments, in literature, in art, in science, in culture, had not that same Providence, that guides the destinies of all nations, reserved her for victories, in comparison of which success in her various revolts must be considered as naught. In the golden age of King Brian Boru and the men who beat back the Danes from the shores of Ireland at the time when they successfully established their power in the country that has since domineered over her; in those bright days when scholars flocked to her from all parts of the world, and when she was known as "The Island of Saints and Scholars," she gave an earnest of what she might have been. However, she is known to us as the "Niobe of Nations." No greater encomium, perhaps, could be desired by lovers of Ireland than that bestowed on her by that appellation. We have seen her conquered, a foreign population planted on her soil; we have seen her distracted internally, a fact which is by no means attributable to the causes ascribed by her enemies, and we have seen her subjected to all

manner of indignities at the hands of her conquerors; we still see the impress of the policy of the cruel and relentless Cromwell that penned her sons up between the "mile-line" of the Shannon, and the "five-mile-line" of the sea; we have seen her in the throes of rebellion after having struggled in vain to obtain her rights in a constitutional manner; and at the present day we see her fighting the brave fight to regain the privilege that was wrested from her by the vilest and most corrupt of means. During all this time, however, her influence as a nation has not been dormant. What unparalleled examples of all the nobler virtues has she not given to the world! Chief among these is the heroic constancy that so often foiled the persecuting enemies that sought to wrest from her the invaluable treasure of her faith. This it is that has been her glory, and as a reward of that fidelity we may safely prophesy for her a more glorious career than extinction at the hands of a nation whose policy towards her has but too often betrayed its ultimate aim.

The situation of Ireland to-day is the outcome of the failure of the great rebellion whose centenary Irishmen in all parts of the globe are this year celebrating. For sixteen years previous to the outbreak of the rebellion Ireland possessed her own parliament, not to say that she possessed an independent legislature, for that boon for Ireland was synonymous with the oligarchical rule of a few creatures of the