

years? Why should ministers of religion, professing to preach peace and harmony to all men, raise their voices or wield their pens in order to justify, or even to palliate, the course taken by a so-called faction of enthusiasts, whose only notoriety seems to lie in their having rebelled against lawfully constituted authority?

The answer to these questions is very easily found; it is forthcoming. Anyone who has carefully studied, with even a fairly unbiassed mind, the revolting story of '98, will not find these petty whinings of so-called loyal citizens very mountainous in his course of rebel justification. In the first place, the manly struggle of the United Irishmen was neither a crime nor an act of treason; neither was it the effervescence of an over enthusiastic faction, nor an unjust rebellion against the lawful rulers. It was the flight to arms of an exasperated people, only after all hopes of constitutional redress had slipped beyond their reach. It was an act of self-defence against an unjust aggressor, who was threatening with physical and moral death, the sons and daughters of Erin's virtuous peasantry. The leaders of the United Irishmen were far from being mere hot-headed enthusiasts. On the contrary, they were men of whom, after the lapse of one hundred years, we are justly proud to-day. The men we honor "were no apostles of anarchy," no promoters of sedition. In the words of the illustrious McGee, whose name is dear to every Canadian, as well as to every right-minded Irishman, we may say regarding the leaders of '98, that "if ever a body of public men deserved the character of a brotherhood of heroes so far as disinterestedness, courage, self-denial, truthfulness and glowing love of

country constitute heroism these men deserved that character." As to the intellectual abilities and social position of the United Irishmen, Dr. R. R. Madden, the greatest historian of '98, writes as follows: "A great portion of these unfortunate persons, were gentlemen by birth, education and profession; many of them celebrated for their talents, respected for their private worth; several of them scholars who had distinguished themselves in the University of Dublin; the majority of them members of the Established Church, some of them Presbyterian ministers; few, if any, of them who did not exert more or less influence over their countrymen."

As regards those whose tender ears are likely to be shocked at any reference to the horrible butcheries perpetrated by the worthy minions, of Camden, Castlereagh, Clare and Cooke, during '97 and '98, or whose nervous temperament is liable to be deranged by anything like a vindication of the position taken on that occasion by the "horrid Irishy" we have very little to say. It is quite easy to perceive that the fine sensibilities of these pale-faced wheedlers on such matters are the pitiful outcome of untrammelled pride and benighted prejudice. Fain would they cloak the brutal excesses of persons with whom they are connected, either by ties of relationship, or by the no less strong lines of sympathy. Consequently, we simply answer them in the words of Dr. Madden:—"It would seem as if such persons thought that the laws of God and man might be outraged with impunity if a decent covering was only thrown over the naked enormities; and once they had been shrouded by those who had perpetrated them, that it was an act of indecorum to lift the pall." \* \* \*