



Speech of the Week in Ireland.

DELIVERED BY HON. EDWARD BLAKE, M.P.

AT A DEMONSTRATION HELD IN LONGFORD.

Few public speeches by Irish Nationalists in later years have attracted more attention and created more diversity of comment than the master-piece of political and national eloquence delivered two weeks ago by Hon. Edward Blake, M.P., at the Longford demonstration, in support of the principles of the United Irish League. Especially will those parts of the speech referring to Canada be of deep interest to our readers. We reproduce all we possibly can of the address. After introductory remarks, on the new function to be assigned to the councillors, Hon. Mr. Blake said:

"Never, never, must you lose sight of the principle of popular and democratic representative authority—namely, that it is a substitute for your own collective action. You are too many, too scattered, too busy to come together for counsel and decision; and so you choose for yourselves special representatives, those whom you think fittest to act for you in the very work in hand. That work you entrust to them. This is the principle. But who is to choose the members of this national assembly? From whom are they to derive their mandate to act for you in these matters? Whose voice is to pronounce them the particular persons you would select for these high functions? Why, the thing is ludicrous? You have, indeed, elected a certain number of persons to do for you certain work in respect of county, district, and urban affairs—important doubtless, but minor and local, as distinguished from larger and national affairs. You thought them worthy; and I have no doubt they are worthy, of the one talent with which you entrusted them—good men for that work; amongst them, I doubt not may be some destined to be entrusted by you some other day with ten talents. But you never were asked to decide; you never did decide that these particular persons were the men who should, for you, and in your stead, but out of their own ranks, forsooth, elect a great national assembly for Ireland. And this is the proposal—that your local councillors shall, because you chose them to do your local work, arrogate to themselves the power to elect for you amongst themselves a national assembly. No one, gentlemen, has greater respect than I have for councils and councillors. No one would lend more willing ears to their judgment in matters within the sphere of their duties. No one is more convinced that they comprise within their ranks, numbers of able politicians, good Nationalists, capable of reaching sound conclusions on political questions; some men fit, if you please, to be chosen by you as delegates to a national convention or as members of Parliament; I rejoice to believe it. But the people have not chosen them for these purposes, or conferred on them this authority; and, therefore, I, for one, cannot accept them as authorized exponents of your political opinion."

After following on in a logical manner, this subject to its conclusion, and having dealt extensively with "The Law for the People" question, Hon. Mr. Blake turned to another exceedingly important matter and treated it in the following powerful manner. He said:

"There remains the subject of higher education. This, to my mind, touches the most vital spot, the growth and elevation of the people. It is not a question for the few who can directly enjoy the blessing; it is a question for the masses who must largely depend on the trained, and broadened, the strengthened, instructed, and elevated minds of the race for guidance and leadership. It is a burning shame that in this country, famed of old for the pursuit of learning under barbarous and incredible obstacles, there should be no suitable provision for the highest cultivation of the intellects of the great Catholic majority. Now, though

some leading men in both British parties acknowledge the grievance, they seem powerless to redress it. In fact, the Conservative party counts in its ranks many of the extreme Low Church section and of the Orangemen; while the Liberal party gathers its greatest strength among the Nonconformists. But in these elements of the British population, mingled with numbers holding broader and more generous sentiments, there are yet to be found in one quarter many examples of the survival of an intense hostility to Roman Catholicism, and in another quarter many more examples of determination in the supposed interest of common or non-sectarian education, and in despite of the fact that Irish education is now almost universally denominational, to refuse to the majority here a university, though by no means exclusive, yet as Catholic in atmosphere as Trinity in Protestant. This condition of political opinion bars the door to Parliamentary success on this, treated as an isolated question. It can prevail only as an element in a great Imperial settlement of the Irish difficulty. I agree then in the view expressed by a most prominent Irish ecclesiastic, that this question depends upon Home Rule. I am proud to remember—for it happened that I myself suggested the plan to our friends of the Irish committee—that the amended Scheme proposed to the House of Commons in 1893, was then received with practical unanimity. But the fruition of that or any other scheme is now, I believe, inexorably bound up with the larger question of Home Rule."

By far the most important portion of Hon. Mr. Blake's speech is that which deals with the "War and rumors of war." This we give in full—it is a magnificent piece of oratory and of reasoning as well:

"And now, gentlemen, may I ask your indulgence while I grapple, before releasing you, with a question, which seems to me of overwhelming importance to the Irish cause? Do you know that I have ever spoken plainly to Englishmen of the wrongs of Ireland. I have said that this conquered country has never lost the supreme right of resistance to its conquerors and of rising for its freedom; that the rebellion of 1798 was justifiable; that Ireland could not join in the celebrations of a jubilee which marked indeed, an amazing record of growing power, prosperity, wealth, comfort and population for Britain, but an appalling contrast of calamity, misgovernment, poverty, famine and depopulation for Ireland. I have said, that whatever might be the obligations of Englishmen, Irishmen had the right freely to express their views in opposition to the present unjust, unnecessary, calamitous and most ill-advised war. A war of fifty millions against two hundred thousand souls—two hundred and fifty to one; from which whatever gallant feats of arms may be performed, no glory can result to the fifty millions, in which thousands of brave men are being slaughtered and millions of treasure lavished; which has already perilously shaken the military prestige of Great Britain; and, in which, looking at the problems of the future, I believe the final victory will be only less disastrous than would be final defeat. Gentlemen, I am no man of peace at any price; and I have said due honor to those who in times gone by rose against injustice, and suffered imprisonment, wounds, and death in their country's cause. But there are, as I have stated, limitations to the supreme right of resistance. First, after exhaustion of all efforts, it should be manifest that there is no hope of peaceful redress; and next there should appear at any rate some desperate hope of national advantage from the stroke. Neither of these conditions exists with you to-day. As to the second, no one seriously suggests even the possibility of armed

resistance. In her present strain, while almost friendless in Europe, Britain rightly feels quite safe in sending the bulk of her troops out of Ireland into Africa. And it is a chief boast of the United Irish League that it is a crimeless and crime-averting organization. I notice, indeed, reports that some Irish Americans propose to accomplish Home Rule for Ireland by invading Canada; and that one of their objectives is Toronto, which I call home. Doubtless, the policy of these persons is governed by far higher considerations. But it does seem rather an odd way of stimulating the sympathy of Canadians with the Irish cause to threaten with war and devastation a country whose House of Commons has on three occasions, by overwhelming majorities, given its support to Irish Home Rule, and a people which, up to the very last years after America and Australia had closed their purses, continued to subscribe liberally to the cause. Why, that very city of Toronto, only a couple of years ago gave me a thousand pounds for Ireland! If I thought these threats serious, and capable of substantial execution, why, gentlemen, I should not have been here to-day. I should have borrowed a Mauser from someone who seems to have plenty to spare, learned the new rifle practice (for mine is fifty years old), and taken passage to help defend my wife and children and grandchildren from my brother Home Rulers. But, as you see, I have not borrowed a rifle, or taken passage. I have no doubt that if such attempt were made, my townsmen would give a good account of themselves, and would need no man's help. But I think that the threats are not serious, that they are only bravado, or at most an obvious ruse. They do not at all disturb such a robust Home Ruler as myself. I stand exactly where I have always stood. But you can well understand that, with the masses of the Canadian people, even those of Irish descent, and still more with those of other blood, whose sympathies are, of course, less fervent, nothing is more calculated to chill zeal than threats like these. And so the harm that a few persons, many, by such threats, inflict on a constitutional agitation like ours, in which one important factor is a world-wide sympathy, may be greater than at first sight appears."

Now I hope to turn the first point. Is there hope of peaceful redress? I say yes! You have for a generation been engaged in this phase of your constitutional struggle. Since Butt's time what immense progress has been made; progress which even the sad reverses of late years have not obliterated; progress which offers us a splendid and advanced entrenched position as a base for renewed attack. But, gentlemen, if we would succeed, we must observe the fundamental condition of success. What is it? It is to be found in the Gladstone-Parnell settlement. We must, indeed, keep England in vivid remembrance that she has no right now to expect from an oppressed and un-reconciled Ireland—to whom she still refuses the fruition of that settlement. Home Rule—she has no right now to expect the golden fruits of justice and conciliation, loyalty to the constitution and a fellow feeling as to common concern. We have suffered too deeply, we have been put off too frequently, we have been disappointed too severely, our hope has been too long deferred, to allow us now to anticipate the reward for future concessions, which are no longer pronounced urgent by Liberals, and are still scouted as outrageous by Conservatives. We have learned by bitter lessons that England is but too apt, unless we vehemently press her, to ignore our claims; and that, to be heard, we must be importunate and hold. We have learned that it is only a united, resolute, daring, energetic nation here at home, sending to Parliament a great party of its own

complexion, and animated by its own spirit, that can accomplish aught. Not must we for an instant hesitate to do and suffer all that, is needed to vouch our earnestness and determination to achieve our end. But, gentlemen, I repeat we must observe the fundamental condition of success. Again, what is it? We can never gain Home Rule for Ireland by constitutional means, unless we are still prepared honestly to accept the views on which Gladstone offered, and Parnell accepted, the great settlement. Yes! The settlement! Remember that from 1886 onwards the settlement has been our aim; and that Parnell agreed in the name of Ireland, and that Ireland, in 1886 and 1892, ratified the agreement to accept Home Rule, as a settlement of her demands, a settlement which should in due season produce the fruits of reconciliation and good-will, of forgiveness for the hateful past, and co-operation for the brighter future."

CATHOLIC SOCIETIES IN AUSTRALIA.

A letter from W. M. Fax, of Sydney, Australia, which recently appeared in the Catholic Times, of Liverpool, contains certain statistics regarding the position of Catholic Benefit Societies in that distant land. The writer claims as his object to spur Catholic Societies in Great Britain to fuller development. He says: "For purposes of comparison it is as well to state at the outset that we have in the seven colonies of Australia about 1,000,000 Catholics, or about two-ninths of the whole population. When it is mentioned that these are scattered over an area of 3,000,000 square miles, some idea will be formed of the difficulties of organizing societies in such a scattered population."

"It must be stated, however, that the chief cities of the various colonies are large and densely populated; Sydney and Melbourne, the capitals of New South Wales and Victoria respectively, are cities approaching Birmingham and Glasgow in number of inhabitants."

"There are several Catholic friendly Societies, in various parts of Australia and New Zealand, but I will confine my remarks to the organization which has attained a solid position in every colony of the group, viz., the Hibernian-Australasian Catholic Benefit Society, established in 1871. From latest returns it has a roll of 16,000 members, and its accumulated funds have reached \$380,000."

"It may interest many of your readers to know something as to the actual work of this society. Its ranks are open to Catholics of all nationalities, but a practical profession of Faith is required of all candidates, and periodical approach of the Sacraments is obligatory on members. I am pleased to say that the Society meets with the cordial approbation of the Hierarchy of Australia, from His Eminence Cardinal Moran, downwards, and could scarcely have prospered so well but for the kindly influence of the priests."

"The benefits that members are entitled to are: 1st, medical attendance and medicine for member, also for his sick wife and family; 2nd, during sickness or incapacity of member \$5 per week for 26 weeks, and lesser amounts after; 3rd, allowance on death of member \$100, member's wife, \$50. The members' subscriptions vary according to local circumstances, but the general average is 1s. 2d. per week."

"The Society consists of 260 branches. The branches in each colony are organized into district boards, which have all necessary power to frame laws. These district boards in turn elect deputies to constitute what is called the Annual Movable Meeting, the supreme controlling body of the whole society. "Such, in brief, is the position of the Hibernian-Australasian Catholic Benefit Society, an organization of which all Catholic Australians are proud."

ST. BRIDGET'S NIGHT REFUGIUM.
Report for week ending Sunday January 21st, 1900: Males, 428; Females, 17; Irish, 278; French, 128; English, 10; Scotch and other nationalities, 86; total 445.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ONTARIO.

In the current number of the "American Catholic Quarterly Review" appears a most carefully prepared article on "The Catholic Church in Ontario," by Thomas O'Hagan, M. A., Ph. D. Anything from the pen of Dr. O'Hagan—be it in verse or prose—is both interesting and instructive, especially for Canadians, more especially for Catholic Canadians, and most especially for Irish-Catholic Canadians. This Irish contribution to the swelling volume of our literature is an additional evidence of the many-sided talents of the erudite writer. To review the article which covers fifteen of the large pages of the "American Catholic Quarterly" would necessitate the re-production of the work in its entirety. There is not a superfluous word, not an unnecessary word in the whole piece; besides it is in great part composed of statistics and data which, while being absolutely necessary for the perfecting of Dr. O'Hagan's plan, can be only analyzed by firstly repeating each item. This is obviously impossible; consequently we feel at a disadvantage attempting to do justice to the contribution. Like those previous issues of the "Review," that have understood the past and the future of living centuries, each gem and each expression is so carefully selected that to polish one or more of them without doing the same for all of them, would simply be to mar the perfection of the work.

Dr. O'Hagan must have had exceptional advantages in the way of procuring exact information regarding the various Catholic ecclesiastical sections of Ontario. We will quote a few lines from his introduction as the basis of the whole article. He writes thus: "The most remarkable fact in the history of the Province of Ontario, during the past half-century, is the wonderful growth and development of the Catholic Church. Fifty years ago it was but a mustard seed; to-day it is a great cedar of Lebanon. Fifty years ago there were but three dioceses in Ontario; to-day there are eight, three of which are metropolitan sees. Fifty years ago there were not more than fifty priests scattered throughout the Province from Sandwich to Ottawa, and from Lake Erie to the Manitoulin Islands to minister to the spiritual needs of about one hundred and thirty thousand Catholics. To-day there are four hundred and fifty priests who have spiritual charge of four hundred thousand Catholics; yet these facts constitute but a segment in the great circle of progress which marks the history of the Catholic Church in Ontario, during the past fifty years. What shall be said of the multiplication of churches of colleges, of convents, of hospitals, which tell of Catholic faith, Catholic generosity? The Irish-Catholic immigrant who came to this country, as the Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee says, 'with much poverty, great faith, and willing hands,' not only felled the forests, built bridges and constructed railroads, and canals, but reared temples to God which bear testimony to his faith in tower and turret, and spire, and cross melting away into emotional light."

Skipping for a moment the whole article, we find in the concluding paragraphs a statement that may serve to cast a light on some of Dr. O'Hagan's sources of information. He says: "Nor has Catholic literary thought and achievement been wanting to those who had tended the altar fires of faith during the past fifty years in Ontario. Such works as Father Northgrave's 'Mysteries of Modern Infidelity,' Rev. Dr. Hatis's 'History of the Early Missions in Western Canada,' and 'The Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula,' and the late Rev. Dr. Dawson's 'Life of Pope Pius the Ninth,' have a permanent place and value not only in the history of the Cath-

olic Church, but in the history of our country." Starting with the first two Catholic settlements in Ontario—which were Sandwich and the Detroit River and St. Raphael's, in the County of Glengarry—we are carried along through all the changes and the developments of the Church in the Province. Of course the Indian missions by the Jesuits were the first attempts made to establish the Church in Ontario; but to Irish priests is due the credit of laying the foundations of some of the most important parishes as well as the earliest ones. The names of Vice-Chancellor Burke, and Father McKeena coupled with the work of a young and unweakened country are associated with the first practical attempts to implant the Fear of God in the hearts of the Catholics and natives.

Side by side with members of the Irish priesthood we find a goodly number of Highland Scotch—principally MacDonalds—striking into the heart of the forest and constructing temples of faith in the utmost seclusion of the mountains. Glancing over this brief but exact history of the rise, progress and expansion of the Church one is particularly struck with the unbroken chain of evidence adduced by one who is a student of human affairs in his own country. Two grand figures stand forth on the background of Dr. O'Hagan's page, and while we must refer our readers to the "Review" for the information in detail, we cannot refrain from quoting a few lines indicative of the characteristics of these early heroes. Dr. O'Hagan says: "Father John MacDonald was the first resident priest of Perth. Father MacDonald was a remarkable man, considered either physically or mentally. Here is a pen picture of him." "The great object of interest, love and pride of all classes throughout the country was the Vicar, old Father John MacDonald, who had led their spiritual life for over half a century and was still living, hale and hearty, in a pleasant cottage in Glengarry. . . . This fine old priest was without exception the most venerable and patriarchal figure the writer ever looked upon. He was nearing his hundredth year of age. His massive head and trunk were unshaken by years, and sound in every function. Only the limbs that had travelled so many a weary mile in days when the whole country was but an untracked wilderness had yielded to time and fatigue, and could no longer bear up to colonial frame. Wallace himself had not passed through more bold adventures than this Highland chief. The reverence and love that centred in him in his old age gave proof of his benign and salutary use of his mighty sway." What a magnificent character must have been!

In another place Dr. O'Hagan tells us: "When the Honorable and Right Rev. Alexander MacDonnell, Bishop of Kingston (the title honorable because the Bishop was a member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada), left on a trip to Europe in 1839, there were in all thirty-four priests in the Province, ministering to the spiritual wants of the Catholic people from Ottawa to Detroit." In this one sentence we have a whole volume of history. We are told of the civic status as well as the ecclesiastical rank of the Bishop; we learn how small the Church was sixty years ago in Ontario; we find another MacDonnell ruling the destinies of the religious Province under him. All we can say is that the whole article merits the closest study, and that it serves at once as an addition of highest value to our Irish-Catholic literature in Canada, and a step higher upon the stairway of success for the learned and pains-taking author—Dr. O'Hagan.

THE PARNELL MEMORIAL

There is still a few hundred dollars wanting to complete the amount promised by the executive, of the local Branch of the Parnell Monument Association. Those furnished with books are requested to make returns promptly to the secretary Mr. P. F. McAffrey, 33 Victoria Square. It is expected that the amount promised will be subscribed by the 15th of February. Now is the time to respond, it may be the last chance ever given to the Irish citizens of this locality to show their appreciation of the late Charles Stewart Parnell. Those not reached by subscription books should communicate with the secretary, who will duly acknowledge even the smallest contribution.

The following additional subscriptions have been received: Previously acknowledged, \$618.50. A Friend, \$25.00; Miss Ann M. Barry, \$10.00; J. P. Kavanagh, \$10.00; Another Friend, \$10.00; E. B. Davlin, \$5.00; T. Conway, \$5.00; C. A. Latham, \$5.00; Jos. Quinn, \$5.00; Wm. Hoelen, \$5.00; G. C. Egan, \$5.00; T. P. Owens, \$5.00; John Lavalle, \$5.00; P. Rafferty, \$5.00; J. A. Rafferty, \$5.00; James O'Donnell, \$1.00; C. J. Murphy, \$1.00; Frank O'Connor, \$1.00; Rev. W. O'Meara, \$1.00; Andrew Dunn, \$1.00; P. H. Brophy, \$1.00; James Barry, \$25; Donovan, 25c; D. Brown, 25c; W. Fitzgerald, 25c; J. Murphy, 25c; Moore, 25c; W. W. Power, 25c.