

entire while the nations echoed in delight that portentous cry : Liberty, Fraternity, Equality. The French Revolution, however, gave to its abettors not liberty but licence, and as that devastating flood of the Reign of Terror swept over poor misguided France, its breakers beat upon the farthestmost boundaries of Europe. Then kings were to be seen leaguings with kings to support with mutual hand their tottering thrones. Nation joined with nation to preserve their national existence. And now out of that awful chaos, a mighty genius is slowly coming to the front, moulding events as he comes, the despot of the France of the day, the tyrant of the Europe of the morrow—Napoleon Bonaparte.

Here in Canada, a people conquered and oppressed but tenacious of its religious and political rights, was engaged in a struggle, at first constitutional indeed, but eventually openly rebellious and even embittered by racial and religious animosity. To the South, a young nation scarcely beyond minority rose exulting in her freedom but with the notes of her joyous song of liberty mingled the groans of a race enslaved. South America still bore the yoke of Spain—a yoke daily growing heavier and heavier because of the persecuting policy of rulers that had imbibed the spirit of the Encyclopedists ; while the sun in his torrid march around the world, never for a moment set on the backs of Britain's slaves.

And Ireland, O'Connell's native land ? Let us retrace our steps to 1782. Thanks to Grattan and the Volunteers, Ireland was given her legislative independence ; yet Catholic Erin continued to wear her chains ; for, if we except the meagre concessions of 1772 and 1778, the penal laws remained still in all their force. In the Irish Parliament, however, Grattan nobly espoused the cause of his down-trodden fellow countrymen, and sought to obtain for them a full measure of justice. For ten years his efforts were nullified by the overwhelming majority that bigotry marshalled against his purpose ; but, at length he succeeded in securing the passage of the Relief Bill of 1793, which, while leaving the Catholics, as of old, debarred from all the higher preferments such as the Lord Lieutenancy, the Chancellorship, as well as from the Legislature and the Bench, granted them