

Nation Making

A STORY OF

NEW ZEALAND SAVAGEISM & CIVILIZATION

By J. C. FIRTH,

AUTHOR OF "LUCK" AND "OUR KIN ACROSS THE SEA."

CHAPTER XIX.

A NEW DEPARTURE.

England abandons New Zealand—Fierce struggle between colonists and Maoris—Able measures of the Hon. John Bryce—Influence in making the nation—Ancient Briton and modern Maori contrasted—Influence of language—Irish Celt not a nation-maker—Home Rule—Suggestions for settling the Irish difficulty.



AFTER five years of war, notwithstanding the wise and urgent protests by Governor Sir George Grey against the removal of all the troops, England retired from New Zealand. Every British soldier was withdrawn. The proud beat of the English drum was heard no more in the land, and the "red cross banner" was left to be dragged in the dust by exultant savages, or to be defended by the abandoned and unaided colonists. The policy of the 'Manchester school' had triumphed, and the colony was left to its fate.

Massacres and the burning of villages followed. The colonists were dominated by hostile bands of armed Maoris. Battles on the East Coast, battles on the West Coast continually occurred, victory inclining sometimes to the colonists, sometimes to the Maoris, until at length, after twenty years of desultory and bloody warfare, under the gallant leadership of Colonel Sir George Whitmore, and under the able measures of the Hon. John Bryce, the colonists finally triumphed.

So fierce have been the struggles between the white man and the Maori, so prolonged the contest—a contest so distinguished by valiant deeds by both races, so innumerable the gallant attacks, so memorable the defences, equally gallant in fortress, forest and ravine, that the colony is eloquent with the heroic story of dusky warriors gallantly defending their country, of colonists as gallantly fighting for their homes, that now, when the long struggle is ended, and the Queen's writ runs everywhere, colonist and Maori, the victor and the vanquished, regard each other, not as tyrant and slave, but with that mutual respect which brave men feel for 'foemen worthy of their steel.'

In the halo of romance which time throws round such a contest we have one element in the work of nation-making, which for centuries to come will leave its marks on the character of the future New Zealand nation.

New Zealand colonists have the further advantage of living side by side with a race very similar to our ancestors. Caesar found them when he invaded Britain. Results very different have followed the two conquests. In the one the vanquished absorbed the victors; in the other the vanquished are fading away. Their reed-made dwellings, like their communistic system of social life, contained elements fatal to a continued existence, and except the numerous earthwork fortifications, the Maori will hardly leave a trace behind. In a few generations a white descendant of some Maori business may still be marked by the survival of the proud lip, or the soft, pensive black eye of the Maori, and may boast of his descent as an English noble of to-day would boast if the blood of the patriotic Boadicea ran in his veins, more than if he could trace a lineal descent from the robber William the Norman.

The Maoris are the Celts of the Pacific. Some points in their story are not without interest in discussing the Irish question now agitating the English-speaking race, as may be seen in the subsequent portion of this chapter.

We English people call ourselves Anglo-Saxons. Nevertheless, the chief strain in our blood is not Teutonic, but Celtic.

Looking at the fact that Caesar found Britain well populated, and that after the first century of Roman occupation comparative peace reigned over a large area during the three following centuries of Roman rule, there can be little doubt that the Britons had so greatly increased in numbers that the Saxon invaders, in their small vessels, could not possibly have crossed the stormy North Sea in such numbers as greatly to increase the population. Yet in the reign of Alfred the Great, Britain had become Saxon in laws, government, and language. The Celtic language, as a language, had disappeared. A few words remained. A few still remain. But the Celtic blood formed, as it still forms, the largest strain in the blood of the English nation.

The strong imagination peculiar to the Celtic race, together with their partially civilized condition, were the chief reasons why the Britons yielded to the fierce hard-headed Viking. These sea rovers had little to loose and much to gain, and were valiant accordingly. The imaginative Britons, softened and enriched by the Roman occupation of their country, fell, though not without many struggles, under the dominant force of the savage Saxon pirates.

The Danes followed the Saxons. But though the vigorous Danish blood added some strong elements to the blood of the English nation, the Danish migration could not have greatly altered the proportion between Celt and Teuton in the population of England.

In the middle of the eleventh century personal freedom and a crude form of self-government had become practically

the prominent features of what we call Saxon England. The imagination of the Celt had been tempered and balanced by the cold, hard, staying power of the Teutonic nature, and thus we have the foundation of the English character as we now know it.

The Celtic Briton, happily for his descendants, had been conquered, his imagination tempered, his language lost, but he himself remained, and remains, the Englishman of to-day.

The Irish Celt, unhappily for himself, has never been conquered. A true hero worshipper, he has never met with a hero. He retains the imagination of his ancestors, and is therefore more loyal to the Church of Rome than any other race. The Irishman of to-day largely retains his love for the Celtic tongue. These three—in the absence even of social progress—make his patriotism at least a poetic dream, if not a political hope.

To these conditions we owe the Irishman of our times, who is as gallant, as romantic, as clannish, as turbulent and as thrifless (in his own country) as his Celtic ancestor of centuries ago. He is not a nation-maker, and if he runs on his present lines he never will be. It is only when Irishmen are removed from their surroundings, when their Celtic tendencies are modified by contact with stronger, harder influences and natures, that Irishmen become the generals, the statesmen, and the administrators who have played so great a part in building up the British nation.

Fifty that such a splendid raw material as the Irish nature offers cannot be more perfectly utilised—that such a love of country cannot be turned into channels more likely to benefit Ireland and the empire. Illness and improvidence are not to be eradicated by an Irish Parliament. Nor are industry and enterprise to be developed by boycotting and Land Leagues. Ireland is like a pilgrim with a pea in his shoe, who makes no progress himself, and annoys his neighbours by his outcries.

If a policy of Home Rule can be devised which will not ruin Ireland by separating it from England, it ought to be adopted. If by a system of County Government, or Provincial Government, or by any other system, the attention of the Irish people can be diverted from the absorbing devotion to a grievance, real or fancied, and fixed on such realities as personal progress, steady industry, more comfortable homes, a better system of farming, the establishment of manufactories—if by these means Irishmen can be taught to be more self-dependent, to be less dependent on orators and governments—the Irish difficulty will be removed.

Nation-making in Ireland by conquest has failed. The only conquest now possible is not by force of arms, but by the arts of peace, and by assimilation. When the Irish landed estates are occupied by small freeholders, nation-making in Ireland will have made a decisive forward movement. Out of his own country an Irishman is a better soldier, a better farmer, a better man than in it. Under the coming changes, aided by a migration of English and Scotch settlers, the assimilative force will come into action. Then Ireland will become, what she has not been for seven hundred years, a prosperous nation.

The Irish people is a high-spirited race. It manifests no signs of decay; it is a close neighbour to a kindred and powerful nation; the Celtic language is disappearing, and there is no question of colour. These are all factors for a peaceful adjustment. Not martial law, not assassination, but good-will and the fullest recognition of a community of interest between England and Ireland, will solve for ever the Irish enigma.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A TEN-MILE POWER MAGNET.

A LECTURE was once being given upon natural philosophy in a village schoolroom in Scotland. Among the apparatus of the lecturer was a powerful magnet, with which he performed some singular experiments. Waxing eloquent over this apparatus, the lecturer exclaimed: "Can any of you conceive a greater attractive power than this?"

"Ou, ay," responded an old farmer who was sitting on a front bench.

"What!" exclaimed the lecturer, somewhat taken aback, "not a natural, terrestrial object, certainly?"

"Ou, ay—quite natral," was the reply."

The lecturer challenged the man who had spoken to name the thing.

Then uprose the old man and said, "I can gie ye the facts, sir, an' you can judge for yourself." When I was a young chap there was a wee bit magnet wi' the prettiest black een ever ye saw. Dod, she could draw me ten miles every Sunday, an' I had nae power to resist her. She could wile a bird aff a bush. That magnet o' yours is nae doobt guid enouch, but it's no to be compared for pu'in' poorer wi' the lassock I refer to."

MY LADY FROWNED.

My lady frowned, and all the summer sky
Grew sullen as with storm-clouds overhead,
The winds that wafted warmth and fragrance by
Blew chill and drear and savourless instead.
The very roses seemed to freeze and fade,
The lilies' blooms were frozen hard and cold,
A bitter blight upon the land was laid,
And all the glory left the sunlight's gold.
No longer from the birds' delicious throats
Came softly warbled songs of love and mirth,
Harsh discords sounded through the silver notes,
And over all the beauty of the earth
There hung a shadow, dim, and profound—
My lady frowned!

My lady frowned; but at a word I said—
So sorrowful, so pleading and so faint
It might have been the whispers of one dead
For hope and pardon to some gentle saint—
The sweet face brightened, and the starry eyes
Waxed strangely beautiful with sudden tears,
And, as the dark nocturnal darkness flies,
Subdued and baffled, when the dawn appears,
The perfumed winds came back, the flow'rs once more
All glowing in the sunshine seemed to bark.
Why was the fair land fairer than before,
The bird's sweet songs more sweet? Ah, need you ask?
The answer scarce were puzzle to a child—
My lady smiled!

Wanganui.

W. R.



(See pages 9 and 12.)

CAPLES VALLEY, REES RIVER.

The Rees River is situated at the head of Lake Wakatipu. Its source lies in the spurs of Mount Earnshaw, 9,145 feet high, Mount Repulse, and the Forbes Mountains. Caples Valley received its name from one of the early explorers of the head of Lake Wakatipu, a surveyor named Mr Caples, who in conjunction with Mr G. W. Reeves, run-holder, and the late Mr W. Arthur (chief surveyor of the province of Otago), explored in thorough manner the glacier-clad summits and the intervening river gorges of this mountainous district. Our illustration is taken from an oil painting by W. J. S. Percival.

A GLIMPSE OF LAKE WAKATIPU FROM HALFWAY BAY.

LAKE WAKATIPU is situated in the province of Otago, and is upwards of sixty miles in length. At a distance of sixteen miles from the Kingston end of the lake, and on the western side, lies Halfway Bay. In the early days of the Shotover rush this bay was a constant halting place for the boats engaged in carrying cargo for Queenstown. At the head of Halfway Bay the River Locky flows into the lake. Our illustration is taken from an oil painting by W. J. S. Percival.

'THE GOLDEN LEGEND' AT WELLINGTON.

ON the 24th of July the Wellington Harmonic Society for the second time performed Sullivan's cantata, 'The Golden Legend,' the first occasion of its representation being two years ago at the Wellington Musical Festival. The solo parts were allotted in the following manner:—Elsie, Miss Katherine Hardy; Ursula, Miss Porter, daughter of Captain Porter, formerly of Gisborne; Prince Henry, Mr W. Izard; Lucifer, Mr F. V. Waters. It was preceded by Beethoven's 'Calm Sea and a Prosperous Voyage,' and Moskowski's, 'From Foreign Parts.' Mr Robert Parker conducted as usual. The performance was such as to reflect credit upon the whole body of the performers, and read a lesson to those towns of New Zealand which, with a larger population, fail to produce similar satisfactory results.

ELECTRICAL FISH.

SOME years ago a young man, with all the confidence of youth and in all the glory of his first knickerbockers, found himself in a small village on the New England coast, and, liking the location, determined to spend the season there. The morning following his arrival he ran down to the beach, where he found a crowd of red-shirted men gathered around a flat fish about three feet in length. "We're trying to get some one to lift it," said an old sea-dog, in answer to a question. "Lift it! Why a child could do that," remarked the young man from the city.

"P'raps he could," replied the fisherman, "but if you kin lug the fish from here to the dory over yonder you can earn \$5."

"You're a fine lot of men," said the city youth, with a laugh; "can't lift a fish of that size! Why, I'll wager the same amount that I can throw it that far."

The fishermen were very anxious to take the wager, and finally the young man approached, thrust his fingers into the eyes of the fish, and if it had been any other fish we might have said prepared to throw, but as it was the moment his hands touched the fish a strange look of surprise came over his face, and those near by might have seen a certain rigidity of the muscles. He retained the same position for several moments, then, with many a grimace, asked to be relieved, and amid roars of laughter the fish was pulled from his hands. When the young man had recovered his equanimity he confessed that it was the heaviest fish he had ever attempted to lift.

The fish was the ray, known popularly as the torpedo (torpedo marmoratus), and one of the most powerful of the marine electricians. It is said that the physicians of Cleopatra, Descurides, used these fishes in medicine.

In examining the torpedo the electrical apparatus is very noticeable, being made up of two large, flat bodies lying on each side of the head. The organs are composed of numerous prisms placed vertically, each of which is subdivided by delicate septa, forming small cells, which contain a clear tremulous, jelly-like substance. In a specimen torpedo marmoratus one may count nearly 500 of these prisms.

It has been found that the upper side of the fish is negative and the lower positive, and that the power is entirely at the will of the fish or under its control. Some curious experiments have been made; thus the scientist Marex applied a telephone to the fish, and at every ordinary shock given he distinctly heard a click. When the fish was greatly excited a loud groan was heard, which sounded like 'm', and the discharge was prolonged four or five seconds.

The electrical discharge of this fish is not of sufficient power to kill a man unless he was in an extremely enfeebled condition, but that it is fatal to other fishes has been noticed on many occasions. Moreau, a French observer, noticed turbot fall upon a torpedo in a fishing boat, and the result was almost instantaneously fatal. They leaped high in air upon receiving the shock, and fell back dead and rigid, and remained for some time bent in a curve. In appearance the torpedo is a flat fish, with a rounded head and short, thick tail.

Brother Jonathan relates that a man in Cincinnati having fasted for six months became at last so tormented hungry, that he ate himself and didn't discover his mistake till he saw one of his neighbour's dogs picking his bones.