

death of Ireland's great old monarch, and the loss of the flower and chivalry of his army, who lay dead beside their Danish foes? But these sorrows were light in comparison with those to come, for they who then fell in Ireland's cause died with the consciousness that their lives were not sacrificed in vain. Their enemies were conquered, their country freed, and death can have little bitterness for those "who close their eyes on Victory's breast."

But though the brilliant courage and incomparable valour of the early Irish race covered their native land with glory, and preserved her free and great, that glory is to us but a memory which only renders more keen the sorrow with which we now witness her ruin and decay. Where now is her former glory, where are her ancient kings, the royal race of princes who once ruled in the old halls of Tara, her magnificent churches and abbeys, her lordly towers and grand old castles?

"Where are they now in summer's light?
Go seek the winter's snow;
Forgotten are our name and might,
And broken is our bow."

What is a glorious past to us now, when no trace of it remains except a few crumbling, ivy-covered ruins, scattered throughout the land, and a memory of lost liberty faint and indistinct, like a half-forgotten dream? Does the nationless Hebrew, when looking upon the site of his ruined city, feel consoled for its destruction, because its temple was once of marble and its altars of glittering gold? Or, when the Indian warrior stands a stranger and a pilgrim upon the ancient heritage of his forefathers, and sees the white man's corn waving smooth and green upon the broad plains where the "Indian hunters roved," is it sufficient for him now that he was lord of that land before the pale-face came from beyond the sea, to rob him, to steal his lands, and destroy his race? The memory of bygone power and possession will bring no smiles to his dark face, but, rather, fill his whole soul with passionate sorrow and unavailing regret, as with slow step and saddened mien he turns mournfully away, unable longer to bear the bitter memories awakened by seeing the ancient heritage of his ancestors in the possession of strangers.

So it is in our own history. The past, though ever so glorious, is nothing to us now; we cannot re-live it, its memory is but a melancholy ghost of departed freedom, a pale shade which arises to haunt us, to point with weird, reproachful finger to what we were, and laugh in mockery and scorn at what we are.

Where then is the student of Irish history to turn in search of anything "provocative of joy?" He cannot even say that his country's sorrows and misfortunes were entirely the work of strangers, for they were first brought about by the baseness of one of her own "faithless sons." As Curran said later on, what renders the idea of her fate more bitter still is, that it has been of her own making. This, unfortunately, is perfectly true, for disunion among those who professed to make common cause for Ireland's sake, was far more fatal to her liberty than any armed foe. And what disunion left undone was accomplished by treachery, for, as the wretched Leinster King was not the first, unhappily he was not the last Irishman who was willing for his own interest to sacrifice his country, and eternally disgrace his nationality.

In all the sad history of Ireland's sorrows and misfortunes it is impossible to discover any circumstance so deplorable as the melancholy fact, that of those who were ever ready to betray her an Irishman was almost always among the foremost. Again, it is beyond the power of the imagination to conceive any spectacle so humiliating to humanity as that of brave, high-souled, patriotic men betrayed in "their hour of might" by some vile slave, whom they had the misfortune to trust as a man. Does it not seem almost incredible that there could be found a man, born upon Irish ground, so base, so lost to all sense of honor, so vile and contemptible, as to betray those who were firm and brave and true in the cause of liberty and Ireland.

And yet when Ireland mourns for the fate of her noblest patriots, her sorrow is doubly increased in intensity by the remembrance that many of them who lie, now, nameless and almost forgotten in their lonely bloodstained graves, were betrayed by men whose birth-place was the same dear land as that of the gallant Wolfe Tone, the chivalrous Lord Edward, and the heroic, intrepid Emmet, the bravest and the dearest of them all.

What memories of the past those names awaken! Though the world now calls them rebels, the day may come when Time will reverse that judgment—

"When many a deed may wake in praise
That long hath slept in blame."

But if that day never comes it makes little difference for the man who through pure, disinterested love for his native land, lays down his life to redress her wrongs, whether fancied or real;—that man is a hero. No matter how mistaken his views may be, his patriotic devotion is sublime. Surely, then, Ireland has just cause to weep with "gratitude, not ashamed of her tears" for such men, and her robe of mourning may well assume a deeper hue in memory of those whose only fault was that their hands and hearts were too ready in her service.

No other country in the world, in looking back over the days that have flown, has such cause as Ireland to exclaim with Charles Edward, "Oh, the brave, the brave and noble that have died in vain for me!" But it is not alone for the fate of those who have died that Ireland has cause for sorrow, but also for the long lives of devoted men spent in her service, and spent in vain. Once only by their efforts were the bonds that bound her broken, and for a brief period she felt how glorious it was to be free. But that one ray of light, "Like heaven's first dawn o'er the sleep of the dead," only appeared for a moment to vanish again, leaving increased darkness behind. "The old house at home," that tomb of Irish freedom is deserted and desolate, and they whose voices once made its walls ring with their eloquence have long been silent in their graves. Some of them died far away from the land they loved so well and served so long, their only recompense—that which always

falls to the unsuccessful patriot—ruined hopes, a broken heart, and a wasted life.

Has Ireland not cause, too, for sorrow in beholding the multitudes of her children who are compelled to become voluntary exiles, and to seek in other lands the livelihood denied them in their own? Like Niobe, all tears, she mourns for their loss; yet she is unable to bid them stay. Her fair plains, and green, fertile vales are in the hands of strangers; to them she must yield her treasures, while her own children wander away, to be lost for ever to the dear old land of their birth, and "are destined to give their last recollection to the green fields they are never to behold on a foreign death-bed, and to lose the sad delight of fancied visits to them in a distant grave."

But the past, though gloomy, gives promise of hope for the future, for its darkness was illumined by one bright star, which always shone clear and radiant, and its lustre has never paled. That is the firm faith of a faithful people, which in trial and misfortune never wavered or changed. Surely from this we may hope that the spirit of the Apostle of Ireland, and that of the scarcely less great St. Lawrence, the princely hermit of Glendalough, still hover over her, and that, one day, their unseen influence will restore her lost liberty, and with the return of freedom, which is the soul of nations, all her sorrows shall be forgotten, and she shall be again in the future what she was in the past—

"Great, glorious, and free;
The first flower of the earth,
And first gem of the sea."

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RAILWAY ACCIDENTS IN 1876.

A RETURN has just been made to Parliament of the accidents and casualties which have been reported to the Board of Trade during the months of October, November, and December, 1876, with a general summary for the year. In that summary it is stated that in 1876 1,236 were killed and 6,112 injured; 38 passengers and 43 railway servants killed from causes beyond their own control; 101 passengers and 630 railway servants were killed from their own misconduct and want of caution; the number of passengers injured from causes beyond their own control was 1,279, and the number of servants so injured 384; from their own misconduct or want of caution, 604 passengers and 2,216 servants were injured; of persons passing over railways at level-crossings, 59 were killed and 30 injured; of the trespassers, including suicides, 305 killed and 134 wounded; of other persons not coming in the above classification, 69 killed and 77 injured. Then 40 persons were killed and 1,389 injured on railway premises—3 passengers killed and 27 injured by falling down steps at stations, and 2 passengers killed and 47 injured from other causes while upon the companies' premises; 13 persons killed and 42 injured while transacting business in connection with the railways; and 23 servants killed and 1,272 injured while engaged upon various duties in warehouses, goods-yards, sheds, and other places. Accidents to trains, rolling stock, permanent-way, &c., during the year 1876 caused the death of 65 persons and injury to 1,486—viz.:—Passengers, 36 killed and 1,245 injured; servants of companies, 23 killed and 236 injured; other persons, 1 killed and 5 injured. In the course of the year 1876 there were reported to the Board of Trade 57 collisions between passenger trains or parts of passenger trains, causing the death of 27 passengers and 1 company's servant, and injury to 509 passengers, 39 servants, and 1 other person; 129 collisions between passenger trains and goods or mineral trains, engines, &c., by which 8 passengers and 2 servants were killed and 493 passengers and 55 servants injured; 57 collisions between goods trains or parts of goods trains, causing the death of 6 servants and injury to 3 passengers (men in charge of cattle), 49 servants, and 2 other persons; 124 cases of passenger trains or parts of passenger trains leaving the rails, causing the death of 8 servants and injury to 101 passengers, 25 servants, and 1 other person; 47 cases of goods trains or parts of goods trains, engines, &c., leaving the rails, by which two servants were killed and 14 injured; 32 cases of trains or engines travelling in the wrong direction through points, causing injury to 24 passengers and six servants; 24 cases of trains running into stations or sidings at too high a speed, by which 64 passengers and two servants were injured and one other person was killed; 206 cases of trains running over cattle or other obstructions on the line, causing the death of one servant and injury to five passengers and seven servants; 68 cases of trains running through gates at level-crossings, by which two servants were killed and four servants and one other person were injured; 13 cases of the bursting of boilers or tubes, &c., of engines, by which five servants were killed and 20 injured; 12 failures of the machinery of engines, by which one passenger was killed and 10 passengers and one servant were injured; 830 failures of tires, resulting in injury to one passenger and one servant; 397 failures of axles, causing injury to 10 passengers and five servants; four failures of brake apparatus, causing injury to one passenger and three servants; 30 failures of couplings, causing the death of one servant and injury to 16 passengers and four servants; and 17 other miscellaneous accidents, by which three passengers and one servant were injured. There were also reported one collision between light engines, 74 failures of wheels, one failure of a rope used in working an incline, seven failures of tunnels, bridge viaducts, culverts, &c., 464 broken rails, 22 cases of the permanent-way being damaged by floods, 19 slips in cuttings or embankments, 23 cases of fires in trains, and three cases of fires at stations, but in none of these instances was there any personal injury involved.—Mail.

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