

events of '48, and more fully demonstrated by the abortive attempts at insurrection since made. The fact is, Ireland was not prepared for insurrection, and the wisdom of the leaders, "Meagher of the sword," and his noble *confrères*, was overruled by the devastating and blighting influences of the famine scourge, which previously deluged the land with poverty and hunger, and almost decimated the inhabitants, while the Government looked on with apparent *sang-froid*, doing comparatively nothing towards the amelioration of their condition. No wonder that these appalling events should be so distressing to the great Emancipator, as to shatter his once powerful constitution, and damp his mighty intellect. As is now but too well known, he sank under their fell influence—the once robust frame was hastening towards its dissolution; and on the 6th of August, 1847, the wit, the orator, the poet, the statesman, the great Tribune of the people was no more, having died at Genoa, in Italy, on his way to Rome, the Eternal City—bequeathing, in the true spirit of the Christian patriot, his heart to Rome, his soul to heaven, and his body to Ireland. His body to Ireland! that country ever dear to him; and in whose defence he was ready to do or die; that country which he had so ardently loved, and which as religiously reciprocated his love; that picturesque and romantic country whose generous sons have been as distinguished for honour and integrity, as her lovely and fascinating daughters for virtue and fortitude; a country possessing one of the most fertile soils and genial climates, with inexhaustible resources, yet, strange contradiction, suffering from periodical famines; a country which has produced, in point of population, more eminent scholars, poets, statesmen, orators, saints and doctors, soldiers and warriors (whose prowess and valour have been signally displayed on every battle-field in the history of modern warfare, and whose standards have been triumphantly borne, untarnished and unsullied, through all the glorious campaigns of the four quarters of the globe), than any other nation on the face of God's earth; that country of which he, himself, so often sang:—

"Oh, Erin! blessed shall be the bard,
And sweet and soothing his reward,
Should he but wake one patriot thrill,
By foes denounced, remembered still;
Whate'er may be thy humble lot,
By foes denounced, by friends forgot,
Thine is the soul, the tear, the smile,
Gem of the ocean, lovely Emerald Isle."

His heart to his country! Such a tribute, such a legacy, was as well worthy of her to whom bequeathed as of him who left it; and who, though now no more, is still living in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen, and the undying traditions of his country.

Sic transit gloria mundi.—Thus passeth away the glory of the world. Thus passed away the immortal Daniel O'Connell, the Christian patriot, the hero, the chief, the liberator, the emancipator, the "uncrowned king," the "Father of his country," the lawyer, the statesman, the scholar, the orator, the Demosthenes of Ireland; he who was as gifted with the pen as with the tongue, and could handle his pistols with scientific precision, and who was ever ready to wield the one or the other in defence of right and justice, honour and principle; he, who, unaided and alone, had for years marshalled the conflicting and dividing elements of party strife into one harmonious whole; who had, by the power of his genius and eloquence, knit together the distracted and discontented members of the community into one grand organisation, whose moral effects are of lasting and universal obligation; thus passed away one of the greatest Irishmen who have appeared in the political arena within the present, or, indeed, any previous century, and who now, though mouldering with his kindred earth, will be remembered as long as history is written by all lovers of freedom, but more especially by those for whom he lived and wrought, and in defence of whose rights he was ever ready to, and actually did, lay down his life.

In paying this slight but imperfect tribute to the memory of O'Connell, the writer wishes it to be distinctly understood that in any remarks of his as to the merits or demerits of the great departed, he does not wish it to be inferred that he speaks disparagingly of any of the great men who, from the gifted Henry Grattan down to the no less gifted and distinguished Parnell, have worked so earnestly and disinterestedly in the cause of Irish freedom and suffering humanity, whose efforts, when directed in the proper channels, he thoroughly admires and approves; his aim being to keep before the minds of his readers that spirit of independence and love of country which was pre-eminently characteristic of the hero of this short memoir.

"Now you have wandered around our planet," said a recent visitor to the hospitable London study of Moncure D. Conway, "what in the course of the whole journey impressed you most painfully?" "Two things," said Mr. Conway, "first the Sabbatarianism of the Sandwich Islands, and secondly, the spectacle presented at Benares and other great Indian cities of religion gone rotten. Of the two, the former, of course, was much the smaller; but anything more miserable than Honolulu on the Sabbath could hardly be imagined. These islands, usually so bright and gay, seemed to be under the influence of a weird enchantment. The windows are shut no life was heard in the streets; a sombre gloom filled the air: the atmosphere was sultry in the extreme, but no ice could be procured for love or money. Missionaries from Boston, a city where the concert-room and picture-gallery are open on Sunday, and where the inhabitants have completely freed themselves from the old Blue laws, have descended upon this hapless island in the far Pacific, and established the Sabbath as a dread demon before whose glance all mirth and innocent pleasure fled far away. A Sabbath, like a great false god, was enthroned in their midst, and woe to be those who did not bow down to it in worship. A more authentic incarnation of the visible-invisible I have seldom beheld. It was *omni-present*. You could not escape from it, overshadowing as it did every street countenance. Literalism was set up to be worshipped at the expense of the true spiritual religion. The idol reigned supreme.

CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

August 12, 1884.

INTEREST, of course, centres greatly in the political intrigues in Wellington. The names of Grey, Vogel, Montgomery, Macandrew, have risen successively, like rockets in the air, to be greeted with various exclamations (some derisive) according to the proclivity of the acclamers. But this is not quite a Christchurch subject. Interest of the practical kind about it centres in Wellington, whence, no doubt, you will receive authentic information of what goes on. Our share in Canterbury here is confined chiefly to asking one another, in the intervals allowed us by gaping astonishment, if these rumours have any truth, and what is really best for the country. Public opinion, in fact, as is usual at such times, is in a comfortably fluid state.

The enterprise and energy of the New Zealand Shipping Company, whose headquarters are in this city, are much before the public just now, on account of their last meeting. There was a drop of bitterness in the cup for the shareholders in the loss of the steamer *Catalonia*, but it was sweetened by the dividend. There is much virtue in a dividend, even more than there is in the applause of half the entire civilised world, which claps hands, circulates glowingly appreciative accounts of the magnificent regularity of the splendid line of steamers, goes into raptures about colonial skill, colonial pluck, colonial shrewdness, colonial success; of this kind of thing shareholders, colonial or otherwise, can stand a great deal: provided it be accompanied by a dividend the quantity is illimitable. But once cut off that charming adjunct, and the really empty character of the vain praise of ill-informed observers very soon comes home to the average shareholding mind. The particular item of loss in this case occurred in the case of the *Catalonia*, as I have said. The Company was at the mercy of the Cunard directors, and the vessel, besides being slower than the other chartered ships, was what owners call a "fire-eater"; her coal bill was enormous. The Reserve Fund, and not the dividend, was wisely called upon to make good this loss. The two most satisfactory things for the shareholders to bear in mind out of the chairman's statements, are—1. That all the other chartered steamers paid well. 2. That the splendid fleet of the Company will soon be numerous enough to keep the profit of these charters at home. Of course the Company wants more money, and equally, of course, the Company wants a *status* on the Stock Exchange. To gratify these legitimate requirements, the one legitimate for the sake of extending operations, the other because it facilitates the business of those supporting the Company, legislation is to be asked for. As money is the only thing our legislation is likely at the present time to refuse, and as the good of the New Zealand Shipping Company (especially at an expense not borne by the Colonial Exchequer) is the good of New Zealand, the powers to be asked for will probably be granted without demur, and placed on the Statute Book early. Mr. Coster, you will incidentally remember, in this connection (the energetic chairman of the Company), is also now a member of Parliament, whose career promises to be energetic. The career is more promising to-day than it was a fortnight ago, when Mr. Coster's medical man, who was very much afraid of a general break up, prevented what a genial medico in the Empire City once called "his man" from attending the banquet given in his honour. "Ah! that banquet, at which I wore a pump and I was proud to join that goodly company," as Thackeray's charming ballad has it—or nearly has it,—for I quote from memory. That banquet has left strange memories. To the unimpassioned observer the sight of 200 people dining with a man who was not present, pledging him frantically, and receiving with immense applause all the sayings in his honour, was curious. To the guests, some score or so, including His Excellency the Governor, the dinner was abundant, though cold. But to a large proportion of the 200 guests of the feast the cold abundance was unattainable. Some tipped the waiters and attained to food, and others tipped the waiters and attained not. The speechifying was, with the exception of the speeches of the Governor and the talented member for Selwyn, not up to a good after dinner average—probably the natural result of the catering arrangements; and even the talented member for Selwyn contrived to import political matter, unconsciously, as he afterwards explained, and so prevented his fine oratory from having a genial effect. But these are small details. As a demonstration in honour of a deserving citizen the dinner was a very successful affair. Another time the givers of a gigantic feast will probably try to make it a success in both capacities.

A meeting of some significance was held here the other day of those interested in the coal-fields of the Malvern district. There are in that locality—across the Canterbury Plain, away at the foot of the hills so snowy and bright at the present season of the year—some eight or ten coal pits, whose owners have spent sums of money, more or less large, on developing their properties. But the pits are found to be so far from the nearest line of railway that the coal industry (brown coal, you must understand, but of good quality) is killed, or at least very much crippled, by the cost of horse cartage to the nearest railway station. The various owners, in meeting assembled, have determined to ask Parliament to place them all in communication with the railway. The cost of the short lines, with sidings, required is estimated at £100,000, and the coal owners talk of a guarantee of five per cent. One member of Parliament who was present, said bluntly that nobody but a lunatic would ever dream of approaching Parliament at such a time with such a request, whereupon he was promptly informed that before election we have from candidates promises *ad lib.*, while after election members give us insults *ad nauseam*. It is not improbable that these are the only words of the Latin language which this caustic gentleman knows, but that he used them with an effect calculated to excite the envy of the compiler of voluminous treatises in the vernacular of the founder of the Cæsars is undeniable. Another member of Parliament, more pliant, said he would see to the thing in Parliament. He was not told that seeing is not getting