

THE CONCERT.

The concert programme consisted of the finest gems of Irish melody of a truly national character, and the committee were certainly fortunate in having secured the services of some of the best local talent for the occasion. Miss Tanghey sang 'Kathleen Mavourneen' (encored), and later on gave a very fine rendering of 'Oh where's the slave so lowly.' Madame Carlton's fine voice caught the audience in 'The meeting of the waters,' (encored). 'Believe me if all those endearing young charms,' (also encored) was her item in the second part of the programme. Mr. W. S. Cadzow did ample justice to the patriotic song, 'A nation once again,' (encored). He also contributed 'The wearing of the green,' which was enthusiastically applauded. Dr. Ingram's famous national melody, 'Who fears to speak of '98,' (encored) was in good hands with Mr. F. S. Pope, who sang it in a sympathetic and artistic manner. He was also recalled for the rendering of 'And we for one another.' The concerted items were: 'She is far from the land,' a trio by Madame Carlton, Messrs. Cadzow and Pope. These items were exceptionally attractive. The accompaniments were played by Madame Cadzow, and the overtures on national airs were contributed by Mr. Cimino's orchestra. During the evening two addresses dealing with the insurrection of '98, were delivered, the first by Dr. Cahill, entitled 'The history of the causes which led to the rebellion'; the other by Sir Robert Stout, on 'The rebellion and the lesson it teaches.' Both speeches were frequently and enthusiastically applauded during their delivery.

DR. CAHILL'S SPEECH.

Dr. Cahill, on coming on the stage received an enthusiastic ovation.

In introducing his subject, the speaker set about disabusing the public mind of the impression that the intention of the gathering was to perpetuate the memory of former contentions. The spirit in which they approached the celebration was expressed in the beautiful song by David:—

'Oh! let the orange lily be
Thy badge, my patriot brother;
The everlasting green for me,
And we for one another.'

We have met to-night (he continued) not to pay a tribute to rebellion, or the spirit of rebellion, but we have met to honour the memory of men who endeavoured by constitutional means to obtain for their fellow men political and religious equality; and who were subsequently goaded into insurrection by the intolerable wrongs to which they were subjected by their masters. They became rebels for the same reason that John Hampden, Algernon Sydney, George Washington, and Louis Kossuth became rebels, because tyranny supplemented law in their native country. The principles which they advocated and for which they suffered are common to humanity, they belong to every age and every race. It would be strange indeed if we, who inherit these fortunate islands when there is fair play for all, should deny to the cause of the leaders of 1798 that manly sympathy which we extend to-day to the rebel chiefs of Cuba and the Philippine islands.

HISTORICAL.

Glancing at the political and social condition of the country before 1798, the speaker pointed out how the provisions of the Treaty of Limerick had been set aside by law; the mass of the people excluded from Parliament, from the magistracy, army, navy, bar, jury-room, and polling-booth; their religion fiercely repressed, and they themselves reduced not merely to poverty but to ignorance—for education was forbidden. The Catholics—five-sixths of the population—could not purchase or inherit landed property or hold leases except on limited and imperfect tenure. A few Catholics saved their estates by the aid of their Protestant friends, for, to the credit of humanity, there were always individuals more generous than the law.

The Presbyterians of the North fared little better than the Catholics of the South, so far as power was concerned. They were shut out by law from civil, military, and municipal offices. The entire Government of the country was monopolised by a few great Protestant land-owners, who represented only one-twelfth of the population. Add to all this the destruction of Irish trade and commerce, and the picture of misery is complete; for, writes Mr. Green, since the time of William III. England did her best to annihilate Irish trade and destroy Irish agriculture. The result was that which might have been expected. For more than a century Ireland was the worst governed country in Europe. Towards the end of the century, England, as the result of misgovernment, had lost her American colonies, save Canada and Newfoundland. Ireland was threatened with a French invasion, and the want of any regular force to oppose it compelled the Government to call upon Ireland to provide for her own defence, and in answer to its call, 40,000 volunteers appeared in arms. Two years afterwards, 1781, the volunteer officers of Ulster, the Presbyterian descendants of the Scotch planters of James I. and of the settlers of Cromwell, met in convention at Dungannon, under the presidency of Lord Charlemont. Resolutions were passed favouring

1. The Declaration of Independence of the Irish Parliament.
2. Recommending Parliamentary Reforms, including Catholic Emancipation.

It was during these years that England lost a great opportunity of reconciling the two nations. In Ireland, as in the colonies, England shrunk from carrying out either a national or imperial policy. I am quoting from Mr. Green. She might have recognised Ireland as a free nationality, and bound it to herself by federal bonds, or she might have absorbed Scotland into the general mass of her own national life. With a perverse ingenuity, continues Mr. Green, she not only refrained from taking either of these courses, but she deliberately adopted the worst features of both.

GRATTAN.

Up to this date the Parliament of Ireland acknowledged the supremacy of the English Legislature. In the following year Grattan carried his Bill declaring the independence of the Irish Parliament, and the English Parliament unanimously passed their famous Act of Renunciation. The franchise was, however, not extended to the mass of the people, and all political powers still remained in the hands of that small portion of the population who belonged to the Established Church. The borough system, which was chiefly the work of the Stuarts, prevailed, and proved, as it had formerly done a fruitful means of corruption. Whatever were its defects, the Parliament made great and beneficial changes. The masses were restored to many of the rights of citizenship, free trade was proclaimed, and the country advanced in prosperity and peace.

For the purpose of bringing pressure on Parliament, and completing the good work thus commenced, the Society of United Irishmen came into existence.

THE UNITED IRISHMEN.

In the year 1791 the Society of United Irishmen was formed in Belfast by Theobald Wolfe Tone. It was at first essentially Protestant and confined to the Dissenters of Ulster. Its chief objects were to obtain Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation. Every member of the United Irishmen pledged himself to use all his abilities to obtain an impartial and adequate representation of the Irish nation in Parliament, and to do all that lay in his power to form a union of affection and interests among Irishmen of all religious persuasions. According to Lecky, five-sixths of the leaders of the Society—like Tone, Thomas Addis Emmet, Arthur O'Connor, Rowan, and many others—were Protestants, and belonged by birth and education to the party of ascendancy in the country. Two were closely connected with the nobility: the Hon. Simon Butler was brother of Lord Mountgarrett, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald was the son of the Duke of Leinster. The Society spread south to Dublin, and extended into Leinster and Munster, but it does not seem to have reached Connaught. The most important of its early transactions took place in 1792. The leaders met in convention in Dublin, and when, as a result to their petition to the King for the relief of Catholic grievances, the members of that body were, in 1793, admitted to the Parliamentary franchise, though still excluded from sitting in Parliament. Relief measures in Ireland are usually accompanied by Coercion Acts. The Catholic Relief Act of 1793 was accompanied by three such measures. One of these, the Convention Act, was specially framed to prevent meetings of the United Irish party. Open and constitutional organisation was thus driven below the surface. After the rebellion was over, Emmet, O'Connor, and Dr. McNevin, representing eighty United Irish leaders, drew up a *Memoir*, in which they say that it was not until convinced by years of experience of the hopelessness of expecting the Parliament to reform itself, that they most reluctantly began to dream of revolution and of foreign aid.

THE REBELLION.

Of the immediate causes which led to the rebellion, it is probable that Mr. Pitt's determination to destroy the Irish Parliament, and the means which he adopted to this end, were the most potent. Let us hear the great philosophical historian, Mr. Lecky, on this point. In his *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, he says:—'It is probable that he (Pitt) was already looking forward to the Union. The steady object of his later Irish policy was to corrupt and degrade, in order that he might ultimately destroy, the Legislature of the country. Had Parliament been a mirror of the national will, had the Catholics been brought within the pale of the constitution, his policy would have been defeated. By raising the hopes of the Catholics almost to a certainty, and then dashing them to the ground, by taking this step at the very moment when the inflammatory spirit, engendered by the revolution, had begun to spread among the people, Pitt sowed the seeds of discord and bloodshed, of religious animosities and social disorganisation, which paralysed the energies of the country and rendered possible the success of his machinations. The rebellion of 1798, with all the accumulated misery it entailed, was the direct and predicted consequence of his policy. Having suffered Lord Fitzwilliam to amuse the Irish people with the prospect of Emancipation, he blighted their hopes by recalling him, and then produced the Rebellion.' Lord Fitzwilliam was withdrawn in 1795. Lord Camden took his place as Viceroy, and from that moment rebellion became inevitable.

As to what happened on Camden's accession to office, I shall call English witness only. Were I to attempt to describe the transactions which followed, I would probably be accused of using the language of exaggeration, perhaps of misrepresentation. Walpole, an English Protestant writer of the present day, says in his *Kingdom of Ireland*:—'The Catholics were attacked indiscriminately, masters were compelled to dismiss their Catholic servants, landlords to dismiss their Catholic tenants; decent farmers, quiet peasants, hard-working weavers, quite unconnected with the Defenders, received notices to go to hell—Connaught would not receive them; their houses were burned, their furniture broken up, and their families driven from their holdings.' The historians Plowden, Gordon, etc., estimate that in one county (Armagh) alone, in the year 1795—mark, three years before the rebellion—seven thousand Catholics, men, women, and children, were driven from their homes or put to the sword. Lord Gosford stated in December of that year:—

'Neither age nor sex, nor even acknowledged innocence of any guilt is sufficient to excite mercy, much less afford protection. The only crime which the objects of this ruthless persecution are charged with is the simple profession of the Catholic religion. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of this new species of delinquency, and the sentence they have pronounced is nothing less than confiscation of all property and immediate banishment.'

In this year, 1795, Parliament, notwithstanding the opposition of Mr. Grattan, carried an Indemnity Act, which protected magis