

audience the Holy Father, in due course, gave them his blessing. Afterwards, being somewhat conscience-stricken, she wrote to his Holiness confessing what she had done and saying that she felt that, like Jacob, she had obtained a blessing by false pretences. Thereupon the Pope replied that he had, at the time, recognised his daughter Margherita amongst the poor women, and that he sent her his blessing with all his heart.

REMEMBER '98.

THE NEW ROSS MONUMENT.

A FEW weeks since we gave an account of a remarkable demonstration, which took place at Oulart Hill, on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of a monument to the memory of the insurgents of that district. Other districts are now following the spirited example set them, and are about to erect memorials to those who bravely fought and fell during the troublous period, popularly known as '98. On Sunday, December 11, there was a splendid demonstration at the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of a monument at New Ross. At first it was not intended to have a very big gathering, in consequence of the inclement season of the year, but as the preparations advanced it was found necessary to enlarge the programme, as the attendance promised to be very large. The expectations of the promoters were fully realised, as the people turned up in their thousands—many of them coming from long distances—but in consequence of want of due notice only two members of Parliament put in an appearance—Messrs. T. J. Healy and Peter Ffrench, representatives of Wexford County. Owing to failing health Canon Doyle, the veteran parish priest of Ramsgrange, was unable to perform the ceremony, but his place was ably filled by the Rev. Father Meehan, P.P., Ballindaggan, a native of Ross, and who was born at Boheen-na-Slawn, a place where the English soldiery bit the dust in hundreds in '98, before the pikes and guns of the gallant men who rushed down Corbet Hill on that memorable June morning, just 100 years ago. The stone itself was not without its historic associations, as it was the coigne of the Three-Bullet-Gate, which was forced by the rush of the insurgents in '98, and which was stormed by Cromwell a century and a-half before. Almost every part of the County Wexford was represented at the demonstration, besides which there were numerous contingents from Kilkenny, Carlow, Dublin, and Waterford, many people coming by special trains, and even by special steamers. There was no dearth of music, as many of the contingents were accompanied by bands. A procession was formed outside the railway station, and after marching through the principal streets, halted at the Tholsel, where a substantial platform had been erected. Here the immense crowd filled up the whole Market Square, and even spread out into the adjoining streets. On the platform were the committee, Members of Parliament, a large number of clergy, and leading men from nearly all the districts of Wexford and the adjoining counties.

THE MEETING.

The chair was occupied by Mr. John Cummins, Ballyhack, Chairman of the New Ross Monument Committee, who in the course of an eloquent and patriotic speech explained the objects of the gathering. He said that upon the foundation-stone that was to be laid that day, there would be raised a monument in memory of as brave, as noble, and as historic body of Irishmen as ever died in the cause of freedom. One hundred years ago, unarmed, undisciplined, against terrible odds, their forefathers consecrated the streets of that historic town with their blood in defence of their homes, their faith and their altars, and it was but fitting that their descendants—the descendants of such noble and historic sires—should erect a fitting memorial to their memory. The duty of laying the stone would devolve on their fellow townsman, Father Meehan. Father Meehan was then presented with an address by the committee, in which they invited him, 'not only as a priest, but as a liberty-loving Irishman,' to perform the ceremony of laying 'the foundation-stone of a truly historic pile, which they hoped would be a magnificent monument, destined to be for ever commemorative of a great, a renowned, a holy, and a glorious, though a melancholy past.' A silver trowel, suitably inscribed, was presented to Father Meehan, who then performed the ceremony. On the motion of Mr. John Meehan, seconded by Mr. Mullally, a series of resolutions, pledging the meeting to carry out the struggle for Ireland's rights; calling upon the Nationalists of Wexford and the adjoining counties to make the monument worthy of the heroes of '98, and advocating unity of action among the people of Ireland, and her representatives, were unanimously adopted. The resolutions were supported in a patriotic speech by Father Meehan, who, in the course of his address, said it was there in that historic spot that many a brutal Hessian bit the dust before the musket and the pike of the gallant Irish insurgents. That was a solemn and sacred occasion for Irishmen, and he was proud of Wexford for having taken such an active part in commemorating the gallantry, the loyalty to faith and fatherland of these men. The foundation-stones of memorials had already been laid in Gorey and Wexford, and in Oulart Hill, that spot made famous by the discomfiture of the North Corks. These monuments would teach future generations of their duty to their country. It was not alone sufficient for them to cheer his remarks, but they should be imbued with the loyalty and fealty of those brave men, who not only sacrificed their homes and everything most dear to them, but their very lives in defence of their country. Their forefathers rose in evil days in opposition to persecution the most dreadful, and were goaded into rebellion by the Government to be slaughtered in cold blood. That mass of unarmed and undisciplined men fought bravely against fearful odds, and this monument would stand as a beacon to future generations, and would encourage them to show the same spirit as their forefathers, to fight for their country—in a constitutional sense, for to fight as they had fought

was now an impossibility. Let them be united as one man; let them stand fast to the cause that the men of '98 died for; let them persevere until they had attained the independence of their country; until they were a self-governing nation, a free and independent people.

Mr. Ffrench congratulated the people of Wexford on the great success of the demonstration, and said he was proud of being the grandson of an Irish rebel. He trusted he would never do anything to disgrace the rebel blood that flowed in his veins. Notwithstanding the persecution which Ireland had suffered still her sons had made an indelible mark upon the civilisation of the world, giving statesmen, scholars, soldiers and missionaries to every country in the globe. He hoped that if there were any differences amongst them they would bury these under that foundation-stone. It was little use to talk about unity unless they were prepared to make sacrifices for it, to do something practical towards its attainment. Differences of opinion would not kill the aspirations of the Irish people, but they helped to postpone the consummation of their desires.

Mr. T. J. Healy also supported the resolutions, and said that as Wexford was first and foremost in 1798, so she was also in the van in 1898. Many stirring events had taken place during the past 100 years, and many prominent persons had appeared on the scenes during that period, but above and beyond these, standing distinctly out from the pages of history they could see the saintly figures of Father Murphy and Father Roche and their gallant band of pikemen, who often carried dismay into the ranks of the foemen. No crime could be laid at the doors of the Wexford soldiers; when fighting was to be done they fought with men, and neither woman nor child was injured. After touching upon the many persecutions and afflictions which Ireland had suffered during the past 100 years, Mr. Healy went on to say that so long as Ireland was denied the right to govern herself, so long her relations with England would be one of revolution, tempered by the absence of rifles and Gatling guns. Sixty years ago the taxation of Ireland was £1 per head, now it was £3 per head of the population. England could have their friendship by restoring to them that of which she shamefully robbed them. The only way in which England could purchase the lasting friendship of Ireland was by restoring to Irish men the power to make their own laws, for their own people, on their own soil.

Other speakers having made short speeches, the proceedings terminated in the most orderly manner.

A banquet in connection with the ceremony was afterwards held at the Royal Hotel, Mr. John Cummins presiding. There was a representative company, and several patriotic speeches were delivered, the principal speakers being Mr. Ffrench and Mr. Healy, who responded to the toast, 'Ireland a Nation,' and Father Meehan, who spoke to the memory of the patriot priests.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH, member of the House of Commons, Colonel Sandys, Mr. Johnston, of Ballykilbeg, and a few kindred spirits make up what is known as the 'Protestant Party' in the House. Mr. Smith is the author of several controversial pamphlets, the material for which is generally drawn from such polluted sources as the writings of bogus 'ex-priests' and 'escaped nuns.' On several occasions his writings have been subjected to scathing criticisms by Mr. James Britten, the able secretary of the Catholic Truth Society, with the result that Mr. Smith has been compelled to carefully revise later editions of his works. It is, however, as might be supposed, with regard to the Church's action towards the Bible that Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., is most eloquent. 'Prohibition of the Bible'; 'Discouragement of Bible Reading'; 'The Bible in Brittany'; these are the headings under which Mr. Smith accumulates his evidence. 'It appears,' writes Mr. Britten, when dealing with a pamphlet under one of these titles, 'that when the Drummond Castle was wrecked off Molene, it was found that the inhabitants of the Island were all Roman Catholics, whereupon a Protestant Bible Society sent some colporteurs to give each one of them a Protestant Bible. To this the parish priest not unnaturally objected: Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., says he "was furious at this interference with his special domain, and spoke against it from the pulpit. The true policy of the Church of Rome," he adds, "is to be seen in such incidents as these." Now, supposing a French ship,' says Mr. Smith's critic, 'had been wrecked off an English Island inhabited by Protestants; suppose that parson and people had nobly devoted themselves to the succour of the saved and the burial of the dead; and suppose that a Catholic Society in France had returned this kindness by sending, uninvited and unsanctioned, a party of nuns to distribute rosaries among the natives: would Mr. Smith have been shocked if the parson had sent them about their business? If not, by what right does he complain if the priest of Molene resented this unwarranted and impertinent intrusion of a proselytising band of paid Bible distributors?'

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