

"If met by forces of the Crown  
 'Neath flags and banners royal;  
 We'll simply shoot the traitors down  
 For conduct so disloyal.  
 We'll feel a pang at every bang,  
 We'll weep with every volley—  
 But theirs the blame, the sin, the shame,  
 The treason and the folly.  
 In smiting wrong we must be strong,  
 Unpitying, and unsparing"—  
 "'Tis heaven's will," says Ballykill,  
 "The will of heaven," says Waring."

But there was really nothing more dangerous than stage thunder at the back of all this prancing and cavorting of the old war-horses of the lodge. 'Bally-kill' was in private life an estimable man, and personally popular with the Irish Nationalist Members of Parliament. Colonel Waring is hardly the stuff that dangerous rebels are made of. Colonel Saunderson—although he has a blustering air and a tongue as rough as a wood-rasp—was far from being the most violent and obstreperous of his Ulster confreres in 1886 and 1893. His speeches were even at times adorned with flashes of wit—like rubies glinting on a rough-sawn deal board. 'If we reside on our properties,' said he once of the Irish landlords, 'we are liable to be shot, and if we go out of range we are called absentees.' On another occasion (recorded in T. D. Sullivan's 'Recollections') he said: 'England is very fond of drying the tears of Ireland, but she always makes Ireland pay for the pocket-handkerchief.' Whether it is in the mixture of blood or not, we cannot say; but, as a class, Punch-and-Judy rebels of the 'yellow' sort seem to share only to a very small extent the typical Irishman's headlong love of 'a rale purty bit of a fight' where the blades fall and the bullets fly. The records of their history tend to show that they prefer to do their killing at long range, or with long odds in their favor—and best of all with the tongue or with the weapon that Samson used with such effect upon the brain-cases of the Philistines. In 1854, and again in 1857 and 1882, the Irish Nationalist newspapers taunted them with their frequent threats of armed rebellion, and invited them to prove their mettle and their 'loyalty' by sending, not their traditional hundred thousand 'ditch-liners,' but a mere regiment, or even a paltry battalion to fight for the Crown in the Crimea, or in India, or in Egypt. But the 'Fighting Bobs' of the lodge never sent so much as an awkward squad, or even a corporal's secretary. Stage thunder impresses the unaccustomed yokel. In the same way this recurrent vociferation about bayonet-points and 'ditch-lining' may fluster those who know nothing about the Irish phase of the agitations for Emancipation, Reform, Repeal, and Disestablishment. And well they know that all these 'hakas' or war-dances are 'mere sound and fury, signifying nothing.' There is a good deal of the spirit of the Vicar of Bray about the brethren's agitation against Home Rule. They and their co-religionists of the ascendancy party hold a practical monopoly of State pickings—of the political manna and quails. And they mean to stick to it as long as they can.

## THE GENERAL ELECTION

The General Election, which took place on Wednesday of last week, did not excite that keen interest which was very noticeable on previous occasions, owing to the fact that neither of the two principal political parties had any definite policy to place before the country. The Government relied on what they had done in the past to insure a renewal of the electors' confidence, whilst the main planks of the programme of the Opposition were vague generalities regarding the alleged extravagance and maladministration of the party in power. That the bulk of the legislation, placed on the Statute Book by the Government during their tenure of office, had the approval of the majority of electors was amply demonstrated by the disinclination of the leaders of the Opposition to suggest

that any of it would be repealed were they to come into power. There were no burning questions before the electors, and consequently the contests were carried out in the most orderly and decorous manner.

A stranger visiting Dunedin on Wednesday would not know that a general election was taking place were he not informed of the fact, so quiet were the streets until the time for the declaration of the polls had arrived. Owing to the legislation of last session dealing with the conduct of elections, the entrance to the booths was free from zealous partisans, who, in former times, pestered voters with directions how to vote, and in raucous voice proclaimed the virtues and qualifications of their candidate and the shortcomings of 'the other fellow.' What was true of Dunedin was also the case in other electorates. As in the case of all such contests, there were many prognostications beforehand as to the result, and on one point all the prophets were agreed, and that was the Ministerial party would be returned with a working majority, but the most sanguine Liberal was not prepared for the overwhelming disaster that overtook the Opposition forces. The Government did not lose a single seat in the whole Colony, while many of the strongest and best known of their opponents, such as Sir William Russell, Messrs. Duthie, Buchanan, and Herdman, failed to secure re-election. This was a surprise to many, but the greatest of all was the relegation to private life of Mr. Taylor, the leader of the New Liberals. Mr. Taylor's defeat was decisive and emphatic, and was certainly plain evidence that his tactics during the past session did not meet with the approval of many who were his friends at the previous election. The 'mana' of the late Mr. George Fisher helped to get his son in for one of the Wellington seats, so that impetuous young man, the only representative of the New Liberals, who now occupies a somewhat similar position to the sole survivor of the Nancy Brig, will have an opportunity within the next three years of making reparation for his blunders during his brief Parliamentary career. Universal regret was expressed at the defeat of Sir William Russell, who, of all men, could be least spared from Parliament. He was always courteous, fair-minded, and tolerant—a gentleman in the highest sense of the word, and a general favorite.

Many theories have been advanced as to the cause of the overwhelming disaster which befell the Opposition, but the most probable is that the people are quite satisfied with the present Administration, and do not see any necessity for change when the Colony is fairly prosperous. Whatever the cause, the fact remains that out of a House of 76 European members the Government have a party of 56, the Opposition 15, with 5 nondescript Liberals, who may be relied on to vote with the majority, as is the manner of rail-sitters generally. Had Mr. Seddon been less experienced and more ambitious, and had he the inclination to be the dictator which his opponents contend he is, such a continuous lease of power as he has had, and such an emphatic evidence of public confidence as he has just experienced might have turned his head and induced him to believe that he could do no wrong, but he is too shrewd an observer of the political barometer not to know that the multitude are fickle, and the hero of to-day may be the victim of the people's wrath on the morrow. Therefore, notwithstanding his great majority and the weakness of the Opposition, it is not likely that he will attempt any alarmist legislation in the future.

The professions and callings of the newly elected members are as follow: Farmers, or persons connected directly or indirectly with agricultural or pastoral pursuits, 22; lawyers, 10; newspaper proprietors, 5; merchants, 5; journalists, 4; storekeepers, 2; general mechanics, 2; mechanical engineers, 2; contractors, 2; bootmakers, 2, and one each of the following—timber merchant, sawmiller, hotel proprietor, native interpreter, insurance canvasser, company promoter, landbroker, clerk, dyer, compositor, mercer, stationer's assistant, carpenter, surveyor, mariner, mining engineer, school teacher, tinsmith, company director, butcher.

As far as we have been able to learn from the imperfect biographical sketches published, about 33 of the members were born in New Zealand, or arrived in the Colony at a very early age, 15 in England, 12 in Scotland, 6 in Ireland, 2 in India, 2 in Victoria, 2 in Tasmania, and one in each of the following countries—Germany, South Australia, Samoa, Wales.

Sixty-three members of the last Parliament secured re-election, whilst of the 13 new members 11 enter Parliament for the first time. The electors of the North Island were evidently more desirous of change in their representatives than those of the South, as they returned 9 new members against 4 by the latter.

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