

if matters have been altered since, must we not look for other factors than a wounded religious feeling? This supposition is at least plausible.

It is quite true to say that this favorable enactment was obtained through the 'unique and extraordinary popularity' which surrounds Right Rev. Dr. Favier, the Catholic Bishop of Peking, whether in Court or in the crowd. Moreover, I freely admit that M. Pichon, the French ambassador, did help much towards the success of these negotiations. But I ask our uncharitable opponents whether they would growl so loudly against these 'rights and privileges,' had they been obtained, as in our case, by mere persuasion, through the medium of Dr. McArthur, with the help of Sir Claude McDonald, the British ambassador? Most evidently not only they would not refuse such favors for fear of provoking a revolt, but they would be praising to the skies the happy instruments of such a peaceful and flattering triumph. What is England now doing in South Africa? Simply trying to obtain, *per fas et nefas*, civil rights for the oppressed Uitlanders; where persuasion has failed, sheer force and might are now used to crush a handful of determined Boers. What would the same Britishers say if M. Pichon, following in the steps of Sir Alfred Milner, had declared war on the Chinese to uphold in China the foreigners' rights, and conquer by bloodshed what he managed to secure by mere diplomacy.

This is my final remark. It is an egregious mistake to suppose that the Boxers, the Triads, the Great-Knives, the Black Flags and the White Nenuphars date their origin from the issue of the decree referred to. Every good student of Chinese affairs knows that all these secret societies are more political than religious. Some of them aim openly at the overthrow of the present Tartar dynasty and seize every possible opportunity which is likely to further their ends. Others, like the Boxers, represent in China the opposition to European interference. For years and years Dr. Favier and M. Pichon have been the only Europeans living in China who seemed to grasp the incoming danger and who warned the Powers to be 'on the alert.' Tung-fu-siang and Prince Tuan, who are inspiring and leading the Boxers, aim at nothing else but the eradication of everything foreign in China. Before long we may hear of their attempts to usurp the Chinese throne, and then woe to every foreigner without any distinction!

As long as the Catholic or Protestant missionaries were left alone, there have been no general uprisings, but only some local or provincial persecutions, soon checked by the wisdom and tact of our consuls. But when John Chinaman has seen his ports besieged by our threatening fleets, his name proscribed, his lands cut up by railways, and his very body attacked by the leopard, the bear and a host of other hungry animals ready to dissect his anatomy and to divide it between themselves, he has resolved not to surrender it without a struggle. Would you expect him to wrap his head in his ancestors' flag and to wait quietly for the final blow which is to sever it?

To any unbiassed mind the 'real origin of the Chinese troubles lies in the ambition and covetousness of the Powers, who, for the sake of their mercantile interests, strive to convert China into a vast market-field. Whatever the Budget may state to the contrary may perhaps prejudice a few empty-headed people against the Catholic Church and its zealous missionaries. But if this hitherto esteemed and esteemed paper cannot afford grounding its opinion on better authorities than the Kunges, the M'Arthurs and the Elliott Griffiths, its future must be pitied. Where giants like Celsus, Julian the Apostate, Voltaire and Rousseau have signally failed, pigmies like those named above cannot hope to succeed. The Church of Christ can well smile at their bold impudence, and wade her way, through many struggles, to other victories, bearing in mind, as a sufficient consolation, these prophetic words of her divine Master and Spouse: 'Blessed are ye, when they shall revile you and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake' (Matth. v. ii).

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'THE SHAUGHRAUN.'

It is rarely that such a large audience has been seen in the Princess Theatre, Dunedin, as was present on Wednesday night of last week, when the members of the Catholic Literary Society, assisted by several friends, produced Boucicault's evergreen drama 'The Shaughraun.' The house was packed in every part, and even standing room was scarcely obtainable. The majority of our readers are conversant with the piece, and have very likely seen it staged with the versatile author himself in the title rôle, or perhaps the late Grattan Riggs portraying in his own inimitable style the happy-go-lucky Conn. To these the idea of amateurs producing such a piece might seem over ambitious. It would be hardly correct to say that the production under notice came up to the high-water mark of professionalism, but, on the other hand, it is no exaggeration to claim it to be a really capital amateur performance, in which there were few, if any, weak points. The object of the production was to assist the funds of the St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage, South Dunedin, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, and this no doubt helped to a great extent in bringing together such a large audience, as there are few people in Dunedin who do not know of and fully recognise the good work carried on in that institution. But apart from this, a good many persons went there because they wanted a few hours' legitimate amusement, and one and all admitted that they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. If they attended with the determination to overlook deficiencies in acting or staging they were pleasantly disappointed, for no allowances were required, the play going with a splendid swing from start to finish that put it on a plane with the best productions by local talent. The title rôle was filled to perfection by Mr H. McCormack, whose conception of the character was a revelation even to those who were acquainted with the actor's histrionic abilities. Conn is the central figure—the life of the piece it might be said—and no better portrayal of the happy-go-lucky Irishman has been seen on the stage here for a long time. Mr McCormack's acting was distinguished by spontaneity, rollicking humor, and a complete effacement of self, which gained for him rounds of applause. Miss McLauchlan's presentation of Arte O'Neill was marked by a naturalness that gained for her efforts the warm appreciation of the audience. A character that was filled with great vivacity and finish was that of Clare Ffolliott by Miss Rose Blaney. Miss M. Blaney, as Moya, was a very graceful and winning *colleen*, and nothing could be more natural than the presentation of Conn's mother by Miss A. Heley, who made a decided success of the character. Coming back to the male characters Mr. Pavletich's fine stage presence fitted the part of Robert Ffolliott to perfection, and Mr. James Hill made a dignified Father Dolan. As Captain Molineux Mr B. G. Stevens was highly successful. The unpopular part of Harvey Duff, fell to Mr. R. Phillips, who played the difficult and unpopular part of the police spy with a marked degree of ability. Those who have had any acquaintance with a class which is at the present time almost extinct in Ireland—the squireens—will readily admit that Mr. J. Black gave a very faithful representation of the aggressive, bumptious, and unscrupulous Corry Kinchella, his acting being distinctly good. The minor parts, which were taken by Misses Clancy, Hanrahan, Winnie McCormack, and Messrs. Campbell, Pastoreh, D. Beard, Ward, M. Coughlan, L. McCormack and others, were admirably filled. Little Miss Winnie McCormack's clever dancing was received with the strongest manifestations of popular approval. It might be truly said that the whole of the actors were letter perfect, the absence of which is often a serious hindrance to the success of a play. The Kaikorai Band, under the direction of Bandmaster Stratton, marched from the Octagon to the Theatre, during which they played some choice selections. In conclusion it is only right to mention that the duties of coach and stage manager were admirably filled by Mr. T. Anthony.

'The Shaughraun' was repeated on Saturday night when it was again witnessed by a large audience.

The Dramatic Club and their friends who assisted in the production have been warmly congratulated on the great success which has attended what might be termed their two first public performances of an entire drama.

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