

of the question of general distress, and met its special and urgent claims. Our association appeals for immediate and national aid on behalf of another class, not included here—the destitute families of some three hundred men slain during the insurrection, of fifteen executed by Courts-martial, of one hundred and thirty-four condemned to penal servitude, of two thousand six hundred and fifty deported without trial, and of about four hundred awaiting sentence by Courts-martial. In all, there have been to this date three thousand two hundred cases of released captives adjudged innocent, but not compensated for their imprisonment. It adds to the urgency of the appeal that many of these have been deprived of their employment, and that some of the female relatives of accused men have, though entirely distinct and without reproach, been heartlessly dismissed from their occupation, and despoiled of their livelihood. The appeal added that 'subscriptions are urgently needed.' Later, a further appeal was made by the association, giving additional particulars of the necessities of the situation. We quote a portion: 'The Provisional Executive states that while the amount received shows a very generous response to the appeal, it is not more than is urgently needed. On the week ending June 24, grants of over £700 were made, but the large number of country cases, which have up to this been met by temporary local assistance, are gradually coming on the list of weekly grants by the National Aid Association, and in many of the city cases the grants have not been hitherto up to the amount which the Executive feels should be made. To cover all cases in the matter that the Irish people evidently desire would involve an enormous expenditure, and even to meet them to the point of genuine necessity must require the issue by the association of weekly grants to a total of not less than £1000 a week.' Finally, New Zealand Irishmen had before them the earnest appeal issued by the Very Rev. Father Bowden, Administrator of the Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, and treasurer of the fund: 'We make appeal to all human hearts, whose noble compassion can reach over every obstacle to redress wrongs and alleviate suffering, that they may co-operate in this merciful and righteous work. For the sake of our country we make it, of our Nation's honor, and of our own, so that its high repute for justice shall be transmitted by our generation unsullied to future and happier times.'

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With such facts and appeals before them, overseas Irishmen could not but recognise that there was a clamant call for help and succor. The effort to provide relief was in itself so essentially humane and charitable a movement that even papers that were not specially friendly to Ireland might fairly have been expected to allow it to pass without comment—and that has, in point of fact, been the attitude of the vast majority of New Zealand newspapers. There has been in the newspaper offices of the Dominion a sufficient sense of the fitness of things to recognise that the affair was, after all, a matter that mainly concerned Irishmen, and that if they chose to send money to assist their own kith and kin in the hour of need that was purely their own concern. Almost the only paper from which churlish and officious interference has been experienced is the Christchurch *Press*, which seems constitutionally unable to repress its anti-Irish animus, even at a time when Irishmen—from New Zealand as well as from Ireland—are nobly giving their lives for the Empire. The *Press* offers opposition to the relief movement in a manner that is at once impertinent and insulting. The *Press* is pleased to disapprove of this work of charity and humanity because, it alleges, there is 'no actual evidence of distress justifying the appeal.' The facts which we have set forth above, from representative clergy and others on the spot, are a sufficient refutation of that contention. Only the most hopeless prejudice, or an even more hopeless ignorance of the subject, could explain the publication of such an utterly unwarranted statement. The paper does, indeed, attempt to quote authorities—of a kind. One is the

London *Spectator*, which the *Press* admits is 'a strongly anti-Nationalist paper,' whose 'possible extravagance of language' must be allowed for; and the other is an anonymous 'Ulsterwoman,' who writes to this 'strongly anti-Nationalist paper.' Has the intelligence department of the *Press* office really sunk so low that it is ready to accept any old wife's story as sufficient ground on which to base condemnation, not only of the Bishop of Christchurch, but of the whole Catholic hierarchy of Australasia? If so, criticism is disarmed, and the case is one that calls for pity and commiseration. The *Press* further objects to relief being sent from Christchurch on the ground that the authorities were not named to whom the money was to be made payable, and that there was a danger, and even a likelihood, that the fund would be used 'for the furtherance of political agitation.' As our readers have long ago been informed, the authority to whom all the money collected in Australasia is being sent is his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin—an ecclesiastic who has a standing second to none in the whole realm of the Catholic world. As before, the authority quoted for proof of this alleged danger is the anonymous old lady, 'Ulsterwoman,' who shows her knowledge of the subject by not being even able to give the name of the Irish National Aid Association correctly. Against her maundering and anonymous statements in regard to the money going to 'Sinn Feiners in prison' we may set the official declaration of the association, issued and signed by the Executive Committee and published in the Irish papers of June 6: 'As our appeal, published in your paper, has shown, we are dealing only with the cases of relatives of those who lost their life or liberty as the result of the insurrection. No grant is paid until the case has been investigated by members of a large committee of ladies which is working in co-operation with us, and which has now all the machinery necessary to enable a fair and proper distribution to be made.' As we have already stated, the treasurer of the association is the Very Rev. Administrator of the Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, whose name ought to stand at least as high as that of any anonymous 'Ulsterwoman.' The *Press* professes to be impelled to its ill-natured and small-minded attitude by a sense of 'paramount duty to the Empire.' These relief collections have been made through all Australia and nearly the whole of New Zealand, and nothing dreadful has happened. Christchurch is almost the last to take up the movement, and then—the *Press* comes bravely forward to save the Empire! Really, the Christchurch paper takes itself too seriously. We have all laughed at the *Skibbereen Eagle*, which kept a watchful eye on the Czar of Russia; but we have just as entertaining journalistic jokes nearer home.

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As we have said, the *Press's* manner of fault-finding was at once impertinent and insulting, suggesting as it did that the Bishops and Archbishops of Australasia were so devoid of ordinary intelligence as to send large sums of money away without really knowing to whom they were sending it, and implying that they needed to be guided in the way they should go from an office in Cathedral square. So far as the Christchurch collection is concerned, the only effect of the paper's interference will be to give the movement a notable fillip—for Irishmen, of all people, will be the last to accept dictation from such a source. But the paper itself remains to be dealt with; and before these lines appear, the meeting of protest called for Tuesday night will have had something to say on the matter. We hope the discussion will not end in the mere passing of resolutions. There is only one vulnerable spot in money-making concerns such as our daily newspapers now are. The sense of 'paramount duty to the Empire'—which furnishes such a convenient pretext for the Christchurch daily—in a two-penny half-penny 'crisis' such as the sending of a few hundred pounds to relieve Irish distress, will undergo considerable modification if the paper experiences a substantial drop in its circulation.