

could be speedily discovered. What have we Irish done already in this war? We have supported it from the outset. We have done all we could to ensure its success in the teeth of the bitterest official opposition in every quarter. We have submitted to the ghastly misgovernment of our country and to all the needless vexations of so-called war measures without protest. We have contributed far more than our fair share of war taxation without complaint. We have sent the flower of our manhood to fight and die without either reward or recognition. We have done all this—first, because we believed in the justice of the war; and, secondly, because we believed in the promises of English statesmen. The character of the war remains the same; but through monstrous mismanagement it has brought us infinitely greater sorrow and loss than we ever could have anticipated. The promises of English statesmen turn out to be scraps of paper; and what do we Irish get in return for our sacrifices? Nothing but abuse—gross, cowardly, dishonest abuse. When I think of our glorious Irish regiments and their acknowledged deeds of unsurpassed heroism, of our gallant Irish sailors who, for two terrible years, have helped to guard the Empire in stress and storm and danger from the Arctic to the Antarctic, when I think of Flanders and France and Gallipoli, and Serbia and Mesopotamia and Egypt; of the landing at the Dardanelles, with its awful toll of Irish lives; of our splendid 10th Irish Division recklessly thrown away by British incompetency; of the hundreds of Irish sailors who perished in the Jutland battle—300 of them in two ships alone—when I think of the desolate Irish homes, of the unnumbered Irish fathers and mothers, and sons and daughters, who have bravely and uncomplainingly given what they loved best on earth to the service of the Empire—I ask myself: What spirit possesses the anti-Irish, when not even our children's sacrifice will propitiate them?

THE DUBLIN RELIEF FUND AND THE PRESS

GREAT DEMONSTRATION IN CHRISTCHURCH.

VIGOROUS PROTEST BY BISHOP BRODIE.

(From our own correspondent.)

As briefly announced in the last issue of the *Tablet*, the Hibernian Hall was crowded to its utmost inch of space, even the platform, ante-rooms, and outside passage ways being invaded by the surging throng, which assembled to enter an emphatic protest against the strictures and criticism of the Christchurch *Press* newspaper, levelled against his Lordship Bishop Brodie and the promoters of a previous gathering, which met to organise a relief fund to assist the starving women and children of Dublin.

Prolonged and deafening cheers greeted his Lordship the Bishop on arrival, accompanied by the Very Rev. Dean Regnault, S.M. Indescribable enthusiasm pervaded Tuesday's meeting, which was otherwise orderly in the extreme, and a credit to the Catholic body, and a compliment to its self-restraint, in the face of a most unwarranted attack on its episcopal head.

His Lordship said that they were present in response to the invitation he made on Sunday morning when he stated that he would make some reference to matters that had been causing some comment during the past few days. He deemed them matters not for pulpit reference, but matters which could, perhaps, be dealt with in a hall like the one in which they were, and in an assembly such as that present. His Lordship then called upon Dean Regnault to move the first motion.

Very Rev. Dean Regnault, who was received with cheers, expressed regret at not being able to be present at the previous meeting, but would now re-affirm personally all that had been affirmed on that occasion. He then moved the following resolution—That notwithstanding the criticism levelled against the Dublin Distress Relief Fund movement, this meeting of Catholics

upholds the merit of the work, and pledges itself to do its utmost to make the appeal a success.' ('Hear, hear,' and applause.) He said that he, a Frenchman, was present now out of gratitude to Irishmen who, in the early days of the war, had covered themselves in a special manner, and also the British Army, with military glory. (Continued applause.) One regiment bore the name of the city whose distress they were present to discuss—the Dublin Fusiliers. (Applause.) Dean Regnault gave statistics regarding the poverty and destitution in Ireland, and said that the condition of affairs was such that the National Government in New Zealand, which they had nothing much to thank for, would have taken prompt steps to remedy. They had been told that Ireland was at present in a very prosperous condition, but everyone knew that great misery could be often found side by side with great prosperity. Mr. James Douglas, who was an honest journalist, had testified to the fact that Ireland had not benefited through the golden flood of war expenditure. When the speaker went through Ireland recently he failed to see any munition factories. They were, he said, aware how the distress in Dublin had been caused, and it was not for him to say whether those who caused that distress were right or wrong—it was not for him to judge either the prudence or the folly of their conduct. Those men fought bravely—they fought a clean fight, and that was more than could be said of those fighting at the front on the east of France. (Applause.) They had fought a clean fight, and showed that they loved their country—loved it, perhaps, too well, perhaps not sufficiently wisely, but they loved their country more than their lives, and they died the death of Christian men. (Continued applause.) It had been stated that they had no authority to show that there was distress in Dublin: Why, they had the authority of the Archbishop of Dublin—(A voice: 'That's enough')—and that was enough for them all. (Applause.) The Archbishop of Dublin had cabled to the archbishops and bishops of America and Australia. In Melbourne, where the Archbishop of Melbourne presided over the meeting called to discuss the distress in Dublin, a sum of over £4000 was raised. (Applause.) The speaker having dealt with the statements made by the *Press* and having paid a high tribute to the Irish soldiers at the front, concluded by expressing the hope that the audience would demonstrate by the generosity of their contributions that they did not agree with the estimate of the reality of Ireland's needs held by the *Press*.

Mr. H. H. Loughnan seconded the motion and said that he had been asked to do so at short notice. He was only too glad to have an opportunity of doing so, and at the same time expressing the same belief which he had always had of the existence of dire distress in Dublin. He could not account for the fact that any newspaper of repute—and they were proud of their newspapers in Christchurch—should have thought that a large body, like the body that had assembled last Thursday night, was in the least degree likely to lose its head about the question then under discussion, or to be led to believe in an imaginary state of distress in Dublin. They knew perfectly well—it was not new to them to hear of distress in Dublin. They were well satisfied of its existence, and that it called for their help and succor. They did not hesitate to express and make known their feelings in that respect. (Applause.) It would have been—well, more courteous to the commonsense of the meeting to have accepted as a fact that the meeting was satisfied, and that there was good reason to be satisfied, that the distress in Dublin was very serious, and of a very dire and terrible nature.

The motion was then put to the meeting and carried. (Loud cheers.)

The second motion of the evening was then proposed by Mr. F. J. Doolan, who moved—'That this meeting expresses its sympathy with those relatives of fallen and wounded soldiers who were present at the Dublin Relief meeting of last Thursday, but who, notwithstanding their sacrifice for the Empire, had to bear their share of the criticism of the *Press* of last Friday.'