

some maritime cities in Ireland; but never more did they dream of conquest. That design was overthrown for ever on the bloody plain of Clontarf.

It was, as the historian called it truly, "a conflict of heroes." There was no flinching on either side, and on each side fell nearly every commander of note who had entered the battle! The list of the dead is a roll of nobility, Danish and Irish; amongst the dead being the brave Caledonian chiefs, the great Stewards of Mar and Lennox, who had come from distant Alba to fight on the Irish side that day!

But direst disaster of all—most woeful in its ulterior results affecting the fate and fortunes of Ireland—was the slaughter of the reigning family: Brian himself, Morrogh, his eldest son and destined successor, and his grandson, "the youthful Torlagh," eldest child of Morrogh—three generations cut down in the one day upon the same field of battle!

"The fame of the event went out through all nations. The chronicles of Wales, of Scotland, and of Mar; the annals of Ademar and Marianus; the sagas of Denmark and the Isles, all record the event. The Norse settlers in Caithness saw terrific visions of Valhalla 'the day after the battle'" "The annals state that Brian and Morrogh both lived to receive the last Sacraments of the Church, and that their remains were conveyed by the monks to Swords (near Dublin), and thence to Armagh by the Archbishop; and that their obsequies were celebrated for 12 days and nights with great splendor by the clergy of Armagh; after which the body of Brian was deposited in a stone coffin on the north side of the high altar in the cathedral, the body of his son being interred on the south side of the same church. The remains of Torlagh and of several of the other chieftains were buried in the old churchyard of Kilmainham, where the shaft of an Irish cross still marks the spot."

Leeston

A very fine memorial window was unveiled at the Leeston church at Christmas (writes our travelling correspondent). It was erected to the memory of one of the oldest parishioners, Mr. Joseph Campbell, and is placed in the north transept as a centre figure. It represents the subject of the Sacred Heart, and is a very tasteful and artistic example of the work of Messrs. Bradley Brothers, Christchurch, the well-known firm of experts in this line.

The run is on the pure "GOLDEN RULE" Soap in pretty coloured cartons, depicting New Zealanders lifting the world into love and harmony. Price 1/3. Wonderful value. Indispensable for Xmas use. All stores.

Church of Our Lady Queen of Peace, Roxburgh

TO THE CATHOLIC PEOPLE OF NEW ZEALAND.

Every Catholic heart these days beats with gratitude to God, the Giver of all good gifts, for His blessing of Peace, which we, in common with the great Catholic soldier, Marshal Foch, believe has come in answer to prayer. Catholic faith and instinct urge us to show our heartfelt gratitude in some act of piety. May I suggest as a most suitable thanksgiving an offering towards the building of the Church of Our Lady Queen of Peace? This church is now being built.

REV. D. O'NEILL,
Roxburgh.

CONSTITUTIONAL AGITATION

(By D. MACDONNELL, in the *Catholic Bulletin*.)

We are constantly told by politicians that many and great victories have been gained by Ireland over England by what is known as "constitutional agitation." They produce a record of such victories, generally beginning with Catholic Emancipation and winding up with the Laborers' Cottages.

When a doctrine is acceptable to a large number of people, though acceptable perhaps for widely different reasons, it is extraordinary what easy credence it obtains; and this theory of the success of constitutional agitation in Ireland is pleasant to many people. The honest but timid patriot is pleased to believe such is the case, while the man who finds it his interest to uphold the British connection is delighted to point out how the country has only to make known her grievances and declare her wishes by constitutional means to have the one redressed and the other supplied. It is a doctrine which justifies the apathetic, brands the more passionate as irrational, and has the special advantage of placing England in the position of a just judge, only needing that the case should be clearly stated to command that justice be done. No wonder that such a doctrine has been accepted with little inquiry.

Now no one can, nor desires to, deny that concessions, beneficial to the bulk of the Irish people, have been frequently extorted from reluctant British Governments by the moral pressure of organised Irish opinion: but there is one point which is, I think, habitually overlooked: every concession so gained (with one exception to which I will refer later) has been gained by one section or class of the Irish people over, and at the expense of, another section or class of the nation; with the one exception, England has not paid. The solitary exception, the bright, particular star in the dark sky of Ireland's history, was the national legislative independence wrested in 1782, by Grattan and the Volunteers, wrested when England was exhausted by her unsuccessful struggle with America and filled with fears at the possibility of a French invasion. In no international treaty would guarantees be required more ample than those then given by England as to the permanence of this independence, yet 18 years later it was torn to pieces.

We have, however, numerous instances of agitations, organised for some local or national (not international) object, winning their way when they had grown powerful enough to cause disquiet or inconvenience to our British rulers; or even when two organisations in Ireland are struggling in rivalry, whichever party is the stronger, better equipped or better organised, is fairly safe to gain the support of England—always assuming that it is a question which affects Ireland *exclusively*. If the transfer of the mail service from Queenstown, which occurred just before the outbreak of the present war, had been a question between two Irish ports—let us say, between Queenstown and Galway—England would have stood aloof until she had seen which town had the larger measure of popular support, then thrown her vote on that side; and the triumphant seaport would have hailed it as "another constitutional success." In the question of the mail transfer English interests were affected, so England took another course. In spite of the overwhelming legal rights of the Irish town, in spite of the incontrovertible and practically uncontradicted evidence of naval experts, England carried off the "unconstitutional" victory by the primitive, disavowed but still secretly loved method that—

"... they shall take who have the power,
And they shall keep who can."

Of the "Constitutional triumphs" over which Ireland is so often bidden to rejoice, one of the greatest was the Catholic Emancipation Act. It was a triumph gained from a bitterly hostile Government, a bigoted Ascendancy party and an opposing native aristocracy.

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