

the cavity for which he had designed it, and then, resting his wrists against the table, with the knife and fork sticking up erect, as though he meant to act on the defensive: "It makes me always love my religion when I find myself feasting on a good beefsteak or joint of mutton, while others around me are keeping the fast on some dried codfish or salt mackerel; it's then that I bless the memory of that jolly dog, Luther, who declared against fasting and all such tomfooleries, in the name of all sensible people who were to come after him—you and I amongst others, Mrs. Malone."

This sally was rewarded with a gracious smile, and so the matter rested. Cormac did not feel himself called upon to take it up for discussion, and for Harry it had little interest, for he never troubled himself about such things.

Meanwhile Alice walked with her companion to her new home, and by the time she arrived there she was perfectly acquainted with Mrs. Dempsey's domestic arrangements, the names and qualities of the four girls who were to be her companions, a due proportion of good being assigned to the narrator's self. If Alice had been better acquainted with fabulary lore, she would have considered Margaret Hanlon as taking to herself the lion's share in the distribution of the virtues of the household; but she knew nothing of the royal beast's recorded monopoly, so she innocently thought to herself, "What a good girl she must be, when she puts up with such ill-treatment from the others!"

(To be continued.)

Evening Memories

(By WILLIAM O'BRIEN.)

CHAPTER XI.—SUCCESS AND UNEXPECTED DIFFICULTY (1886).

United Ireland was now in the full tide and torrent of its power. It had a steady weekly circulation of 75,000 to 100,000 copies, meaning not far from 500,000 readers, in addition to a circulation for its literary sister publication, *The Shamrock*, which by this time seldom fell below 50,000. It may be to the discredit of Irish soft-heartedness that the high-water mark of the sales of *United Ireland* should be reached with the number that presented a colored portrait of Gladstone (the circulation passed 125,000, and was only stopped by the failure of the litho machines to deliver any more), but the fact is, to my thinking, a much more scathing commentary upon England's incapacity either to gauge Irish feeling or to repay it. To the wonder of all beholders a journal whose every number might be its last and every member of its staff a prisoner—which had no capital except Parnell's signature for an overdraft on the Hibernian Bank—whose overdraft mounted to £3000 during the years while it was wrestling for its life against innumerable suppressions, gaolings, and prosecutions, civil and criminal—had not only cancelled its indebtedness to the Bank, but was attaining a commercial prosperity which its founders would have hailed with grisly laughter, had it been foretold to them. In the year we have now reached, I find that following the Auditor's annual report, I was able to forward a cheque for £2000 to Parnell for the national funds and to leave a considerable sum to our credit in the Hibernian Bank.

But it was a prosperity built upon the crust of a volcano. Every number contained ample material for prosecutions for sedition, for libels (all the worse for being well-founded) upon powerful officers of State and great landowners, and open and calculated defiance of all law which was not of the people's making, or at choice for the summary suppression and breaking up of type and machinery with which the Castle never hesitated to visit more defenceless Nationalist journals. We were now faced with a never-ending Coercion code, under which it was calculated that, as the responsible publisher, I incurred penalties extending over 1500 years of imprisonment, had the Coercionists consistently enforced their own law in all its rigor. Had *United Ireland* been suppressed *manu militari* when it promulgated the Plan of Campaign, or during the next following months while it was uncompromisingly preaching it to the country, it was not to be doubted that a quite legitimately commercial newspaper like the *Freeman's Journal* must have instantly ceased to report the meetings and the speeches by which the conta-

gion was spread, and the history of the next five years might have been one of practically uncontested sway for "firm and resolute government"—uncontested, that is to say, except by a no less "firm and resolute" régime of bullets and dynamite.

Maybe we were spared because the new Chief Secretary, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, underrated the influence of *United Ireland* with the country, and believed, as even some of our own disheartened colleagues were whispering that we "were flogging a dead horse"; maybe his Dublin Castle advisers were rather disposed, from gruesome experiences of their own, to give him exaggerated forewarnings against treading again the bitter Calvary of Forster and Spencer. Our hopes of immunity during the incubation of the new movement were, at all events, based upon audacity and ever-increasing audacity in assailing a government bereft of the smallest moral authority or consent from the governed—upon a fairly well-known recklessness as to personal consequences—and upon the knowledge that the paper spoke with the unconquerable strength of a race both for many thousands of peasants for whose cabins it offered a trustier protection than the blunderbuss of the old agrarian wars, and for the young generation for whom it was for the moment the vanguard and the hottest fire-centre of the deathless battle against the power of England.

That was not all. The newer generation, with youth's happy gift for imagining themselves the discoverers of America, will not, I hope, be over-shocked to find most of their new world shining in the pages of *United Ireland* more than a quarter of a century ago. Our opening number contained, as one of its special features, the first of a series of papers on "Irish trade for the Irish towns," by one who has since made his mark in the history of the Irish industrial movement, Mr. T. P. Gill. Peter O'Leary, the forerunner of the prophets of the Irish Laborers in a wilderness where there was then naught but camel's hair and wild honey for their portion, had a column to himself in which to expound those claims of Labor which are now in everybody's mouth. The Gaelic Athletic Association was founded in our pages, and might never have grown to maturity under the blight of many foes without the special department which was placed weekly at the disposal of its founder, Michael Cusack. One of the earliest enthusiasts of the Gaelic Language League was among our constant contributors. *Nec deerant epulis rosa*. Even in the clash of arms while, like William of Deloraine, we had to

"Carve at the meal with gloves of steel

And drink the red wine through the helmet barr'd,"

the dainty charms of literature were not altogether unworshipped. A series of exquisite Irish historical cameos which might well be disinterred for the students of a happier day, was contributed by young Justin Huntly McCarthy. Our nest of singing birds and romancists contained not a few of those who were the pride of an older day, or are the joy of a later springtime—Charles Kickham, "Finola," T. C. Irwin, Frank Fahy, Roso Kavanagh, Ethna Carbery, Katherine Tynan, Una Taylor (daughter of the famous author of *Philip van Artevelde*), P. J. McCall, Charlotte O'Brien, Dora Sigerson, John Augustus O'Shea, Edmund Leamy, and many another of the bright company of *étoiles qui filent*.

Thus fortified with all that could impart the benediction of a nation, *United Ireland* acted with a boldness which no newspaper, except John Mitchell's, ever approached before or since, openly and of set purpose, on the principle that the only way of obtaining good laws for Ireland was by breaking bad ones. We did not hesitate to exhort juries, and with entire success, to "make true deliverance" between the Crown and its victims in the spirit in which the London jurors acquitted the Seven Bishops, rather than with any regard for the technicalities of venal Crown Prosecutors; nay, we instigated the Royal Irish Constabulary themselves to imitate General Buller's "dispensing power" in their own department by throwing down their rifles if called upon to assist in iniquitous evictions—advice, doubtless, punishable whenever the Government chose, with any penalty from penal servitude to the sharp services of a firing platoon. And still the firm and resolute Chief Secretary made no sign, but like all the

E. S. Robson

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