

that he showed great disinterestedness and honesty. The only reason assigned by Mr. Gray for not taking office was simply that he would not allow anyone to say that in the promulgation of his principles on this question he had been actuated by a desire for office, and that he would serve the cause without office, while, perhaps, he could not serve it with office. He declined my offer I believe on the highest patriotic grounds."

In 1863 Mr. Gray came to Otago, and it was so ordered that his career should terminate. The people of Victoria subscribed a considerable sum of money which they desired him to accept as a testimonial of their regard and respect; but influenced by the same motives which induced him to put from him the office of Solicitor-General, he declined to accept the proffered gift. For some time he practised in Dunedin as a barrister; but recognising his merits and great fitness for the position, the Government conferred upon him the appointment, which he held to his death, of first District Judge of the gold-fields. Here his talents had full sway, and his evenly balanced judicial mind was fully developed. Higher office still might have been his—a seat on the Bench of the Supreme Court of New Zealand was offered to and refused by him. A similar offer came across the water from Victoria, and that too he declined. His self-estimate never attained the height of the estimation wherein others held him; for a more truly modest man never breathed the breath of life. Moreover, he had an unconquerable horror of accepting any position which would entail upon him the dreaded responsibility of depriving his fellow men of their personal liberty even for a single day; and it would have been fairly impossible for him to have ever pronounced sentence of death. From these things he shrank, preferring to tread the even tenor of his honest humble life, unfettered by such weighty responsibilities as these.

Two years ago the Government, aware of his failing health, offered to bestow upon him his full pension, if he thought fit to retire from the Bench. But he refused. To himself it seemed that he had no right to accept the favour, because he had not then served the full time required by the statute to legally entitle him to a pension. In May next that time would have arrived, but it was decreed that he should not live till its accomplishment. Worn almost to a skeleton, and unable to take enough refreshment for the maintenance of existence, yet, with a spirit undismayed, he persistently lingered on, doing his duty well and faithfully to the end. He started on his last circuit tour, holding Courts at Naseby and Queenstown, and thence returning to Clyde and Lawrence. When at Clyde, so ill was he that he had to be taken in a buggy from the Dunstan Hotel to the Court-house—a few hundred yards distant—and when he went on thence he was compelled by his infirmity to stop half-way at Roxburgh, and proceed by another coach. At Lawrence his weakness was so painfully obvious that his friends endeavoured to dissuade him from going to the Court-house at all. But his strong will and ever-present overpowering sense of duty predominated over physical pain and corporeal weakness. Here is the testimony of the local journal touching the last appearance of Wilson Gray upon the judicial Bench:—"On Wednesday last he summoned up almost superhuman strength, and held a sitting of the District Court at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. He was conveyed from the Commercial Hotel, well wrapped up in clothes, in a buggy to the Court-house, when he was literally borne in men's arms to and from the Bench. He was in a very weak state, and happily there was no business except of a mere formal character. A bankrupt of the name of Hugh Irwin, of the Blue Spur, was discharged unopposed; and the Havilah Hill Goldmining Co.'s winding-up case was further postponed. His Honor spoke very feebly; at times his mind appeared to wander, and he apparently had just strength enough to perform this, his last official act."

He has died in harness. Of his career in Otago, what need is there to speak? Who amongst us has not recognised his worth, his ability, his honesty, his simple modesty, his unassuming demeanour? Who is there that has not known him, who has not learned to love and respect him, and does not now deplore his loss? From the highest to the lowest—from the humble tenants of sod-huts to the occupants of stately mansions—wherever the news of Wilson Gray's decease may penetrate, an universal feeling of sorrow will prevail. Not in Otago only, nor in New Zealand even; but also in Victoria, in Ireland, in America—in every place and country that he has ever adorned by his living presence. He has gone from us, and we remain to mourn; but his life has been a practical lesson from which all may learn wisdom, and his influence will be felt for many years, long after his mortal frame has returned to the dust.—*Guardian.*

There has been instituted lately in Belgium a reward of 10,000 francs, to be given to the colliery owner who in the decennial period ending 1883, shall have had the smallest number of workmen killed by explosions. This is an example let us hope, which will be imitated in this country. To a wealthy coalowner the money value of such a reward is of course of no consequence; but no one, however high his position, should be unambitious of the honourable distinction which such a mark would confer.

Mgr. Ceconi, the new Archbishop of Florence, was preconized on December 21. His Holiness would not hear of his refusal to accept the position, which he had done through excess of modesty. The Pope told him that he had selected him years ago to be the historian of his reign, and that he had now chosen him to be Archbishop of Florence. The new archbishop bowed and said that the will of his Holiness could not be gainsaid. The Pontiff then presented him with a magnificent gold cross mounted with diamonds, and announced that he would consecrate him himself on December 21.

VIENNA.—A daughter of General Arthur Georgey, who distinguished himself in the Hungarian Revolution of '49, has become a Catholic.

SKETCHES OF DUBLIN IN THE LAST CENTURY.

STORIES of the district of Essex Bridge abound.

Let any one cast his eye over the Ordnance Map of the city and note a space on the southern bank of the river, beginning at Westmoreland street on the east and ending at Fishamble street on the west, the southerly line being marked by Castle street, Cork Hill, and Dame street. This space in the heart of the map is no bigger than the blade of a good sized pocket-knife, but it represents a region which was in old times a throbbing, straining world of social and political life.

From our observatory on Grattan Bridge, we look to the City Hall, beholding the very spot where Henry II., in his pavilion of polished osiers, received the Irish kings and chiefs; and disgusted them by eating the flesh of cranes at his banquet. Close by was the famous mill-dam from which Dame Street got its name, and near at hand, on the present Cork Hill, stood the Church of Sainte Marie del Dam, containing in its wall the eastern gate of the city, surmounted by a niche with a statue of the Blessed Virgin. This gate was the spot where many a foeman stormed, and whence many a bold attack was driven back along the plain to the ships fast by the shores, leaving dead dying strewn upon the way.

It may be imagined that Cork Hill was named directly after Cork. Not at all. That would have been too Irish and ungenteel. Cork Hill was named after the Earl of Cork, an English adventurer, Robert Boyle, who, having failed to reach the bar in London, and being discontented with his earning as a law clerk, took it into his head to go to a foreign country. "It pleased the Almighty, by his divine providence," writes this audacious character, "to take me, I may say, just as it were by the hand, and lead me into Ireland." All he had was a matter of twenty pounds, a couple of suits of clothes, with a pair of black velvet breeches, laced, a rapier, and a dagger; but such use did he make of this limited stock-in-trade that, first marrying a Limerick widow with a dowry of five hundred a year, he went on "acquiring" lands so fast as to arouse his envious competitors to look into his hastily-gotten and suspiciously-kept fortune, and to charge him with criminal dishonesty. Queen Elizabeth, however, swore "by God's death" that he was innocent, made him clerk of the council in Munster, and created him Earl of Cork; so, having done his best to "suppress Popery" and root out the native Irish, or, at least, transplant them from the plains of Leinster to the wilds of Kerry—having, according to his countryman and fellow-immigrant, Sir Christopher Wandesforde, more violently and frequently than any one man in either kingdom since the suppression of abbeyes, "laid profane hands, hands of power, upon the Church and her possessions," the ex-law clerk died at last, after "raising such an honor and estate, and leaving such a family (he left four sons peers) as never any subject of these three kingdoms did."

On the high ground by the Castle—called after him Cork Hill—the prosperous adventurer built a lordly mansion, which after his death, became a seat of government, then, falling as he had risen, was devoted, as years rolled on, to coffee-selling, to duels, to fencing classes, to a literary academy, to a wild-beast show, to a cock-pit, till at last, something less than a century after King Death had rid poor Ireland of the Earl, we get a last glimpse of his lordly pleasure-house given up to an exhibition of "a painting by Raphael and several fleas tied by gold chains?"

This locality kept its hold on the height of fashion till close up to our century's date. When the Duke of Hamilton came to Dublin in 1755 with his beautiful Irish wife, Elizabeth Gunning, they lodged at the Eagle Tavern, on Cork Hill, and the street in front of it was blocked up by eager crowds, resolved to obtain a glimpse of the lovely duchess. Hereabouts lay the choicest haunts of Bohemian bullying fashion, the taverns, coffee-houses, theatres, clubs, and so forth. Gold-laced and sworded roysterers swaggered about from club to tavern, from tavern to theatre, and from theatre to bagnio; and one standing on this bridge at dead of night in the era of the "brass monarch," aforesaid, might have heard the oaths of brawlers, and perchance the clink of rapiers borne to him from Cork Hill or Smock Alley.

Smock Alley is still Smock Alley in the mouths of the inhabitants, despite of every effort to change its name. Here it lies up Parliament Street, a few yards only, first turning to the right. In this poor, abject lane stood the famous Smock Alley Theatre. Enter the burial-vault of the Church of Saints Michael and John, and you stand in the pit of the theatre, on the spot where close-packed crowds laughed, wept, cheered, rioted, in times now long gone by. What names puissant rise up before the mind as one stands in fancy upon this classic scene! Farquhar, Nicholani, Booth, Quin, Margaret Woffington, Garrick, Sheridan, Cibber, Barry, Mossop, Macklin, Daly, Kemble, Mrs. Inchbald, Mrs. Siddons herself, and a host of others of no mean repute in their day, graced the boards of Smock Alley during the century and a quarter of its disturbed career, at the end of which time its fate was to be turned into a flour and whiskey store, and finally to fall of itself, at the same time that Napoleon fell, leaving a site for a Catholic Church and no vestige of itself but an old arched passage, which can to this day be seen. Looking around one in this vault, and seeing by a dim funereal light the simple narrow houses of the dead, it is not easy to realise that here, in this very spot, was the pit so feared by managers and actors; the pit that fiercely hissed, and loudly called, and madly cheered, or more madly rose in wrath, and wrecked with demon fury; the pit from which Dudley Moore leaped on to the stage on a certain anniversary of William of Orange, during the reign of dull Queen Anne, and recited a prologue to the play of "Tamerlane," which Government had forbidden to be spoken; the pit from which "Kelly of Connacht," a "Trinity boy," inflamed with wine, sprang on the stage, and, being baffled in his pursuit of an actress, hit the manager, Sheridan's father, with an orange, and organised a series of riots which kept Dublin in a fever for weeks, closed the theatre for awhile, brought Kelly himself face