

Nationalist and Catholic. It need hardly be said that in

The Dublin of 1763

it would have been hopeless to launch a Catholic daily. The Penal laws enacted from the days of Elizabeth to those of King William, were still in force, a code in many respects more oppressive in the "Kingdom of Ireland" than even the anti-Catholic legislation in England. Catholics, the vast majority of the people, were glad enough that some of the worst enactments had fallen into desuetude, though they might be enforced again. Meanwhile the unfortunate "Papists" labored under a multitude of oppressive disabilities. It was a code deliberately devised to keep them in servile poverty, and make perversion to the so-called "Church of Ireland" the avenue to citizenship and the prospect of a career. The Seven Years' War had just ended, a war in which (largely because its King was also Elector of Hanover) England had fought as the ally of Frederick the Great of Prussia, and the "Protestant hero" was a popular idol in England, honored incidentally by "the King of Prussia" becoming a favorite sign of country mus. The war had given England the unchallenged control of the sea, the possession of Canada, and the first conquests of the Indian Empire, and with these came a wave of prosperity. Irishmen had fought on both sides in the war, some as soldiers in the French and Austrian armies, others recruited for the British Army, in which the law barred them from rising above the ranks. But it brought no gains to them. With all the current talk of philosophic respect for the rights of man, progress and liberality, that was already becoming the fashion, the Catholics had only the bare right of existence. As for Nationalism, ever since the Williamite wars the majority of the Irish Catholics had sunk into a condition of patient, almost apathetic endurance of wrongs there seemed no hope of righting. But the hopes of better days soon revived. By a strange turn of events it was

The Conquest of Canada

that started a train of events, which, amongst other results, gave to the Irish Catholics the first small instalments of citizenship and freedom, and gave a new impulse to the National ideals. An almost forgotten chapter of history is the story of the protests of the Puritan New England Colonies against the Quebec Act legalising the religious freedom given to the French of Canada under the treaty with France that made the country a British colony. It was the first rift between the New England colonies and the home Government. Other causes, it is true, helped to precipitate the conflict that created the United States and produced in Ireland the Volunteer movement and Grattan's campaign for a free Irish Parliament. The movement was primarily a revolt of the dominant Protestant section against the senseless policy of England in discriminating even against the "Loyalists" of Ireland in matters both of administration and of trade interests. Grattan, though he held that Protestant ascendancy must be a part of the Irish system,

realised that the open oppression of the majority of the people must make all stable government impossible. He needed Catholic support, and he declared that "even the Protestants of Ireland could not be free while the Catholics were kept in slavery." From the days when

The Drums of the Volunteers

were beating and Grattan, with all his limitations, became the national leader, the files of the *Freeman's Journal* supply a wonderfully contemporary record of both the political and the religious history of Ireland. It passed through the hands of many proprietors. It had its prosperous and its difficult years. Under one chief it would take a bold line, under another it would play for safety and show the weakness that is often the price of security when great events are in the making. But there were many times when it not only recorded current history but helped to make it. In the days when O'Connell was the leader of both the Irish and the Catholic cause it came under Catholic influence, and since then it has been a Catholic paper, in the sense that it was a leading newspaper of a Catholic people. So a large part of its space was given to the record of distinctly Catholic activities, though those of non-Catholic religious bodies were also fairly reported. It reached its most prosperous period when Sir John Grey having purchased it, his son, Dwyer Grey, succeeded to the control. He was a thorough business man and at the same time an enthusiast for any cause he held to be right. The *Freeman* became the champion of the Land Reform movement and the fight for Home Rule under Parnell. There were stirring times in Ireland, and Grey organised a splendid system of news gathering. His reporters were to be found at every "proclaimed meeting," taking their full share of danger. A special wire linked the London and the Dublin offices, and the Parliamentary reports of the *Freeman* were the best in the Dublin press at a time when

Irish Affairs

came up evening after evening at Westminster. Grey directed, but did not edit, his paper. He had a workmanlike chief editor in the Dublin office in the person of Dr. Byrne, but his strongest man was the late Mr. Tuohy, in charge of the London office near Temple Bar. Tuohy was a journalist who devoted himself entirely to journalism, in the times when journalism was still anonymous, and so the general public hardly knew his name, but few men in the Fleet Street of those days did more important work. For a while he acted also as London correspondent of one of the great daily papers of New York, and its service of news was at the disposal of the *Freeman*. He was in close touch with some of the leaders of finance, and the business columns of the *Freeman* had often exclusive information that brought Irish investors into many a profitable development in "industrials." Hard-headed business men in Belfast, who detested its politics, read the paper for the sake of Tuohy's business intelligence.

I was a beginner in journalism in those years and a friend of my college days intro-

duced me to Grey; from him I had my first journalistic commission that opened the way to important work. I had lived for awhile abroad and was in touch through correspondents abroad and friends in London with good sources of information. I gave some of this to Grey when we met from time to time, and at last one evening at Westminster he asked me to write for his paper a weekly survey of foreign affairs. The special wire was comparatively idle on Sunday evenings, so it was handed to Tuohy on that night to be wired to Dublin, and it was a feature of the Monday issue for some months. I told Grey that I must be allowed to put forward my own view and I feared it might sometimes clash with that of Byrne's leading articles. He told me I might write what I wished, but to save editorial responsibility the articles were written in the first person, and signed with a single initial. Journalism still being strictly anonymous then.

Dwyer Grey's Achievement.

"I want to interest our people in foreign affairs," said Grey. "We have paid too little attention to them, though they continually react on our own national cause." Once, talking of his hopes for his paper, he said that in the past it had suffered from false economies. "I am going to make an Irish bull," he said, "but that figure of speech is sometimes very expressive. Well, my theory is that the only way to make a paper really pay is to waste money on it." Success came quickly, and the *Freeman's Journal* was converted into the property of a company. Its shares went at once to a high premium. On the day the prospectus appeared Grey told me he had enjoyed an incident of a few days before. It was just after the affair of the Pigott forgeries. A *Times* representative had come to Grey at the House of Commons and tried to argue him into giving that paper the advertising of his new company. No company of the least importance had ever before been floated without a *Times* advertisement; surely it was an oversight that this had been omitted. "I told him," said Grey, "that it was by my order the *Times* had been struck off the list, because it had given so much space to Mr. Pigott's productions."

Grey's sudden death after a brief illness was a heavy blow to the *Freeman*. Its decline began when it had to meet the competition of Alderman Murphy's well-produced and well-managed *Independent*, which broke its monopoly in the Dublin press. The day came when the shares that had once stood at 70 per cent. premium no longer carried a dividend.

1916 and After.

It failed to weather the stormy years since 1916. Its office, once Sir John Grey's Dublin residence, with the editor installed in its beautiful Georgian dining-room, stood close by the Post Office, the headquarters of the fighting in "Easter Week." For five days no *Freeman* appeared and the office was burned to the ground when the bombardment fired the Post Office. The paper started again in an improvised office as soon as the fighting ceased. It built new premises and made a brave start again, only to be sup-

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