

They Died for Ireland

MEMORIAL UNVEILED AT GALBALLY.

TIPPERARY T.D.'s PLEA FOR NATIONAL UNITY.

On Sunday last some three thousand people witnessed the unveiling, by Mr. Dan Breen, T.D., of a monument to the men of the Irish Volunteers of the Galtee Battalions who gave their lives for the cause of Irish freedom.

Led by the C. J. Kickham Band from Tipperary, the combined services paraded through the village to the Square, where the ceremony took place.

The Bruff Pipers' Band, the Mitchelstown Brass Band and the Anglesboro Band were also in attendance.

Very Rev. J. Heffernan, P.P., V.G., Galbally, who presided, said that they were assembled there to witness the unveiling of a memorial to valliant men who in days gone by had fought for the freedom of Ireland. Unfortunately, they lost their lives, but unborn generations would remember them and venerate their memory.

MR. DAN BREEN, T.D.

Mr. Dan Breen, T.D., said:—Beneath the Galtees, beneath the hills that have sheltered many a man made homeless because of his love of Ireland, we meet to honour the memory of men who died for her, of men whose fixity of patriotic purpose was as immoveable as these historic hills. That we should remember our soldier dead "at the going down of the sun and at the rising in the morning" is the first necessary step towards the achievement of their ideal. That we their comrades shall recall to our own minds and shall shadow forth to a new generation the story of their achievement, of the depth of their sacrifice, of the tradition in which their beliefs were rooted, is an urgent and needful thing if we desire that this nation shall survive, shall gather strength, shall prove again to be that bulwark of civilisation in the new Dark Ages that are descending on Europe.

THE UNITED IRISHMEN.

Two hundred and fifty years ago after Aughrim and the Flight of the Wild Geese it could be truly said that Ireland lay like a corpse on the dissecting table. Our enemies believed that the Gael was gone. But outlawed men in every generation in one form or another kept the germ of resistance alive till it burgeoned forth again with the coming of the United Irishmen, with Tone and Emmet. It is a common belief that from the death of Emmet to the coming of Young Ireland this country of ours was quiescent. but Wellington's words that the alternative to Emancipation was revolution proved otherwise and Carrickshock was as truly the nation in arms as was 1916.

THE FENIANS.

It has been said that Irish resistance was broken in the famine of '47 when Manchester economics brought about the death of a million of our people. It is forgotten that a people disarmed, deprived of every privilege of manhood, deprived of leadership by corrupt judge, packed jury and penal servitude is in no condition to make its will effective and it is forgotten that from the ashes of the famine sprang the Fenian movement, the movement which never died, which was the backbone and driving force of the Land War, continued into a new generation, was responsible ultimately for Easter Week, 1916, and for whatever measure of success was won in the years till 1921. It was in that time that the men we honour to-day won their laurels. It was in those times that these men faced the might of a triumphant and contemptuous Empire.

"A SIGN-POST."

It has become the fashion among certain untried men to decry the efforts and achievements of those who served the nation in that testing time. This is understandable only on the part of those who have not troubled to acquaint themselves with the history of the period, of the history of national steadfastness not only against a disciplined soldiery supported by the resources of empire but against that pitiless rabble of gaol-birds and military misfits which we remember as the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries, to whom was given the unrestricted irresponsible power of life and death over our people. That these men whom we honour and their comrades smashed that power is responsible for the safety to-day of Ireland's people in the welter and horror of a war embracing the whole world. Had not that fight been made, had not these men stood that terrible testing time, to-day's sun rising over the Galtees might have risen on devastated fields, ruined homes and a desolate people. I stress the fact because I want you to remember your Fenian dead, to remember what Thomas Davis, whose centenary we honour this year, said: "Ireland is no mere sand-bank cast up by the sea, but an ancient nation with proud traditions"; and in loyalty to our traditions lies our strength and our hope for the future. This is not a mere block of stone; it is a sign-post pointing backwards to the sacrifices and achievements of the past, pointing, too, to a demand and a possibility of the future, a demand for men or character and courage and selflessness and a possibility for these of attaining the final goal of a completed freedom.

THE CIVIL WAR.

In the history of every nation there is light and shade, glorious success and tragic error. There is inherent in every human effort the fatal fact that men cannot control circumstance and circumstance forced on us the bitterness of a Civil War. Great Irishmen who had no personal motive or ambition to serve died on both sides. Let us hope the time is approaching when this nation can erect a common monument to their memory, when our people can remember only that in the light that God gave them they served Ireland faithfully and well. Their greatest monument will be a unity of unselfish purpose among our people directed towards the final achievement of their hopes.

This monument is not merely a tribute to the memory of heroic dead men. It is also a promise on our part to follow on the road which they have trodden. It is a promise that we shall do our utmost to erect to their memory the monument of a national unity which time cannot wither nor years destroy.

THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

Mr. Sean Forde spoke of the importance of the Irish language. The men whom they commemorated were as brave as any who ever fought in any part of the world. They took the word of P. H. Pearse, who said "Go out and risk your lives for the sake of Irish freedom."

Referring to the sacrifice of those brave men, Mr. D. Hannigan hoped that the day would soon come when people could demand and get their rights without having recourse to force or bloodshed.

Senator T. Crowley said that the Galtee and Galbally people were always in the forefront of the fight for freedom, and consequently we enjoyed neutrality from the start of this fearful world war, because the people were united, and unity the like of which was never before witnessed, ensured that we could hold up our heads and maintain our self-respect to-day in a world of turmoil.

Captain Tom Byrnes (Dublin) said that when, thirty years ago, he came to Galbally to help in the training of the Galtee Battalion, he found that the men did not want any moral or national training.

Major-General Liam Hayes said the men to whom that monument was erected had left behind them a memory that was imperishable.

Afterwards the visitors were entertained by the local committee, who were highly complimented by their distinguished guests on the practical and efficient manner in which they organised the parades and the ceremony.

The monument, which is of granite, takes the form of a 1916 Volunteer, with a service rifle at the ready.