

Tongueless Bells!

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"And Saint," he prayed, "who called me,  
Thou art here, as on the deep,  
Where thou smoothed the wind-grieved waters,  
And soothed the storm to sleep.  
I come, a boy, at Thy bidding,  
To salve the eyes that weep."

"By the cross on these Stones encarven,  
I sue for this Red Isle—*Peace!*  
That the hands of my brothers may fold them,  
The wraith of my father cease.  
On these Stones let the Christ-sign whiten,  
So His Kingdom may increase!"

Was he kerne or king's son sailing,  
His young face wet with rain?  
Tears from the hills behind him,  
That were born of joy, not pain,  
For the sorrow he bore from Islay,  
Never lay there again.

There is a cross in Irish Arran  
That the hills of Islay know,  
And one in far Iona  
That has seen her wisdoms go;  
But the third still braves the sea-wind,  
For the Saint who carved it so..

#### THE CONNAUGHT RANGERS: THEIR CLAIM TO A MEDAL.

DEAR SIR—It has been suggested by various officers and others who are interesting themselves in the matter that the question of urging upon the Secretary of State for War the justice of giving a medal for "The Defence of the Transvaal" in the 1st Boer War of 1880-1, should be laid before Members of Parliament, as this appears the only way of securing attention for any subject.

The reason given for withholding the medal was that it is unusual to award medals for unsuccessful campaigns, but so far as the defenders of the Transvaal (*viz.*, the garrison of the Transvaal) were concerned, the campaign was most successful, *i.e.*, they carried out the task allotted to them, and held the Transvaal. It was no fault of theirs that Sir George Colley and others failed to come to their relief.

The Transvaal Garrison held 7 posts, *viz.*: (1) Pretoria, (2) Standerton, (3) Lydenburg, (4) Rustenburg, (5) Mare-bastadt, (6) Wakkerstroom, (7) Potchefstroom, some of which were only defended by one Company, yet none of them were captured, and most of them had severe fighting, many lives being lost and many were wounded. Several V.C's were awarded to the defenders, but no medal and no batta. A man with a V.C. and no medal is unique. The 21st R.S. Fusiliers, 4 Co.'s of 58th Regt. (now Northhamptons) and the 94th Regt. (now Connaught Rangers) with the Volunteers raised in Pretoria and elsewhere, were the gallant defenders, and why should they not receive the only soldiers reward, *viz.*: the medal?

During the last year of Lord Wolseley's term of Commander-in-Chief-ship the medal was granted for the Red River Expedition, which he commanded in 1866, about 35 years previously. Here, then, is a precedent for rectifying in this Coronation year the omission of 1881, about 22 years ago, by granting to all survivors who apply for it the medal for the defence of the Transvaal, to which they have always considered themselves entitled—none to receive the medal who were not in the Transvaal between the 21st Dec., 1880, and the date of the signing of the amistice in March, 1881. Rolls of all those entitled to the medal were furnished at the time, which it is presumed have not been destroyed, so that, on receipt of an application for the medal, reference might easily be made to ascertain whether the claim is just or not.

May we therefore beg that you will do your best to obtain consideration for this reasonable request. A few years ago a medal was given for an expedition to Abyssinnia in which not a shot was fired, and yet for the old Transvaal Defence Force of 1880-1, who had much tough

fighting lasting over three months, during which time they in many instances endured all the hardships of a prolonged siege, and not a single garrison was captured, no medal has ever been awarded.—We are, sir, yours,  
July 18th, 1902. JUSTITIA.

#### ILLEGAL IMPORTATION OF SLAG.

THE Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland have intimated to us that they have received within the last week or two several reports to the effect that slag of a very inferior quality described as basic slag has recently been imported in considerable quantities into Ireland. Farmers intending to purchase genuine basic slag should, therefore, be on their guard, and should not fail to take advantage of the provisions of the "Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act." The Department sends us a leaflet containing full information as to the procedure under this Act. Copies of this leaflet can be had on application to the Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, Upper Merrion Street, Dublin.

[In cases of this kind it seems to us that the Department should institute the necessary proceedings, as they have the power to do under the Act referred to on information received from individuals. Private persons are very unwilling to take upon themselves such an addition to their responsibilities.—Ed.]

#### TONGUELESS BELLS!

DEAR MR. O'GRADY,—Some time ago you printed a few verses under the title "Conchubhar," signed "Patrick Ossery." Your own remarks on the verses were severe, among other things touching the sense, &c., you said they did not *sing*. I am no judge of poetry. I only know what I like; and a great deal that is supposed to be very good and the right thing to admire leaves me as cold as a stone. But whether it could sing to other people or not, that little poem has haunted me, and recurred to me so often, like a half-forgotten strain of music, that I determined, in spite of your criticism, to ask you if you know anything of the author; whether Patrick Ossery is only a *nom de plume*, and if you could get at him to find out why he gave the verses the name "Conchubhar," as nothing in them affords any clue. I would like to know who he really is, and whether he has written any more than this fragment. As I cannot remember the date, I may just quote the first verse, so that you may recall it. As I said the name suggests nothing to the uninitiated reader:—

"Music! ah, what music haunts me!  
Is it the wind in the tongueless bell;  
Or is it thy voice that daunts me—  
The voice that I knew so well?"

I hope you will not mind my troubling you about what you seemed to think little of.

Eitlin.

[DEAR EITLIN,—I remember the verses very well, and though I don't understand them, they have haunted me, too. Yes, I hope Patrick Ossery will unveil himself a little, and tell us what he meant, if he be not one of those who have been scared away by the alarming apparition of the Crown in these columns or something else calculated to frighten the patriotic mind.

I printed, too, another poem that I could not understand. Do you remember?

"Down in the coom where the marigolds are golden."  
For incomprehensible poetry can sometimes be very beautiful, admired by all if understood by none. Witness Coleridge's:—

"In Xanadu did Kubhla Khan  
A stately pleasure dome decree."  
with the exquisite irrelevant lines:—

"It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on a dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora."

—Ed.]

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