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Hon Mr. Justice Curran Home From Old Land

Interviewed By True Witness

Coghlan Briscoe's Great Speech at Town Tenants League. Meeting

Our reporter had an interesting interview with Hon. Mr. Justice Curran, on his return from the British Isles, by the SS. Parisian. The Judge spoke enthusiastically of his visit to Scotland. Glasgow pleased him very much as a great business centre. He spent "fair" week there, when all the workers in the mills and factories were enjoying their annual holidays, and the city was free from smoke.

Edinburgh he considers one of the most captivating cities in the British Isles. The trip through the Trossics is most charming. A letter of introduction from Mr. Justice Dunlop to his brother at Ayr, gave the judge an opportunity to see the birthplace of Burns and the beautiful park and museum to his memory, as well as the enjoyment of Scottish hospitality in a highly cultured family.

HON. MR. JUSTICE CURRAN.

Speaking of London, he said the city is a world in itself. Through the kindness of Lord Strathcona, he was favored with admission tickets to the House of Lords and to the Commons as well. He was particularly fortunate in being present at a very interesting debate on the Irish Agricultural report. Mr. Hayden, one of the Nationalist members, delivered a very able speech, although he has almost entirely lost his sight. Messrs. Balfour, Birrell and Russell also spoke. Each speaker in succession admitted that the Irish people had been treated in a most unjustifiable manner, when their industries were suppressed.

The judge spoke gratefully of the kindness of Mr. Redmond, leader of the Irish Party, and of the hospitality of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P. Whilst in London he met Mr. Donald MacMaster, K.C., formerly of the Canadian Bar. He has attained a prominent position at the Bar of London, and his friends claim that he will soon figure in the House of Commons.

The Judge paid a visit to Old Ireland. Speaking of the country he said: "All that poets have sung and orators said about the grand old land is no exaggeration." Of course he saw Killarney, etc. He went first, however, to Wexford, his mother's birthplace. It is a quaint old city, with its narrow streets. The people he found high-spirited. There were no beggars, and the great majority were well dressed and hard-working.

In Dublin he met many old friends; their hospitality is beyond description. The city looked very well, and was filled with visitors attracted by the International Exhibition and the great horse show. From Dublin he went to Belfast and the Giant's Causeway, visiting Newry, where his father came from. Belfast is a city of great industrial activity. The strike at the docks was just over, but the military were still on guard.

Referring to social and political conditions, he found that there was hardly any of the abject poverty we are accustomed to hear so much about, and an almost total absence of intemperance. His Majesty the King is invariably spoken of as a friend of Ireland. Mr. Birrell is also very popular, despite the disappointment caused by the meagreness of his recent Irish Government measure. The people are sanguine that a genuine bill will soon be passed into law. The Judge said he did not think that anything in that way could be hoped for before a half-dozen of years, and then, possibly, the opponents of Birrell would carry the measure for which he shall have paved the way. For the present the people are doing all they can to promote home industries, and nearly all wear home-made goods, and use home manufactures as far as possible. An attempt is being made to revive the old woollen industry, and great hopes are entertained of its success.

Speaking of the Nationalist party by the Unionists, and some misguided people, who are playing into their hands, but, from all he could learn, Mr. Redmond possesses the confidence of the people, and all attempts at disunion were being scouted.

Amongst those he had the pleasure of meeting was Mr. Coughlan Briscoe, T. C. of Dublin, the originator of the movement for the Compensation of Town Tenants, which was passed into law a short time ago. When the measure was first spoken of, no one hoped to see it carried, but Mr. Briscoe had formed a league, which was irresistible, and now a class of tenants, who were formerly without redress, are under legal protection. This law will soon be enlarged and made more effective. Mr. Briscoe is an ardent temperance worker, and has done immense good amongst a large section of the people. He is also active in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and is engaged in promoting works that will materially improve the condition of many. He will likely visit Canada next summer, where he will meet several of the Coughlan branch of the family.

Returning to London, the Judge and his family sailed in the Parisian for Havre, where the steamer took on a large number of French families coming to Canada to settle in the North Western provinces. Amongst the French passengers were a body of exiled nuns. The good Sisters looked mournful enough on quitting their native land. Just as they were losing sight of the French shore they struck up the "Magnificat," their souls glorifying the Lord, in the moment of their great affliction. It was indeed a touching scene. They are destined for points in our North West.

We are glad to note that the trip abroad has been beneficial to the Judge's health. He was accompanied by Mrs. Curran and two of his daughters.

MR. COGHLAN BRISCOE AT THE GREAT WATERFORD MEETING.

Mr. Coghlan Briscoe, in the course of a speech on the Town Tenants Bill, said it was a pleasure to him to come to the city of Waterford. He regretted that their distinguished member was unable to be present, but if Mr. Redmond was not with them that night it was because it was essential that he should be in London to see that the fullest measure of justice was done to the evicted tenants (cheers). He (Mr. Briscoe) was glad to have the opportunity of acknowledging publicly and in such a fitting place as Waterford the great and valuable services rendered to the town tenants by Mr. Redmond as leader of the Irish Party (hear, hear). Since the day the Town Tenants' League was founded it had Mr. Redmond's support, and it was chiefly due to his and Mr. John Dillon's influence that for three years in succession the Irish Party gave the town tenants first place on its sessional programme (cheers). They had assembled that night to establish by public resolution the Town Tenants' League in the City of Waterford. He (Mr. Briscoe) confessed that up to a month ago, when Mr. Crane wrote to him, he was under the impression that they in Waterford were signally blessed, that the houselords of the city were all lambs and quite different from those found in other parts of Ireland. It came, therefore, as a surprise when he found that the Waterford town tenants had grievances just as bad as those in other places. In the press and strain of carrying on this movement during the past four years he often felt discouraged that important centres like Waterford, Cork and Wexford held back and allowed the whole burden to fall on the smaller towns in Connacht and Ulster. He rejoiced that Waterford had fallen into line, and he hoped the example would be followed by other centres. The Town Tenants' movement did not lend itself to oratory. It was a great forward, social movement, and called for something more than the passing of resolutions and the delivery of speeches (cheers). In their ranks they had no room for quacks or political cranks (hear, hear). It had been established to safeguard the home which was the cradle and the stronghold of the nation (cheers). It called on the individual to recognize that he had no right to exist for himself alone. It told him that he was but a drop in the ocean of humanity, and that all his interests were bound up in the good of the entire community (cheers). The Town Tenants' League summoned with trumpet-voice the men of the towns to come together, and, by united action, promote the common good (hear, hear). The old days of feudalism had gone forever, and all men's hearts confessed the common creed, that the powerful and the rich had no God-given right to feast in their mansions while hunger and disease was the portion of the poor. No class had a right to batten and fatten on the industry of others or to confiscate what had been created by the patient toil and industry of their fellows (cheers). The worker, who created all the wealth of the State had a right to be properly housed, and should not be left as he was at the present, a prey to the harpies who traded on his necessities and screwed the last penny out for insanitary dwellings. (Hear, hear). These were the thoughts which filled his mind when four years ago he, with Mr. Field and five others, established the Town Tenants' League. That League was now spread all over Ireland, and it rested with the town tenants themselves to say how soon their claims might have the force of law (hear, hear). There was one point he wished to make clear. The Town **Tenants' League was not hostile** to any class. It did not seek to protect tenants who did not pay rent, or who wilfully dilapidated a landlord's house. Their movement, being founded on justice, must triumph. They would render to the houselord what was his, but they would take very good care that he took no more (cheers). The idea of town reform was not an idea born to-day or yesterday. Far away towards the close of the 18th century, in those days when the fostering care of Grattan's Parliament was beginning to awaken the soul of the Irish nation, it was felt that the system of town tenure was not only a danger to the health of the people, but hampered the growth of town industries. In Ulster and in Connacht House Leagues were established. Then the foundation of Belfast's prosperity were laid, for the people won from the Marquis of Donegall leases for 99 years (cheers). Although the movement died in the North after the passing of the Union, it continued to exist in many towns in Connacht down to the starting of the Land movement, when under the leadership of Parnell, the people of the towns and villages led the van in the fight for liberty (hear hear). Through all the strain and trouble of the times one town preserved its books. In 1903, when the Town Tenants' League was founded, they found at Tuam, not only some members of the old committee, but what was of great importance, a balance in bank to the credit of the organization. The movement now existed in nearly every principal town in Ireland. Its rise and progress was unique. No movement in the past had, in so short a time, accomplished so much (hear, hear). The Town Tenants' Act had been placed on the Statute Book after three years' agitation. The act, which would save millions worth of property, had not cost the town tenants of Ireland one thousand pounds. In fact, the one thing he had to complain of was the apathy shown by the town tenants of Ireland to their own movement (hear hear). Last year the whole of Ireland only subscribed three hundred and sixty pounds, and the result was he and others had to face the debt incurred in carrying on a great national and social reform. He desired to impress on the town tenants of Ireland the fact that they could not have an organization and starve it (hear, hear). In some towns he found it required a notice to quit to galvanize a town tenant into action. There was no use in organizing when the houselord's bailiff was in possession (cheers). If their organization was to become a power they must organize all the time, and the organization must include every man in the town (cheers). He had given five years of his life to the town tenants. He had spread the organization all over Ireland, and it was as strong to-day in the towns of Antrim as it was in Galway or Tipperary (cheers). Circumstances might happen soon which would compel him to devote his time to other matters, and he wanted the town tenants to understand that the whole future of the movement rested with themselves. If they were loyal to each other and stood together, no power could withstand the force of an organized people. The present act had to be amended, so as to protect the weekly, monthly, and quarterly tenants (hear, hear). Legislation was urgently requested to deal with the proper housing of town workers. The conditions of life under which some of the Irish towns housed their workers was a national disgrace. The children, who would be the men and women of the future, did not get a chance to become useful members of the State. It has been written: "You cannot rob a child of its childhood and expect him to grow up a robust man." The people in the tenement slums of Dublin and the other cities had to face their purgatory before the grave (hear, hear). The awful shame of the whole thing was that the rents paid by the workers for the slums was at a far higher rate than the rich paid for their villas. That rent, properly applied, would provide them with decent, self-contained dwellings without any loss to the rates (hear, hear). The solution of this part of the town problem would benefit the entire community. It was a vital question of public health. Here was the writing on the wall for the rich. Disease would not examine their banking account or spare them when tired of afflicting the poor. He therefore called on all who had the power and the means to help in this great movement, if from no higher motive than self-preservation (cheers). The workers must do their part—they had votes and they could use them to return representatives who would be pledged to look after their interests. The question of reviving town industries would require a national effort on the part of the people. In other lands it was the special business of the government to foster and develop home industries. Waterford was once a great centre of many industries. Her beautiful glass was now only found in museums or on the shelves of curiosity shops. England had no more idea of reviving Irish industries than she had of building for them an Irish fleet. Ireland revived her own industries in the past, and the movement paved the way for the declaration of Irish rights. The same process must be repeated (cheers). Ireland must build up her own trade and commerce, and it must become the pride of Irishmen and Irish women as well to help in saving their motherland (loud cheers).

On the proposition of Mr. E. Walsh seconded by Mr. M. Doyle, a hearty vote of thanks was tendered to Mr. Briscoe for his able address. A vote of thanks having also been passed to the chairman for presiding, a large number of persons were enrolled as members of the newly-formed branch of the League.

MR. J. M. COGHLAN BRISCOE.
City Councillor, Dublin.
Organizer of the Town Tenants' League.

Abbey's Effervescent Salt

Clergymen Need Just such a Tonic as Abbey's Salt. It gently regulates stomach, liver and bowels — helps appetite and digestion — strengthens and invigorates the whole system.

ALL DRUGGISTS, 25 and 60c. BOTTLE.

UNIFYING MARRIAGE LAW OF CHURCH.

Important Decree of the Congregation of the Council, Rome.

The following important decree regarding Sponsalia and the valid and licit celebration of the sacrament of matrimony has been issued by the Congregation of the Council, and applies to the whole Church:

DECREE CONCERNING BETROTHAL AND MATRIMONY.

Issued by the Sacred Congregation of the Council by the Order and with the Authority of Our Holy Father Pope Pius X.

The Council of Trent, cap. I., sess. XXIV. de reform, matrim., made prudent provision against the rash celebration of clandestine marriages, which the Church of God for most just reasons has always detested and forbidden, by decreeing: "Those who otherwise than in the presence of the parish priest himself or of another priest acting with the license of the parish priest or of the Ordinary, and in the presence of two or three witnesses, shall attempt to contract marriage, the Holy Synod renders them altogether incapable of contracting marriage thus, and decrees that contracts of this kind are null and void."

But since the same Sacred Council prescribed that said Decree should be published in all the parishes and should have no force except in those places in which it had been promulgated, it has happened that many places in which the publication has not been made have been deprived of the benefit of the Tridentine law, and are still without it, and continue to be subject to the doubts and inconveniences of the old discipline.

Nor has all difficulty been removed in those places where the new law has been in force. For often there has been grave doubt in deciding as to the parish priest before whom a marriage is to be celebrated. The canonical discipline did indeed decide that he is to be regarded as the parish priest in whose parish one or other of the contracting parties has his or her domicile or quasi-domicile. But as it is sometimes difficult to judge whether a quasi-domicile really exists in a specified case, not a few marriages were exposed to the danger of nullity; many, too, either owing to ignorance or fraud, have been found to be wholly illegitimate and void.

Such we have seen happen frequently in our own time on account of the increased facility and celerity of intercommunication between the different countries, even those most widely separated. It has therefore seemed expedient to wise and learned men to introduce some change into the law regulating the form of the celebration of marriage; very many Bishops in all parts of the world, but especially in the more populous states where the necessity appears more urgent, have petitioned the Holy See to this end.

Many Bishops in Europe as well as others in various regions have asked that provision should be made to prevent the inconveniences arising from Sponsalia, that is mutual promises of marriage, privately entered upon. Experience has sufficiently shown the many dangers of such sponsalia, first as being an incitement to sin and as causing the deception of inexperienced girls, and afterwards giving rise to inextricable dissensions and disputes.

Influenced by these circumstances, our Holy Father Pope Pius X. desiring, in the solicitude he bears for all the churches, to introduce some modifications with the object of removing these drawbacks and dangers, committed to the S. Congregation of the Council the task of examining into the matter and of proposing to himself the measures it should deem opportune.

He was pleased also to have the opinion of the commission appointed for the codification of Canon Law, as well as of the Eminent Cardinals chosen on this special commission for the preparation of the new code. They as well as the S. Congregation of the Council, have held frequent meetings for this purpose. The opinions of all having been taken, His Holiness ordered the Sacred Congregation of the Council to issue a decree containing the laws, approved by himself on sure knowledge and after mature deliberation, by which the discipline regarding the sponsalia and marriage is to be regulated for the future, and the celebration of them carried out in a sure and orderly manner.

In execution, therefore, of the Apostolic mandate the S. Congregation of the Council by these letters lays down and decrees as follows:

CONCERNING SPONSALIA.

I. Only those betrothals are considered valid and produce canonical effects, which have been contracted in writing signed by both parties and by either the parish priest or the Ordinary of the place, or at least by two witnesses.

In case one or both the parties be unable to write, this fact is to be noted in the document and another witness is to be added who will sign the writing as above, with the parish priest, or the ordinary of the place or the two witnesses.

II. Here and in the following articles by parish priest is to be understood not only a priest legitimately presiding over a parish canonically erected, but in regions where parishes are not canonically erected the priest to whom the care of souls has been legitimately entrusted in any specified district and who is equivalent to a parish priest; and in missions where the territory has not yet been perfectly divided, every priest generally deputed by the superior of the mission for the care of souls in any station.

CONCERNING MARRIAGE.

III. Only those marriages are valid which are contracted before the parish priest or the Ordinary of the place, or a priest delegated by either of these, and before at least two witnesses, according to the rules laid down in the following articles, and saving the exceptions mentioned under VII. and VIII.

IV. The parish priest and the Ordinary of the place validly assist at a marriage.

(i) only from the day they have taken possession of the benefice or entered upon their office, unless they have been by a public decree excommunicated by name or suspended from the office;

ii) only within the limits of their territory; within which they assist validly at marriages not only of those subject to their jurisdiction, but also of those not subject to it;

iii) provided when invited and asked, and not compelled by violence or by grave fear, they demand and receive the consent of the contracting parties.

V. They assist licitly:

i) When they have legitimately ascertained the free state of the contracting parties, having duly complied with the conditions laid down by the law;

ii) When they have ascertained that one of the contracting parties has a domicile or at least has lived for a month in the place where the marriage takes place;

iii) if this condition be lacking the parish priest and the Ordinary of the place, to assist licitly at a marriage, require the permission of the parish priest or the Ordinary of one of the contracting parties, unless it be a case of grave necessity; which excuses from this permission;

iv) concerning persons without fixed abode (vagos), except in case of necessity it is not lawful for a parish priest to assist at their marriage until they report the matter to the Ordinary or to a priest delegated by him and obtain permission to assist;

v) in every case let it be held the rule that the marriage is to be celebrated before the parish priest of the bride, unless some just cause excuses from this.

VI. The parish priest and the Ordinary of the place may grant permission to another priest, special and certain, to assist at marriages within the limits of their district.

The delegated priest, in order to assist validly and licitly, is bound to observe the limits of his mandate and the rules laid down above, in IV. and V., for the parish priest and the Ordinary of the place.

VII. When danger of death is imminent and where the parish priest or the Ordinary of the place or a priest delegated by either of these cannot be had, in order to provide for the relief of conscience and (should the case require it) for the legitimation of offspring, marriage may be contracted validly and licitly before any priest and two witnesses.

VIII. Should it happen that in any district the parish priest or the Ordinary of the place or a priest delegated by either of them, before whom marriage can be celebrated, is not to be had, and that this condition of things has lasted for a month marriage may be validly and licitly entered upon by the formal declaration of consent made by the two spouses in the presence of two witnesses.

IX. i) After the celebration of a marriage the parish priest or he who takes his place is to write at once in the book of marriages the names of the couple and the witnesses, the place and day of the celebration of the marriage, and the other details, according to the method prescribed in the ritual books or by the Ordinary; and this even when another ptiest delegated either by the parish priest himself or by the ordinary has assisted at the marriage.

ii) Moreover, the parish priest is to note also in the book of baptisms, that the married person contracted marriage on such a day in his parish. If the married person has been baptized elsewhere the parish priest who has assisted at the marriage is to transmit, either directly or through the episcopal curia, the announcement of the marriage that has taken place, to the parish priest of the place where the person was baptized, in order that the marriage may be inscribed in the book of baptisms.

iii) Whenever a marriage is contracted in the manner described in VII. and VIII., the priest in the former case, the witnesses in the latter are bound conjointly with the contracting parties to provide that the marriage be inscribed as soon as possible, in the prescribed books.

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