

by the request for Gaelic, but there are well qualified instructors in this country, and where demand warrants we shall try to supply it." The course is now being given in some of the Western Knights of Columbus schools.—Catholic Transcript.

THE IRISH QUESTION IN AMERICAN POLITICS

EXAGGERATED, BUT CAN VANISH ONLY WITH ANGLO-IRISH RECONCILIATION

By A. F. Whyte,
Associate Editor, The New Europe

The Irish question in the United States is like the shadow of a man thrown in gigantic relief on a mountain mist. It moves threateningly over the political landscape, and is used in American politics for purposes often very remote from any real Irish interest. It is itself at once unreal and real. Its ramifications are extensive, and yet its effective influence on the American mind is very difficult to gauge.

No true measure of American thought on the Irish question can be gained from the politicians or the press. A cursory review of American news during the last eight months would give the impression that the mountain shadow is the greatest figure in the American arena; that America is almost more Irish than Ireland herself. Senator Gerry's Irish reservation on the Peace Treaty; the Irish parade on St. Patrick's Day a few weeks ago in New York, when Fifth Avenue was given up to Ireland for the space of half a day; the wide publicity given to Mr. de Valera on hundreds of movie screens in every State in the Union; the constant stream of messages in the press relating the exploits of "England's iron hand" in Ireland, all serve to deepen the impression that America is aflame with enthusiasm for Sinn Féin.

The impression is false. The true magnitude of the Irish question in America is represented by the man on the mountain, and not by his gigantic shadow on the mist, which is but a freak of the political atmosphere. Shadows, however, play a large part in politics, and this Irish shadow cannot be ignored. It will disappear some day, but as long as the Irish question is unsettled in Ireland there will be an unsettled force in America. It is the Irish vote, organized, articulate, vociferous—the instrument of a resolute minority—which forces Ireland into an unnatural prominence in American politics. The Irish vote will not be merged in a true Americanism until national sentiment in Ireland itself is appeased.

What, then, is the real attitude of Americans toward this old and ever-new problem? No man alive can fully answer the question. But since it has been my good fortune to travel for eight months through over thirty States, living in the hospitable homes of Americans, and mingling with all classes of her people, I may, perhaps, contribute certain factors which compose America's opinion. There is a widespread interest in the Irish question which is just as marked in regions where Irish political influence is negligible as it is in Boston or New York. Among the numerous questions constantly asked of me by bankers, manufacturers, business men, clergymen, journalists and professors two stand out in great prominence of all the rest:

First—Where is labor going in Great Britain?

Second—What are you going to do with Ireland?

There are whole regions on the Atlantic where you will hear nothing but disgust either in official or semi-official receptions given to Mr. de Valera. The point of interest to a traveling guest in this attitude is that while it represents a wholesome resentment, it is politically impotent, because, on the whole, the finer type of American has not yet found his way into politics, and has, therefore, little means of making his opinions effective. I have usually found a great deal of surprise at the unruffled equanimity with which I regarded the whole Sinn Féin campaign in the United States. Those who express this surprise feel that a Britisher ought to resent the whole business. I do not, because I know how it has arisen and why the organized unreality of Irish republican propaganda plays so large a part in the whole publicity of America.

On that I shall have a word to say lower down. But whether one is traveling in places where the receptions to Mr. de Valera are regarded as acts of international discourtesy or where the eager desire to know the facts about the Irish question is due first of all to the feeling that many Americans have today, owing to the original relation between their forefathers and Great Britain. They cannot divest themselves either of interest in or even of a certain sense of moral responsibility for the present Irish situation. They feel that a discontented Ireland means that something is wrong in the old home from which so many of them once came.

Indeed, the source of much American interest in the Irish question is found in a deep-seated attachment to England (which I find more widespread than I had expected) and a hope that the practical statesmanship of Britain, which has hosts of admirers in America, will not fail in its most crucial test.

Having discussed Ireland in America with hundreds of individuals, scores of private groups, as well as in public addresses before Chambers

of Commerce, rotary clubs and university audiences. I conclude at the end of an eight-month tour that the attitude of the entire American people is a strong desire to see the Irish question settled. One per cent, probably less, actually and explicitly hopes that Ireland will be an independent republic; but 10 to 15 per cent, join with varying degrees of enthusiasm, zeal or reluctance in the vociferous and brilliant, organized demonstrations of Sinn Féin. The other 85 per cent, neither pretend that they think an Irish Republic possible, nor if they thought it possible, would they think it desirable?

If once a reasonable settlement can be made in Ireland the Irish question will gradually disappear from American politics. No one imagines that even if a settlement were made tomorrow the poison of the Irish question could be immediately eradicated from Anglo-American relations, but its source will be dried up, and the future outlook will be bright.

Meanwhile, during the last six months America has experienced the visitations of two aggressive bands of Irish propagandists; the first from Sinn Féin and the second from Ulster. Judging solely from the nature of the reception given to them they might both claim that they had caught the ear of the American people; and so they did—in the strict sense of the word. I think they made an impression on the minds of Americans very different from what they intended. Merely as oratorical presentations of different aspects of the Irish question they were undoubtedly effective within the walls of each gathering; but after their audiences dispersed, a sense of unreality began to creep into the minds of most of their hearers. The net result has been expressed over and over again in the words, "That is obviously not the whole truth about the Irish question." The effect of recent propaganda in the United States has been to reveal to thousands of Americans, perhaps for the first time, the complexity of the Irish question and the very real obstacles that lie between us and its ultimate solution. Not only is this the case with a great and growing body of pure Americans, but it is true of a number of the older generation of American-Irishmen. I have in mind two or three prominent ones, in cities on the Atlantic Coast and in the Middle West, of Irishmen who have never wavered in their support of the Irish national cause, but have expressed the deepest regret at the circumstances that have given rise to Sinn Féin movement.

These men, who represent no inconsiderable section of Irish-American opinion, desire a settlement not on the basis of an Irish Republic, but in the form of the fullest possible Irish autonomy which is compatible with the sovereignty of the British Commonwealth. They stand aloof from all Irish propaganda today.

But the matter does not end there. In the ranks of professed Sinn Féiners I have found a number of men whose private opinion is very different from their public profession. When you get to grips with these gentlemen you find that the solution that they are prepared to accept so closely resembles Sir Horace Plunkett's Dominion plan that they have no right to call themselves by the name of Sinn Féin. I cannot help believing that their adherence to the Irish republican movement is purely tactical, based on the assumption that unless they ask for the whole baker's shop they will not even get half a loaf. It is certainly reassuring for one who, like myself, has been a long life believer in Irish Home Rule to find that there are so many apparent Sinn Féiners who are much more reasonable than the extravagant propaganda which they feel themselves driven to support.

There is one vitally important factor in the present state of the whole Irish problem which has been little noticed in America, but which is now becoming gradually better known. I hold the opinion that the most vital change in the Irish question—regarded as a problem which concerns the British Isles as a whole—is the conversion of many British Conservatives to the policy of Irish Home Rule. The resistance of Ulster and of the whole of the British Conservative body to Irish self-government has hitherto been the chief obstacle to the realization of the Irish hopes. That obstacle has already been half removed, and with its removal the Irish question can at last be lifted out of the confusing atmosphere of British party politics and has some fair chance of being treated on its real merits.

I hope that the significance of this factor will be widely grasped in the United States. It is certainly important. The conclusions which I draw from eight months observation of the Irish problem in America are:

First—The Irish vote is large enough to force the people to give the Irish question an altogether unnatural prominence.

Second—The great bulk of American opinion dislikes the intrusion of Irish propaganda, but cannot prevent it.

Third—As long as the Irish question remains acute in the British Isles the British people must be prepared to face with equanimity any and every manifestation of Irish ill-will in the United States.

Fourth—Practically the whole body of American people desires a settlement that shall be satisfactory in about equal measure to Ireland and Great Britain.

Fifth—In present circumstances British propaganda on the Irish question is practically useless in the United States, and, therefore—

Sixth—The first task on which the British friends of America should bend their energies is to make an enduring settlement in Ireland. Once Dublin and London are reconciled, we shall be on the high road to good relations between America and Great Britain.—N. Y. Times, April 16.

AN ODISIOUS DAMNED LIE

PROFESSOR STOCKLEY AND DAILY MAIL

The Evening Echo, Cork, April 2
The following has been addressed to the Editor of the Daily Mail.

SINN FEIN

Sir,—The Daily Mail, March 30, learns "on unimpeachable authority" that official inquiries have proved "that the Lord Mayor of Cork was murdered by Sinn Féiners; and that by them, was condemned to death."

I ask you, sir, not to shrink from publishing what I say. Were I to say all I feel, I could not ask you to publish. You have been led to publish what is false. Whoever lied to you forgot the need to be precise in a lie. His very dates are wrong. About them, doubtless he knew little and cared less. Ignorant and careless!—in exasperating, in driving to despair of any justice, in loading suspicion, in encouraging to murder!

You are told that the late Lord Mayor and I attended "a private meeting of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, on March 19," and "at this meeting it was reported that we had been expelled," and so doomed to death. I never was at a private meeting with the late Lord Mayor. I do not believe he was at such a meeting. I do not believe there was such a meeting. And the attempted murder of myself was on March 17, two days before this invented meeting of your unhappy informant, who says the Lord Mayor was murdered on March 20. He was murdered, the night, March 19-20. I say, sir, that your informant invented this murder meeting, and told a lie—Shakespeare's "odious, damned lie." If need there be to write stronger words in order to make oneself believed. And I say, sir, that by poisoning men's judgments, and firing their prejudices, and maddening their imaginations, with "Black Hands," "Inner Kings," "murderous orders," and "sentences on the untrustworthy," you reduce an English newspaper to the level of Crabbe's newspapers, which:

"Coin their fresh tales, and live upon the lie."

Shame, sir. And the shame is not on Ireland. You know that what you have published is an unfounded rumour. If you can feel, seriously, the woes of men—Irishmen, too, are men—you are able to feel sorrow for publishing what stirs up, in Ireland, more contempt for England—were that now possible—more disbelief in English honor, more hate of an England which appears to Ireland, first, a liar, and then a bully.

There is no such Sinn Féin as your cruel blinding words imply. I assume you do not really mean only to wound the living and insult the dead. I am assuming this possibility of an English journal being brought to recognize responsibility, at such a time as this.

What is Sinn Féin? It is the taking of England at England's word. Nothing more: nothing less. "Twere hard, indeed (we are told), to ask proud England to act on America's word. Sinn Féin asked only that England should word on England's word. Sinn Féin then acted, as if England word was something worth. England went back on her word to us; say thousands of ex-soldiers, now Sinn Féiners. Small nations: equal rights for great and small; self-determination; a new and juster world, a world not assuming that the bonds bind, except mere brute force—we fought for those things they say. And, therefore, we fight, heart and soul, against this England railing and transporting and plundering and murdering over Ireland today. Any of us who came from England are not those least ashamed of this England.

"Down in the dust, and a shame to be seen."

Have pity, sir, on your deed that did not right; though their country's leaders meant but wrong. Show your living young men how they may equal the young Sinn Féin men of Ireland; for such are the patriots that England needs; young men, brave, disciplined in heart, unself-seeking, generous, accounting little the cost of worldly damage or ruin, ready to believe that the weak things are chosen by God's eternal justice to confound the strong.

Is it not possible for a powerful English journal to pause, to think, and to make confession, to make restitution, when an English soldier-poet writes, that if this English militarism in Ireland is what we soldiers fought for?

"By God, we're sold?"

Will you show there is more than wordy truth in Newman's: "An Englishman's repentance is greater than his sin."

Ask, if Englishmen are not good Sinn Féiners, for England. Ask what English Sinn Féiners would say, and would do, if England were under an army of occupation, and a hostile Government's armed police,

Ask, why England supported Republican Polish Sinn Féiners, and would not compromise for even Dominion Home Rule for the Republic of Bohemia.

Ireland has asked these questions. Therefore, Ireland is full of Sinn Féiners who will not be answered, that only might is right. And, therefore, the tyrannous, and the unscrupulous, and the interested, hate and fear Sinn Féin, and hate and fear the English principles, of British justice and British freedom. Freedom! Justice! Alas!

"As slaves, below, that under hatches lie
Hear those on deck extol the sun
and sky."

"Words, words, words." You have put points to our contempt, and on our sneering.

Sinn Féin is what England says, not what she does. "After her acts, do ye not?"

We Irish know well that the rank and file of the English people care no more about Ireland either in fury or sympathy, than Ireland were distant as Timbuctoo. So it is said. And so we know. Therefore we are Sinn Féiners; that is, people who would mind their own business.

W. F. P. STOCKLEY,
Woodside, Tivoli, Cork.

March 31, 1920.

THE FIRST PEACE CONFERENCE

Signs of the dawn of a brighter future are breaking the black veil of night which, these many years, has enveloped the nations of the world. For the first time since the outbreak of the disastrous War of five years ago, representatives of all the nations sat together again in an international congress, which just finished its session at Geneva. Attempts had been made, notably on the part of Socialists, to hold international congresses, even during the period of the War; but as international undertakings they proved to be a fiasco. Then came that still greater fiasco of internationalism, at the end of the War, the Peace Conference of Paris. Far from bringing nations together again as had been promised with so much rhetorical profusion of idealism, it widened the gulf created by hatred and hatred. New seeds of bitterness were sown, and these seeds have already sprouted under the heat of nationalistic sentiments. This bitter and poisonous fruits these growths may develop and mature, men of large vision, who know how to judge the history of the future, by using the past as a norm, are beginning to see. Hence their voices, growing louder and louder, demand a revision of the treaty.

The first real Peace Conference met in Geneva at the invitation of the *L'Union Internationale de Secours aux Enfants*. About 200 delegates were present, coming from all quarters of the globe. French, Germans, Serbs, Austrians, Czechoslovaks, English, Bulgarians, Americans, Italians, Jugo-Slavs, Armenians, representatives in fact of great and small nations, met to discuss ways and means how to relieve the horrible distress among the child population of Central and Eastern Europe. A spirit of peace ruled over the deliberations of the Congress. Where but while ago the spirit of hatred had declared with a blare of martial trumpet, it must be arms against arms, the spirit of charity now proclaimed with clear clarion call, it must be arm in arm. Formerly division, now unity. The War was not discussed, excepting as to its consequences. Politics were forgotten; statesmen were ruled out. The results of the congress were wordy, but they were honest, no fraud, no hypocrisy, no treachery. Words were again used as they should be used, to convey and not to conceal ideas.

It was, in truth, a real peace conference and no wonder. The Vicar of the Prince of Peace sounded the key-note of good-will and reconciliation in a message which was brought to the Congress through the means of an address, opening the conference, given by the Apostolic Delegate at Bern, Mgr. Luigi Magliola. The message was so much the more significant, since persons of every creed, of high and low rank of Church and State were assembled at this international gathering. In his address, his Excellency showed what great interest the Holy Father had taken in the movement of peace and charity; how his heart was set upon the ideal that the charity and the justice of Christ might again rule in the world; and how he proved the worth of charity with deeds by his contribution of 4,000,000 lire to the fund of the *L'Union Internationale*. Two million of this came from the Venetian provinces which had been subjected to greater hardships of warfare than any other province of Italy. This also was a propitious sign, showing that peoples easily forget wrongs and insults and make generous sacrifices, if only they serve to bind nations together again with strong, unbreakable bonds. In truth, humanity which had cloaked its face for shame of the outrages that had been heaped upon the world, again showed a smiling face.

Throughout all the sessions of the Congress there was heard this dominant note of peace and good-will. Practically every one of the speakers expressed it as his conviction that this Congress would help to soften prejudices and tend to lift people to a level where they would see with

larger vision the necessity of a genuine international understanding. Sir David Henderson, General Director of the League of Nations, the Red Cross, most emphatically declared it the duty of every delegate to impress upon their governments the necessity of themselves co-operation to the end that reconstruction would be real and earnest, so as to put strength and back bone again into broken nations.

The importance of fostering this spirit of charity must, indeed, not be overlooked. Unless charity first cools and tempers hot-headed national sentiments, works of well-balanced and even handed justice are out of the question. Charity together with justice are the two pillars upon which the new social order must be rebuilt. None emphasized this stronger than Mr. Murphy, representative of the American Relief Commission in Europe. He made it quite plain that the American people were willing to dig down into their pockets still more deeply than here before whenever further aid might be necessary, but, he added, all this matter of relief can be nothing more than a temporary arrangement, bridging over to the more solid and permanent movement of clear, plain, common sense action in the political and economic life of all nations. Unless this is done, all the eloquence about reconstruction and its ideals, is like sand before the wind, blinding peoples who are eagerly looking forward to brighter and better days.

The Congress faced a formidable task in striving to solve the many problems of how best to save the lives of children in disease and death-stricken Europe. The immediate needs are still immense. Europe is now facing a very critical period. The stores of food which had been gathered and which had been rationed out with scrupulous carefulness during these long winter months, are fast melting away like the snow before the warmer and warmer rays of the sun. The hardships resulting therefrom are horrible to contemplate. In the train to Geneva I met a little Vienna girl, thirteen years of age, on her way to a Swiss family in a little mountain village. Better days awaited her there. She had hardly as much as tasted milk in the past year. In Vienna children to the age of one year receive about a pint of milk per day; from the age of one to six years they receive condensed milk, and those beyond that age receive no milk at all. Half a pound of potatoes, the same amount of flour, one loaf of bread, a pound of meat are rationed out to each person once a week. Otherwise they subsist on vegetables, mostly turnips. This little girl had come with 600 other Viennese children to partake of the generous hospitality of the Swiss people for a period of from two to three months. Switzerland has already done heroic work in this respect. According to a careful estimate of Mr. R. de Tavel, President of the Swiss Central Committee for suffering German and Austrian children, about 8,000,000 francs have already been expended through means of the hospitalization of these children in Swiss families; evidently an enormous sum for a small country like Switzerland. This country is, indeed, one of the few bright spots in Europe. Here humanity has been tried and proved to be as genuine as gold. Switzerland has written glorious pages for itself during the terrible days of the War, in caring for the sick, wounded and homeless soldiers and people of neighboring nations; and it is still writing them in its aftermath, pages of which its descendants will be justly proud. Enclosed on all sides by war-stricken lands, Switzerland has withstood the terrible horrors of the late War. Lord Robert Cecil, whose brother Lord William Cecil, Bishop of Exeter, read a letter of his at the Congress, said well in his communication:

"If men in England and in the United States, and in other countries, seem to be indifferent to this great movement of relief, it is not because they are ungenerous or even unselfish, but because they are unimaginative. Preoccupied with many affairs in business and in government, they have not brought home to themselves what ravages famine and disease have inflicted upon the innocent victims of the War."

When men see misery, it is usually not difficult to stir them to activity. It is needed only that they learn to see.

Imaginations were vividly stimulated by the reports read at the Congress. They carried with them the emotions of the living voice of men and women who had witnessed the horrors with their own eyes, and who had worked with the meager means at their disposal most heroically to stave off still greater disaster. I can only cite a few cases, but as these are quite typical of all the others, it is safe, in this instance, to conclude to general conditions. The average weight of boys and girls, fourteen years of age, was nine pounds less in 1918 than in 1914, according to tests made in the largest cities of Central Europe. This makes plain the dangers of underdevelopment. Due to this, tuberculosis has increased to an alarming extent. In Prussia it has increased 68 per cent. In Hessen 124.4 per cent. In Mecklenburg-Schwerin 128 per cent. Thirty-two thousand children are sick in the city of Leipzig, due to under-nourishment. In the city of Budapest five dispensaries for tuberculous persons are unable to take care of all the patients; the number is so large that twelve or fourteen would be needed. Vienna, perhaps, shows worse conditions than any

other section of Central Europe. Out of a child population, up to fifteen years of age, of 840,000, about 382,504, or nearly 98 per cent, are undernourished. Practically every child in this city is suffering from varying degrees of undernourishment. And no small wonder. This is how one of the reports describes conditions in Vienna.

"Vienna now looks slovenly, there is little traffic and one seldom sees merchandise carted; oaks are few and far between. The automobiles one sees appear to belong to foreign missions and to the numerous military commissions of the Entente. Milk carts, bakers' and butchers' carts are rare; stores are open, but often empty. In the market one finds cabbages, swedes, carrots, turnips, small second-rate apples and similar potatoes. Cats and dogs are very few; many of them ended as scavengers. The horses are thin, but well kept—many a cabman looks more starved than his beast."

The American Relief Commission is finding a wide field for work in this city. At the Congress the distressing announcement was made that its funds will allow it to continue its relief work only until about the beginning of August of this year. Who will then feed the three-million mouths, which the American Commission feeds every day, is difficult to say. It is quite certain that the distress will not be conquered even in its greatest extent by next winter. Conditions in Europe are too unsettled. They cannot be righted even within a year.

The real solution must be sought in making it possible for people to work again on a reasonable basis. There is no lack of will to work. But there is lack of raw materials and financial credit. In granting these, financial interests may, perhaps, have to sacrifice precious gains. But their duty of sacrifice in this matter is plain. Charity is a duty, but no less justice. The world sometimes seems to forget this.—A. J. Muench in America.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH EXTENSION SOCIETY OF CANADA

EXTEND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

"Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." This command of Christ to His Apostles needs little explanation. It is scarcely necessary to point out either that Christ Himself established the first missionary society, the Apostles under their chief. They were not just as the moment of that divine command and the rulers of a completely organized Church for God the Holy Ghost had not yet come and Christ though risen was still on earth. But the whole plan of God was at least announced. We dwell upon these words and emphasize them because of their missionary import. They also indicate what the Church with her divine Gospel was to be. Every creature was to hear God's word, every believer in the Word of God who received the baptism of Christ tried and proved to be as genuine as gold. Switzerland has written glorious pages for itself during the terrible days of the War, in caring for the sick, wounded and homeless soldiers and people of neighboring nations; and it is still writing them in its aftermath, pages of which its descendants will be justly proud. Enclosed on all sides by war-stricken lands, Switzerland has withstood the terrible horrors of the late War. Lord Robert Cecil, whose brother Lord William Cecil, Bishop of Exeter, read a letter of his at the Congress, said well in his communication:

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The Catholic Church Extension Society insists with all Catholics on the value of these truths. With the devoted Bishops and pastors of souls she labors as a handmaid of the Lord to hear of their wants, to know of their trials, to tell their story to the Church that is established and supply, if possible, a portion of their daily needs. She realizes that she is a portion and let us hope a valuable portion of the

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RELIGION

Religion is anterior to society. It is the focus of social virtues, the basis of all morals, the most powerful of all instruments, more enduring than any government.

It is stronger than self-interest, more universal than honor, more active than love of country.

It is the curb of the mighty, the defense of the weak, the consolation of the afflicted.

Religion is the covenant of God with man.—Cardinal Gibbons.

FATHER FRASER'S CHINA MISSION FUND

Almonte, Ontario.

Dear Friends,—I came to Canada to seek vocations for the Chinese Missions which are greatly in need of priests. In my parish alone there are three cities and a thousand villages to be evangelized and only two priests. Since I arrived in Canada a number of youths have expressed their desire to study for the Chinese mission but there are no funds to educate them. I appeal to you: charity to assist in founding houses for the education of these and others who desire to become missionaries in China. Five thousand dollars will found a house. The interest on this amount will support a student. When he is ordained and goes off to the mission another will be taken in and so on forever. All imbued with the Catholic spirit of propagating the Faith to the ends of the earth will, I am sure, contribute generously to this fund.

Gratefully yours in Jesus and Mary
J. M. FRASER.

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