

## IRELAND AND THE IRISH QUESTION

Rev. Fred. Williamson, Rector of Roslin Parish  
Replies to Mr. Garrett O'Connor.

Editor Ontario.

I was not in the least surprised when I read Mr. Garrett O'Connor's letter. In fact, I could have told the gist of it for it is the one and only story of Ireland's "betrayal." Let me tell your readers here, never to read a history of Ireland, if they desire anything authentic, for it is a well known fact that no such history exists. No Englishman could write it, and no self-respecting Irishman would attempt it. Better let your readers try Carlyle's history of the French Revolution as an alternative—they will be about as far forward when they have finished it, if they ever get that far.

He, like the others, make the inevitable appeal to John Mitchell, an Irish Presbyterian minister. It is a wonder to me he didn't take a more recent Presbyterian in the person of the late member for Derry. It is always a Presbyterian they call up. Well, let me tell him right now, that I come of good old Irish Presbyterian stock, and was nurtured in the bosom of Irish Presbyterians and I can say that any such appeal now is honest.

The Irish Presbyterian General Assembly has settled that point once and for ever, for in June, 1914, by a unanimous vote they decided against Home Rule, while ninety nine and one half per cent Presbyterian laymen said Amen to that resolution. The Irish Episcopal Church voted absolutely dead against it.

I am not appealing for my argument to bygone days when the real purport of Irish Nationalism was clouded by reason of other domestic troubles—and when men's minds were agitated by such evils as Landlordism. But with the clearing of these mists, the real issues were unfolded, and with the exception of a few malecontents, and "big boys," who remembered how Father's great-grandfather had to pay extra rent for self-made improvements. I say with these exceptions—and I know for it is not long since I left Ireland and I visit it yet, not infrequently—protestant Ireland is now Anti-Home Rule. Any action ever taken by Southern Unionists is taken from fear of isolation from the Northern Unionists, and the consequences to them and their property of a parliament in Dublin. Hence Mr. O'Connor's claim that there is a Protestant majority in Ulster for Home Rule is positively false, and is either due to ignorance, or is a deliberate misrepresentation. I can also say that not only was there a tremendous protest against Home Rule in any form by the Irish Presbyterian and Episcopal bodies—reiterated at every gathering of assembly and synod—but even the Society of Friends—Quakers—placed themselves on record as opposed to it. All you have got to do, Mr. Editor, is to write the Moderator of the Irish Presbyterian Church, or to the Lord Primate of all Ireland—Foliosat—in order to verify my statements. This will be more to the point than consulting ancient documents. Take even the attitude of Irish Presbyterians when in very recent times they actually—I mean Asquith and Birrell—foisted a University on Belfast. They refused to accept this sop offered to them, against the action of these men in establishing a Roman Catholic University in Dublin. Then to make matters worse a chair of Scholastic Philosophy was introduced in the Presbyterian University, that is a subject which could only be taught by a Roman Catholic priest. Presbyterians don't forget such insults. Let them try to introduce a chair, that would necessitate a Protestant clergyman, into the National University and see what would happen. Ulstermen of all denominations know their ground too well to be fooled by any scheme however clothed. These points simply emphasize a very few antagonisms.

I can speak with ease on this matter. For I moved among the Ulster people; was in business for years in Belfast; know the Ulster mind and know only two exceptions to that mind—Sir Hugh Mack and Sir Robert Keightley, and the sons of these old men are astonished at the attitude of their fathers. Ulstermen generally, however, don't take them in the least seriously, as their personal record is sufficient evidence against them. The former was proprietor of a newspaper that was fined five hundred pounds for slander; the latter always avowed himself a Unionist, but was mistrusted and finally in his keenness to get into parliament, contested the seat as a Liberal and again was turned down. Now he lives a disappointed man, rewarded with a knighthood, like the others, by the Asquith gov-

ernment for money spent in vain. Once Ulster finds out such men their chance of representing her in any way is gone forever. Traitors there are; traitors there always will be, but they come to the inevitable end.

Munro, an Irish Presbyterian, was hanged in the market square of Lisburn, and his head was strung up on the market house as a warning to all whom it might concern. Colonel Lundy, the traitor of Derry, escaped just in time, and his effigy is burned on the 18th of December every year as an evidence of the disgust and loathing of Irish loyalists.

We in Ulster have all the big generosity of heart, typical of the Irish, but thank God, the miserable cunning of our Nationalist "friends." In the not very far distant past, we can remember a few little tricks, whereby it was attempted to "prove" to the world that many Protestants in Ireland were in favor of Home Rule. It is a wonder that Mr. O'Connor didn't quote the "packed" meeting in Dublin, the real significance of which was not known until it was sprung on the world that "this meeting of Protestants and Roman Catholics had met to affirm their belief in the great benefits to the Irish people that would accrue from the granting of Home Rule." That trick failed, but it has been tried again and again, and is still being tried, reminding one of the story of the fox and the cat.

When Parnell died, the chief anxiety of the Nationalists was to find another gullible Protestant to take leadership and failing this had to fall back on John Redmond, but he is well known to every Irishman that had such protestant been procurable Redmond would never have been Irish Nationalist leader.

Redmond's death taking place when it did left room for no other alternative than Dillon, who promptly made an ass of himself to the great disgust of his friends, and the amusement of Ulster. Mr. O'Connor may succeed in pulling the wool over the eyes of a few Belleville people, who have never really been interested in the question, but those who count know better.

Then I notice how glibly he quotes figures. This was a sad weakness in John Redmond and a source of worry to his friends, for according to Redmond's figures there were more Irishmen at the retreat from Mons than actually took part in that glorious retreat all told—English, Scotch, Welsh and Irish together. I fear the Irish mind was never meant for mathematics. Indeed it would remind one of the humorist's attempt to figure out just how many apples Adam and Eve ate in the garden of Eden—for example Adam 8142 please Eve. If the one is ridiculous so is the other. Redmond and Mr. O'Connor simply assume that all Irishmen in the Colonies and the United States are Roman Catholics.

Further: Sir Edward Carson seems to have aroused his ire, and I don't wonder, for he has a very disconcerting way of making hidden things plain. Why Carson was admittedly the strongest man in Lloyd George's war cabinet, and the latter knew it and trusted him. As a matter of plain fact it was the adoption of Carson's policy that redeemed something of the debacle in the near East; it was his policy that ultimately prevailed as to how to deal with the Balkan States, or to quote his own words as nearly as I can recall them, "Why is Germany gaining such a hold in Greece? because she is afraid of Germany. Then for God's sake let us make her afraid of us." We did, I, nor no other man can tell one thing that any Nationalist did, except to embarrass the war cabinet. Carson only left the war cabinet when Lloyd George spoke of opening up the Irish question again, and that, too, at the most critical period of the Empire's history. One wonders at Lloyd George so far forgetting the real issue, however, he recovered himself in time to attend to matters that needed attention as to the gun-running episode off the coast of Antrim; these guns had the same object in view as Mr. O'Connor says his letter has viz defensive. Their meaning, being interpreted, was "Aut pax: Aut bellum." And don't let him make the mistake that Winston Churchill and Lloyd George nearly made, in June, 1914, of thinking that bluff entered the scheme, even though Gerard, the American Ambassador thought it so. The greatest mistake in history has been made by great statesmen, and Gerard is about third rate compared to some of them. Diplomacy is the name of ambassadors, and diplomacy has been well defined as two-thirds evasion. Hence diplomatists are not

much good when the other side means business. Germany was sadly disappointed in Ulster, but Nationalist Ireland suited her alright—She played the German game right up to the last day in the afternoon. No men don't bluff on such a scale. Winston Churchill found out it wasn't bluff, and when afterwards in the House of Commons his action, in sending war ships from Lamlash to Belfast, was put before him in plain English, it so appalled even that fickle-minded politician, that he jumped to his feet and screamed: "I repudiate the hellish suggestion," but he knew it was the truth. He afterwards tried to bring forth fruits of repentance by considerably modifying his ideas of Irish affairs—

read his speech in Dundee in the early summer of 1914. More evidence I can easily—quite easily—adduce that no bluff ever entered into the scheme. What Ulster was then, she is today—determined to resist to the last drop of her blood as her forefathers did any incursion of her rights, to think and act and live with in the Empire, of which she is, and always will be a disintegral part.

On the day war was declared on Germany, John Redmond rose in the House of Commons and declared that the Roman Catholics of the South would stand shoulder to shoulder with the Protestants of the North. Carson rose and offered the services in France of the Ulster Volunteers, who unlike the so-called Nationalist army, were trained by well qualified regular officers and non-coms. Redmond's pledge was never redeemed for so far from helping they tied up a large army which could have been employed in France, owing to their old harrowing tactics. Ulster on her part sent a whole division, apart from those reservists who had to rejoin their own regiments.

On the first day of July this fine Ulster Division went over the top at the Somme, and in a few hours went right through and beyond Thiepval singing as they fought, but owing to the division on their right being held up by barbed wire, they had to fall back for supports, and on that day they suffered nearly seven thousand casualties. It took the British three months to accomplish what our fine division accomplished in a few hours. For Thiepval did not fall into British hands until September, 1918. The flower of Ulster manhood fell on that day. Where, in the meantime, was Redmond's so-called army? Sir, I saw them with my own eyes drilling at the back of some houses in the Rathmines district of Dublin, and a more nondescript, miserable and disreputable crowd you couldn't conceive of. A good appellation would be "the muffer brigade," and this drilling took place on Sunday. God keep Ireland indeed, if those were type she was depending on; and they were, for I have known them since I was a boy.

And yet in fifty years time another of the type of Mr. Garrett O'Connor will be quoting Irish history to show the wonderful part Nationalist Ireland played in this war. There was not one Roman Catholic in the whole Ulster division—not a single man. Apart from regular army reservists Ulster sent nearly ten thousand more men to the war, than the other three provinces combined. There is no exaggeration in those figures, despite the reluctance for some peculiar political reason on the part of Dublin Castle officials, headed by Augustine Birrell, to publish the official figures. Ulstermen challenged them to do so, but they declined.

In six, at least, of the counties of Ulster we have a Protestant majority; the big industries throughout the whole province are owned by Protestants. Belfast alone pays two-thirds of the taxation of all Ireland—get this fact carefully. Now there is the crux of the whole question, for on those simple facts rests the Nationalist contention—a whole Ireland or none—for the Nationalists know perfectly that if they act decently their lot will be a perfectly just one in so far as treatment is concerned. It is vastly different with Protestants elsewhere in Ireland. Hence the anxiety of Southern Unionists. When Blucher rode through London with Wellington, he exclaimed: "My God, what a city to loot!" and the exclamation of every Nationalist when he visits Belfast is, "My God, what a city to tax!"

There is only one sensible thing now left to Nationalist Ireland, that is, to get busy and build up industries like we did in the North. If they are willing to work—though I doubt it—they have every facility. They have at Cork, one of the finest harbors in the world, where ship-building could be introduced; they have all the advantages of the Southern climate for spinning and weaving; they have good land for cultivation. They know all this, but they seem to go on the principle of some beggars whose philosophy is that there is no need to work if you can get others to do it for you.

If instead of following Mr. O'Connor's method of always raking up the grievances of the past; and which no

longer exist, but in memory; if, I say, instead of this constant grumbling and whining, they would shake off the shackles of their own making, and work, they would accomplish a great deal more, and get a hearing if they then wanted it.

Ulster in general, and Belfast in particular, went to work in earnest laboring under the same disabilities. If such they were—and today Belfast is the third port in the United Kingdom; has five industries, which of their kind are the largest in the world; contributes more to the wealth of the world than Ontario; has multiplied its population over and over again, until to speak of Dublin as the capital of Ireland is a huge joke.

No wonder, then, Sir, that we simply, but positively refuse to give up to a lot of grumbles and agitators what we have wrought by our own brain and sinew. We had to work hard, let Nationalists and Sinn Feiners do the same.

I would like to ask Mr. O'Connor what became of the nine hundred million dollars that were given to Ireland for purchase—and given mark you, by a Conservative administration at that. Ulster got none of it. No Liberal party—not even Gladstone's—ever treated Nationalist Ireland anything like so well.

The whole history of Nationalist Ireland has been bad. The Empire's difficulties have always been taken advantage of by them, and piled to the uttermost.

Mr. O'Connor refers to the Irish parliament. Well, let me tell your readers some facts that neither Mr. O'Connor nor any Irish historian can gainsay. During the nineteen years of the Irish parliament, the national debt of the country was multiplied thirteen and one half times and three times it brought England to the verge of war. During the closing years of the eighteenth century, when the Napoleonic power was then at its height and England was a life and death struggle, William Pitt, possibly the greatest Prime Minister England ever had, discovered that Irish Parliament was intriguing with the enemies of England, and he decided that there was no half-way house between the abolition of the Irish parliament, and the establishment of an absolutely hostile power in Ireland. He abolished it; and a commission of the time appointed to inquire into Irish affairs found that over two millions of people were living in virtual starvation. This is fact, Mr. Editor, and no amount of blaming England and pleading imaginary wrongs can condone the miserable past of Nationalist Ireland.

During the Boer war an Irish Boer brigade was formed under Colonel Lynch, and many a fine Britisher fell to the traitors' bullets. They still glory in this fact too. When our brave boys were giving up their lives on the hills of Africa, the Nationalist members rose in the British House and cheered to the echo every British reverse.

After John Redmond pledged his honor in the House of Commons what happened? The same old story. Priests from their pulpits made the most horrible statements. Sinn Feinism reared its ugly head, and many of our fine lads in the Sherwood Foresters, and other battalions died on the streets of Dublin and were denied the chance to fight the Boche.

Ireland from Dublin to Cork made itself like an ugly cur—cowering at that—biting at the flanks of a bulldog, when it was fighting another pest. And when occasionally the bulldog turned and gave it a nip, it ran off yelping, until it thought it had another chance to attack in safety.

No, for God's sake Mr. O'Connor don't begin to quote Irish history—past or present—it is bad reading. And if that priest friend of yours draws your attention to anything else ask him to explain his colleagues' utterances on Conscription in Ireland and Quebec.

Many a fine man, woman and baby lies at the bottom of the sea, through information given to German submarines by Irish traitors. Mr. O'Connor may appeal to America, but America is disgusted and American soldiers will not readily forget those who attacked them on the streets of Dublin.

And so I could go on and pile up evidence upon evidence that should all any man of ordinary feeling with shame, rather than lead him to attempt to condone it by the paltry excuses drawn from days that are long passed, and whose wrongs no longer exist, and even if they did, could never deserve the miserable blackguardly work being done in the name of freedom.

Asquith and Birrell have a heavy orme sheet to face, for had it not been for them, especially the former, the whole Sinn Fein movement would have perished long since. I don't owe my knowledge to Katharine Hughes—thank Heaven. I speak that I do know and testify that I have seen. I was in Dublin immediately after the insurrection of Easter, 1916. Had Asquith remained in London and allowed General Max-

well a free hand to continue his work much good would have resulted. As it was, General Maxwell had the situation so well in hand that thousands of avowed Sinn Feiners threw away their arms, and innocently, yet tearfully disavowed all connection with the movement. Sinn Feinism became decidedly unpopular, and it may become so again one of these fine days. Just watch the press columns, Mr. O'Connor for it promises to be interesting. Well, Mr. Asquith must needs step in and pat them on the head and tell them to be nice boys and no one would hurt them. That did it. Irish cunning saw a weakness—a flaw in you like—and Sinn Feinism became popular again. They actually accosted people coming out of stores for money to help their funds. I won't tell you here what my answer was, but it was to the point.

Today Asquith and Birrell are political outcasts—broken old men; discredited by their former followers. Great, indeed was the fall thereof, but who knows but some Irish historian may surround their deeds with a halo—or will it be a noose?

Fred Williamson  
Roslin, Feb. 6.

## Ontario Diocese is Flourishing

FINANCIAL AND MISSIONARY REPORTS BEST ON RECORD

Radical Changes are Proposed in Canons

Kingston Feb. 7.—The annual executive committee of the Synod of Ontario met in St. George's Hall Tuesday morning, and the meeting was largely attended, those being present as follows: Archdeacon Dobbs and Beamish, Rev Canons Pittot, Bedford-Jones, Armstrong Fitzgerald, and Woodcock, Rural Deans Buss, Crisp and Swayne, Rev Messrs. Matear, Coleman, Wright, Lyons, Kirkpatrick and Code, Judge Reynolds, John Dargavel, John Elliott, W. B. Dalton, W. B. Carroll, R. G. Wright, G. F. Rutland, F. F. Miller, B. S. O'Laughlin, J. S. Dawson, Fred Walsh, R. J. Carson, treasurer; Francis King, lay secretary; and Rev. J. W. Jones, secretary. In the unavoidable absence of Bishop Bidwell, Chancellor McDonald presided.

A generous donation from Major Arthur Mills to the superannuated fund was gratefully acknowledged. The treasurer's report was the best ever presented, this showing a net earning of six per cent. on invested capital, with little arrears of interest. This with the generous contributions throughout the diocese to the various appeals placed the funds in a satisfactory condition, and did not affect the one debt balance.

The bishop received \$4,850, while the clergy received increases, and only one or two missionaries received less than \$1,000. Two additional senior clergy received \$400 from the Clergy Trust Fund, while two superannuated clergy received \$50 in addition to their salary.

Reports on Missions  
Archdeacon Dobbs' report on general missions received great praise. This showed receipts for missions the highest on record, namely, \$19,400. Nearly \$9,000 was sent to the M.S.C.C. of Toronto; \$2,400 was given to Sunday school war memorials and the balance used for diocesan needs. The following grants were made to missions under Bishop Bidwell: Rawden, \$100; Amherst Island, \$200; Marmora, \$250; Kitley, Bannockburn, Tweed, Shannonville, Augusta and Madoc, \$200; Pittsburg and Mallorytown, \$350; Loughboro, Westport and Marburg, \$400; Sharbot Lake, Parham, Selby, Bancroft, Clarendon, Coe Hill, North Addington and Maynooth, \$500; special grants of \$100 were made to Bancroft, Edwardsburg, Parham, Selby and Wolfe Island.

A resolution of sympathy was moved by Canon Fitzgerald and seconded by Rev. J. de P. Wright, regretting the absence of Dean Starr, who was unable to attend the meeting on account of illness.

Proposed Changes in Canons  
The chancellor, Judge McDonald gave notice that at the next meeting of the Diocesan Synod, he will move an amendment to the Canon on discipline, striking out the clause which renders the clergyman liable to discipline for "officiating at the services of religious bodies not in communion with the Church of England," and will also move an amendment to the canon on "the composition of the Synod," which will have the effect of allowing females to be elected as lay representatives to the Synod.

MARRIED  
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- Women's Patent Button and Lace, odd sizes, reg. \$4.00 for \$2.49
- Men's Patent Lace, Gun Metal and Kid Button, reg. \$5 and \$7 for \$4.50
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