

A Description of Ireland's Great Manufacturing Centre - Some Humorous Incidents Showing the Antagonism of Its Residents Toward Home Rule.

The Famous Ulster Covenant Which Started The Troubles

Being convinced in our conscience that Home Rule would be disastrous to the material wellbeing of Ulster, as well as to the whole of Ireland, and as well as to our civil and religious freedom, destructive to our citizenship, and perilous to the unity of the Empire.

We whose names are underwritten, men of Ulster, loyal subjects to his gracious Majesty King George the Fifth, humbly relying on the God whom our fathers in days of stress and trial confidently trusted, hereby pledge ourselves in solemn covenant throughout this our time of threatened calamity to stand one by another in defending for ourselves and our children our cherished position of equal citizenship in the United Kingdom, and in using all the means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up Home Rule in Ireland.

In the event of such a Parliament being forced upon us, we solemnly and mutually pledge ourselves to refuse its authority, insure confidence that God will defend the right.

Hence we subscribe our names, and further we individually declare that we have not already signed this Covenant.

CHE inhabitants of Belfast, that splendid commercial city of the Emerald Isle, have fought Home Rule for over a hundred years, for they began their opposition as soon as they learned that the Irish down in Dublin were fighting for it, and this was away back in 1801, when the Irish Parliament was abolished and the legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland proclaimed. The chief point of issue is a religious one, and the antagonism of the Ulstermen towards the Catholic Church dates back much farther than the Home Rule agitation, for it was already established in 1690, when William came to Belfast—one of the strongholds of the Reformed faith. When the King drove through the streets to Belfast Castle the crowds shouted, "God save the Protestant King!" The same spirit reigns in Ulster today and Belfast Castle which housed the Protestant King in the seventeenth century was the first place given over to the Ulster volunteers.



Albert Memorial

stands on a high hill on the outskirts of Belfast, is now owned by Lord Shaftesbury. As is usually the case where religion is an issue both sides have waged a bitter warfare and there has been more or less bloodshed in the agitation. The present crisis seems to have been brought about by the practical certainty of Mr. Asquith's Home Rule Bill becoming a law without the consent of the House of Lords, together with Sir Edward Carson's sudden determination to resist such a Bill for this part of Ireland and the organization of a volunteer army for that purpose.

Descendants of Cromwell.

Ulster is inhabited mainly by descendants of the men who were sent to Ireland by Oliver Cromwell as farmers after he had subdued the country and of the Scottish Covenanters. It is these people, descendants of the most rigid Protestantism, who have made Belfast and the surrounding counties, and rather than bow to what they term Popish rule they are content to plunge England into a civil war. The animosity between the Catholics and Protestants in Ulster is confined to no special class of people, for it exists in all grades of society, from the four hundred down to the humble Scotch-Irish stevedore who has frequently refused to work beside another stevedore because he "hung his hat on a Catholic peg."

Rapid Growth.

The City of Belfast is pleasantly situated on the low banks of the River Lagan. A great part of the town is said to be not more than six feet

BELFAST - The Stronghold of the Orangemen



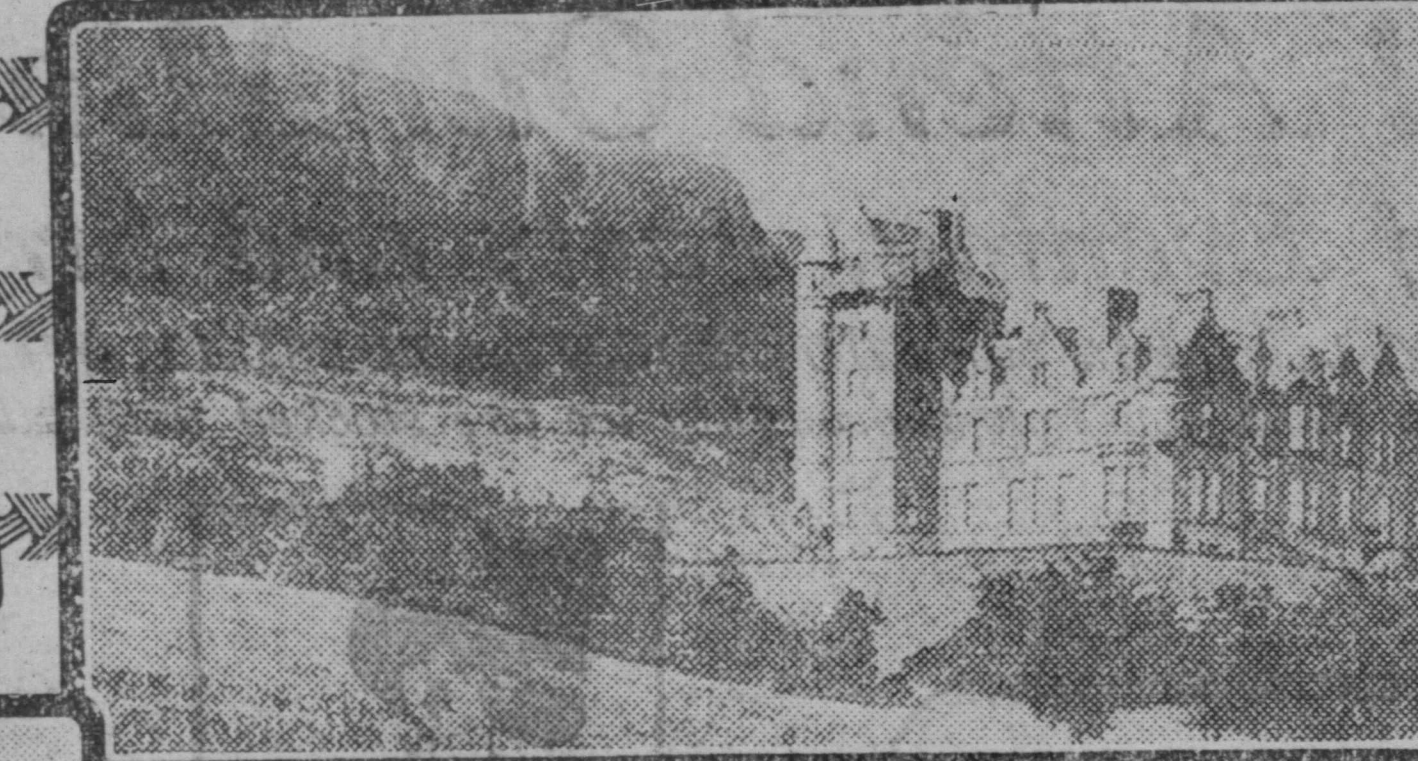
Castle Junction



Belfast Castle where 3500 of the Ulster Volunteers had their stronghold during the recent agitation

above high water mark, being built on ground reclaimed from the river or the sea. The harbor, originally a creek of the Lagan, has been greatly extended and improved, and is now one of the finest in that part of the world. The picturesque bay is well sheltered by the hills from the north and west winds. It affords a safe anchorage although not altogether free from sand banks. The quays extend for about a mile below Queen's Bridge on both sides of the river. The city is beautifully laid out with wide streets lined on either side with splendid business houses and fine residences. It has the best street car system and the cleanest hotels to be found in all Ireland. Its banks are prosperous, occupying splendid quarters, and its public buildings are imposing, especially the massive City Hall—the scene of so many demonstrations against Home Rule.

Belfast has grown rapidly, especially during the last seventy-five years. In 1841 its population was only a little over seventy thousand,



The imposing City Hall



The imposing City Hall

forty years later it had risen to over two hundred thousand, and in 1911 the census showed it to be a city of nearly four hundred thousand persons. Its growth of property values has been even more remarkable as these have increased ten times over in the same length of time. Belfast is the headquarters of the linen industry of Ireland. The work in these factories is done almost entirely by women and children, over twenty-eight thousand of them being employed and only six thousand men. The wages are low, but the cost of living is far less than it is in the United States. The greater part of the operations can be done by unskilled labor and the conditions under which the work is done are not always the best. Although there is a Child Labor Law it does not seem to be carried out strictly to the letter, for one finds children almost in infancy working in the linen factories. One of the curious clauses of the law is that children under fourteen years of age are allowed to work only three days each

who invested about \$200,000.00 of his private fortune in the industry. Then came an Act of Parliament for the encouragement of linen manufacture, and the work has been increased to such an extent that about fifty thousand looms are in use at present with over a million spindles. The flax used is nearly all grown in the Ulster provinces.

Home Of Huge Ships.

Belfast has two large shipyards which give employment to twenty-five thousand men, and only a short time ago the "Aquatoria," the largest passenger ship in the world, was launched at one of these yards. The "Olympic" was also built at Belfast. The city boasts of a large rope-making plant, a number of cigar factories, and the huge manufacturing plant of the famous Belfast ginger ale which is known throughout the world. As in all factory districts a large number of Socialists are to be found, but in the recent agitation the workmen seem to have forgotten their views on this subject for hundreds of them enlisted with the Ulster volunteers to fight Home Rule.

Belfast is an educational centre as well, for even in the days of Lord Macaulay he deemed Queen's College as "worthy to stand in the High Street of Oxford." The number of its students now runs into the thousands and many of the most influential men of Ireland claim it as their Alma Mater. Queen Victoria was greatly beloved, and it was this good and gracious sovereign who in 1892 conferred upon the Mayor of the city for the time being the title of Lord Mayor, and upon the corporation the name and description of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of the City of Belfast. A beautiful statue of Queen Victoria stands in the centre of the city. The Albert Memorial, erected to the memory of the consort of Queen Victoria, is perhaps the most imposing monument of the city, being in the shape of a huge clock tower.

Breathing Spots.

"Breathing spots," as the Ulsterman calls the parks, are numerous—six in number, and all well kept, especially the Botanical Gardens where some of the most beautiful plants grown in the British Isles are to be found. Belfast is without doubt the cleanest city of Ireland, and has none of the ill-smelling slums such as are to be found in the cities farther south. It has an excellent supply of pure water, a fine sewerage system, and well paved streets—in fact, were it not for the number of jaunting cars to be seen upon its streets the visitor might imagine himself in an up-to-date American city.

The Ulsterman is shrewd in business, and while more or less a bigot as far as his religion is concerned, he is nevertheless a good citizen and loyal subject to the English crown—so loyal that England cannot afford to impose Home Rule upon him against his consent.

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