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LONDON SATURDAY, NOV. 6, 1920

LORD MAYOR MACSWINEY'S DEATH

The long martyrdom of Terence MacSwiney is over. The high-souled and single-minded patriot is at last free. In a rhetorical outburst Patrick Henry exclaimed: "Give me liberty or give me death!" Quietly but with deliberate resolve MacSwiney determined that death would be for him the only alternative to liberty. "I wish to state," he said on hearing the finding of the court-martial, "that I will put a limit to any term of imprisonment you may impose. I have had no food since Thursday, Aug. 12th. Therefore I shall be free in a month." The President of the court asked: "If sentenced to imprisonment you will take no food?" "I have decided the term of my detention," replied the Lord Mayor, "whatever your Government may do, I shall be free, alive or dead, within a month." To that resolution he inflexibly adhered despite the fact that a month did not put a term to his agony. "It is not with those who can inflict death," he declared in his election as Lord Mayor of Cork, "but with those who can suffer most that the victory will rest." Before the world Mayor MacSwiney typified Ireland and the cause of Irish liberty. May not the long-protracted suffering before death came to his relief suggest that the country which he loved so passionately has also a capacity for patient suffering far beyond the dreams of the callous Government that could not break his indomitable spirit?

It is well to note here that the British press and people condemned the obduracy of the Government, and sensed the fact that with the dying patriot who suffered most the final victory would rest. On the authority of C. F. G. Masterson, one of the sanest and most enlightened of England's public men, there is convincing proof of this. In an article in the Daily News in reply to Bonar Law he enumerates those who in the interests of England as well as of Ireland demanded clemency for the Irish patriot:

(1) Practically the whole body of the old Unionist stalwarts of the South and West of Ireland, who have fought for Unionism all their lives, who have nothing but hatred of rebellion, and who may be presumed to have spoken with a certain sense of responsibility when they appealed not so much to pity as to reason against the forcing in this case of an irrevocable issue; (2) Practically the whole newspaper press of Britain, outside the "kept" Government newspapers, from the Times at one end of the scale to the Daily Herald at the other; (3) The unanimous opinion of the Labour Party and the Liberal Party outside the Government, which between them represent a substantial majority of the electors of this country; (4) The public opinion, wherever vocal, outside these islands, of the whole civilized world.

"These are formidable forces to defy and to condemn," adds Mr. Masterson. But they were defied, and this thoughtful and scholarly young Irishman whose philosophy of patriotism was suffused with passionate love for Ireland was given the victory through suffering. This is acknowledged by the Westminster Gazette which had this comment when death finally set MacSwiney free:

"The Government may urge a thousand reasons to prove that it could do nothing but what it did do. Nevertheless, it has been beaten by Lord Mayor MacSwiney. Englishmen have never failed in generous respect for those who resist them

to the death. They know that the death of this man is not a victory for them."

Even the very pro-British New York Times which, like some Canadian papers, unconsciously insults decent English sentiment by con founding pro-British with pro-Government, is constrained to admit as much in the course of a very pro-British article:

"Use and wont have somewhat dimmed the pathos of the self-inflicted death of Mayor MacSwiney, but its appeal will go far and wide."

The world will at present consider only the outstanding result, it sees an Irishman willing and glad to die if only the cry of his nation can be better made itself heard. Call it folly, call it madness, there it is just the same—a gesture of deep tragedy on a stage where all mankind looks on.

"Not the individual self-immolation is the thing to be reckoned with, but the intensity of the national aspiration and demand embodied in it. To this the most stolid Englishmen cannot be dull. They are not. It is now the almost universal admission of men of all parties in England that the Government of Ireland has been one long reproach to British statesmanship."

The Chicago Tribune, also pro-British, but not quite so obsequiously pro-Government as The New York Times, has this quiet but caustic comment on the state, outworn excuses usually advanced for "firmness":

"The Irish question is almost as much a part of American politics as it is of British. The rigidity of British law cannot go unbowed through the course of a revolution. The unveiled acquiescence of British law in the retaliatory work of the Black and Tans in Ireland is evidence that the law can be compromised to attain an end. This compromise embitters the Irish. A compromise with MacSwiney would have been an expedient, but it might have been a successful one."

The first quiet but firm statement refers to the "domestic question" clasp; and the plain spoken reference to what is now being perpetrated in the name of the law in Ireland is obviously a rapier thrust at Lloyd George's Lucerne statement in which he said: "A law which is a respecter of persons is no law. If the Cabinet departed from its decision, a complete breakdown of the whole machinery of law and Government in Ireland inevitably would follow."

The Tribune article, which we give in full on page 1, is marked more by plainness of speech to England than by sympathy for Ireland. It thus concludes:

"MacSwiney was even less flexible than his enemies. He gave his life to his cause in a fashion which required indomitable purpose, not in a flash of resolve or in a moment of peril, but in a submission to slow, wasting death, imposed by his own will, extending over an agonized period of seventy-four days. People may differ in their valuation of the principles for which he died or in their estimate of his cause. They may deplore the sacrifice and doubt its utility, but the unconquerable spirit of the man and his devotion to his cause are high in the annals of sacrifice to a national cause."

The Daily News of London, England, which reflects the decent English sentiment outraged by the Black and Tan Government, says:

"Every day Ireland is being welded more surely and more irresistibly by the Premier and his armies into a nation that will not be conquered. Irish nationalism will be given a stimulus almost incalculably effective by the Lord Mayor's death."

The French papers, so far as the cable informs us, are generous in their appreciation of the motives and clear as to the effects of the tragedy just ended:

"One can only bow down before the man who has died for his ideal," declares The Journal. And The Echo de Paris says: "The sacrifice made by MacSwiney will resound throughout the world as a heart-rending appeal of a suffering nation."

That, there can be no doubt, was the motive that inspired MacSwiney in his suffering and his sacrifice. Nor can there be any doubt that he succeeded to a large extent in arousing the conscience of England and of the world; how effectively time alone will tell.

WAS IT SUICIDE?

There are some moral questions arising out of the late Mayor MacSwiney's death that have occasioned inquiries on the part of readers of the RECORD. A word or two of explanation here, supplementing articles already published, may suffice to clear up their difficulties.

Mayor MacSwiney refused to take food and consequently died of starvation. Was this suicide?

There is a well known and universally accepted principle which many competent theologians hold covers the case: It is allowed to place an act indifferent in itself from which two effects follow—the one good, the other bad; provided that the good effect alone is intended, the bad merely permitted. This principle, whether explicitly so held or not, is, as we have said, of universal acceptance in practice. For instance, in the retreat from Mons it was often necessary to detach a small force to hold some point of vantage and delay the pursuing enemy long enough to enable the main body of troops to make good their escape.

The detachment thus sent on rear guard action was sent to certain death. Here the evil effect is the certain death of the rear guard; the good effect is the saving, or it may be only increasing the chances of saving, the main body. To make the parallel more complete suppose that a number of men volunteer for such rear guard action. No one thinks of charging them with suicide; everyone recognizes heroic self-sacrifice. Why? Because everyone recognizes that the good effect alone was intended, although the bad effect was foreseen, as a necessary and inevitable consequence.

Instances of the application of this principle might be multiplied, but this will suffice for the purpose of illustration. The Chief Magistrate of Cork believed that his course of action, whether it resulted in death or in his liberation by the Government, would focus the attention of the English people and of the world not so much on himself as through him on the barbarities of English rule in Ireland. He knew the indifference and apathy of the English people were due to ignorance and misinformation with regard to Ireland. Englishmen after Englishman has acknowledged and deplored this fact; the most courageous and high-minded amongst them tried to awaken the English people to what was being done in Ireland in their name. Mayor MacSwiney desired one thing, intended one thing and one thing only: to serve the cause of Ireland. That was the positive good effect, the evil, if the Government proved obdurate and merciless, he permitted, but did not intend or seek.

In suicide there is always an element of cowardice, of seeking to escape the burdens, the trials or the sorrows of life. In the patriotic hanger-striker's case there was unconquerable courage, unflinching devotion to duty as he conceived it, even to the ghastliest of deaths. He used the only weapon possible in the circumstances for him to use and died a soldier's and a hero's death.

We can understand that even the suspicion of suicide offends the Catholic conscience; for nothing is clearer in Catholic moral teaching than that suicide is murder, self-murder. The report that the moral issues involved has been referred to Rome for definite decision is most probably true; there is a question of fact as well as of principle involved, hence the diversity of opinion. To take the example already used by way of illustration. Suppose that it is charged that the time and place for the rear-guard were so ill-chosen, that it resulted in a wanton sacrifice of life without any good whatever being accomplished. A court-martial might find the responsible officer guilty of criminal recklessness, or of an error of judgment culpable or excusable. So the judgment of fact in MacSwiney's case may differ. For our own part we have not a doubt in the world that he accomplished the good effect intended; and in any case since we know from his whole life that he would shrink in horror from the suggestion of suicide, his sole object in abstaining from food while in prison was the good he believed he could accomplish—this alone was intended, death if it came was accepted, welcomed, for he was dying for the freedom of his beloved country.

Whatever be the final decision as to the morality of the act, in future it is quite evident that the hunger-strike as a means of protest can

accomplish little if any good. If stated by custom the appeal would lose all efficiency.

Another question arises from the fact that the dead patriot deliberately and unequivocally denied England's right to rule Ireland; denied the jurisdiction of her courts, the authority of her officials; and gave his full allegiance to the Irish Republic.

How can Canadians, loyal and contented British subjects, prize British ideals and cherishing British connection, how can such Canadians countenance the setting up of a republican government in Ireland? Why not advocate agitation within constitutional lines for the recovery of Ireland's right of self-government?

To any one whose memory carries back ten years the answer is evident. Carson and Carsonism killed forever Constitutionalism in Ireland. Carson defied Parliament, flouted its authority and nullified its decrees. Parliament weakly and basely yielded to this arch-rebel and thus abdicated its functions so far as Ireland is concerned. Carsonism was aided and abetted by Bonar Law and the present Lord Chancellor, and indeed by practically every supporter of the present Government's brutalities and barbarities in Ireland.

They publicly in press and on the platform furnished what Asquith, then Premier, characterized as "a complete Grammar of Anarchy." A sufficiently full, very accurate and dispassionate recital of these facts of recent history is furnished by the Rev. Dr. O'Gorman in "Ireland Since the Larnie Gun-running."

The Irish Republic is the logical and inevitable sequence of Carsonism. And this tremendously significant fact is recognized and proclaimed by honest Englishmen. It must be taken into account. It is taken into account by all Englishmen except those who share the responsibility with Carson for the present chaotic state of Anglo-Irish relations. It is, let us hope at least, not anti-British to stand with the most enlightened and courageous of Englishmen in facing the facts. No, it is what Lord Bantock calls the "honesty in high places" that is un-British or anti-British, and it is those who condone and applaud the "interchange of qualities between the combatants" that are traitors to all that is worth while in British traditions and British institutions.

We may fittingly conclude with some quotations from a letter by General Sir Hubert Gough to Common Sense, a thoroughly British weekly, published in London, England. (It would hardly flourish in Toronto or Belfast.) Inviting Englishmen to face the facts of the Irish situation General Gough amongst other things, says:

"No measures of repression or suppression, however severe, will restore order or contentment to Ireland. That is why I, in company with many others in England, in the Empire, and in the world, disagree with any purely military solution."

"If only responsible ministers would take long views, both in looking back on the past and gazing into the future, they should be able to convince themselves that generous action in regard to Ireland will be wise and statesmanlike action, as well as magnanimous. The Irish knot must be untied by sympathetic fingers and not by the sword or even by block houses and barbed wire. Great Britain and Ireland would be bound together by a durable friendship if the bold course is taken now; and, indeed, Britain needs Ireland's friendship. Her wide-flung possessions, and her, to my mind, greatly over-extended frontiers, should be an argument for multiplying friends and diminishing enemies. Otherwise the Empire must take the risk of being overwhelmed by the pressure of hate and jealousy. If Britain's policy is guided by true greatness and wisdom, Ireland will not be one among her enemies, but one among her friends and brothers."

"The suggestion here put forward for serious consideration, therefore, is that the British Government should 'face the facts,' and send a representative to discuss the future of Government of Ireland with leading Irishmen, including, of course, the Sinn Féiners, who are now the predominant party."

The British representative, avoiding the ambiguous and cautious methods of the professional officials and diplomats, should say to the Irish representatives: 'England wants to be friends with you Irish. She believes we can be friends, she wants to see you happy and prosper-

ous. Owing to the proximity of Ireland she must have some concessions from you, such as the use of all or some Irish ports for her navy, and the denial of similar privileges to a foreign power. As regards your internal affairs, England has duties and responsibilities towards Unionists and Ulster, and she asks you to give guarantees which will satisfy her. Subject to this, you can discuss any form of Government, including even a Republic, if you really wish. Britain will faithfully help you. Now, what do you say to this? Will you not realize that she is in earnest and meet her halfway on the path of friendship?"

Instead of heeding the counsels of General Gough and many other enlightened Englishmen the Government has given Ireland what The Times and many other British journals have branded as "Legalized Lynch Law," which, by the way, is a libel on the lynching mobs, for these at least confine their barbaric rage to the real or supposed culprit.

THE REAL LABOR DIFFICULTY

BY THE OBSERVER

The first principle in the payment of employees is that they should have a living wage. And this should be estimated in a reasonably generous way, and not in a niggardly way.

Men have a natural right to live, and to live in the married state, and to bring up a family. Whatever may be added to the general cost of living by the paying of such wages ought to be accepted by all good citizens.

Now, in and about every industry today there are men who are paid high, and men who are paid low. When I speak of men who are paid low I mean men who are married and have families and get less than four dollars a day: I think that is a fair statement, in view of the present prices of the necessities of life. When I speak of men who are paid high I mean men, married or unmarried, who get upwards of six dollars a day; and I think that is a fair statement, even in view of present prices.

The low-paid men ought to be brought up to standard; and this ought to be done before any further increases are given to the high-paid men. In the past, increases in wages have usually been given on a percentage of previous earnings. Thus, a man who was getting \$3.50 a day when a ten per cent increase all around was given, went up to \$3.85; while a man who was getting \$7.00 a day went up to \$7.70.

It seems plain enough that it was the \$3.50 man who really needed the 70 cent increase; while the \$7.00 man could have got on well enough with the 35 cent increase.

This unevenness in the payment of wages puzzles public opinion; and creates coolness in sympathy where sympathy would come freely and fully if the case of the low paid men were dealt with as it ought to be dealt with.

I do think that the labor unions ought to take up this question, and level up wages. Much of the resentment which is felt throughout Canada at the repeated strike, is felt because the public know that a very large number of high paid men in coal mines, machine shops, and other industrial plants, are now getting incomes exceeding very much the incomes of professional men; exceeding, in many cases, two or three times the income of the more prosperous farmers; and that these high-paid men are not satisfied and are still trying to drive their wages up.

It is not the demands of the low-paid men that have aroused a cold, slow anger in the general public. It is not the four dollar man that is thought of when you hear the average citizen say, "If they want to strike, let them strike and keep on striking. It's time they had their lesson."

No, when people talk like that they are thinking of high paid men, and of high-paid agitators who keep the situation warmed up all the time. There is no doubt whatever that neither employers in general nor the consumers who pay all costs of production, would oppose a proposition to bring the low-paid men up to standard: but unfortunately for the low-paid men and for their families, they get the rough edge of the situation every time. The increase that they need goes to the high-paid man, when wages are increased on a percentage.

I have inquired why labor unions do not put the case of the low-paid workman in the forefront of their

agitation; and I am told that labor unions cannot be run in that way; and that in order to keep men together solid in a union, all must get an increase, when any get it.

If that is so, the sooner that situation in the labor unions is changed, the safer will be the future of labor unionism. The excessive demands of high-paid workmen are consolidating against the unions a tremendous weight of public opinion; and powerful as the labor movement is it cannot afford to encounter that obstacle.

And, the methods which give some workmen far more favorable treatment than others in the same unions, can only end, if persisted in, in creating divisions within the unions themselves; especially when those who get the least are those who need the most.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

HERE THIS ISSUE OF THE CATHOLIC RECORD is in readers' hands the United States Presidential election will have been decided. The conservative elements in the community, both there and in Canada, will hope that with the election out of the way the nation will settle down to the practical business of government, and to the restoration of the national dignity which is usually dragged through the mire in a Presidential election.

IT WILL BE a source of some satisfaction to many that even at this late date the spirit of economy is to prevail in Government circles at Ottawa. It is not too much to say that wastefulness had become a settled habit, almost a policy, in Parliament and throughout the Departments. During the War it amounted to a public scandal. Parsimoniousness is one thing; intelligent economy, even in small things, quite another. And, in the estimation of observant visitors, wastefulness, and the worship of mere pleasures have become the cardinal sins of the Canadian people.

WHAT MAY BE taken as a preliminary to an appeal to Canadians for co-operation in the Fund that is to be raised for the restoration and preservation of Westminster Abbey, appears in the Toronto Globe in the form of an article descriptive of the glories of that venerable fane by the Dean of Westminster, its custodian and administrator.

WHAT THE Dean says of the Abbey, as the "priceless treasure of the English-speaking race" is unquestionably true. It is in itself an epitome of English history from the old far-off Saxon days to the present time. Within its walls, as recounted in these columns last week, repose many of the illustrious men and women of the intervening centuries. Its chief glories, however, lie in its Catholic foundation, its possession of the mortal remains of at least one canonized saint, and of other holy men and women who in days long past gave to the preservation and propagation of the True Catholic Faith the energy and devotion of a lifetime.

HAVING REGARD to its more recent associations, however, and its present status under the Established Church, the culminating assertion of the Dean that "it has a message of its own, religious, vital and true, as the mother shrine of the English-speaking peoples," and that it is "an influence with the fulfilment of a great spiritual purpose and with the living realities of the people's Christian faith," however feelingly expressed, must be relegated to the merely rhetorical. Westminster Abbey has a message, and exudes a spiritual influence, it is true, but they have not their source in the purposes which the Abbey is now made to serve, but are rooted deep down in the period when unity of the Faith was a reality in England. St. Edward the Confessor, Harold, the last of the Saxons, Edward the First and his successors, Chaucer and the early chroniclers would find themselves in strange company, and the witness of stranger rites were they to return in the flesh to the Abbey of today.

SPEAKING OF Westminster and its Catholic memories, the yearning for things Catholic seems to penetrate every section of English society just now, notwithstanding current unrest and the antipathy stirred up in some quarters towards Ireland. For example, the King held an investiture of 22 Knights of the Bath some

months ago, the ceremony taking place in the beautiful and historic Henry VII. chapel. This ceremony was notable because of the revival of mediæval rites and the appropriation of beautiful prayers from the Catholic ritual, even the actions—as when the Sovereign genuflected to the altar because of the Real Presence which should be there—being retained. The drawing of their swords by the Knights at the same time, and turning them towards the altar because the handles bore the cross—this too was redolent of the Ages of Faith, and their consecration of chivalry to the Most High. It seems clear that while faith in the multitude decays a section of the English people realize more and more the great loss which the sixteenth century revolt brought upon the nation, and while current amenities may delay the day they draw nearer and nearer to the only re-union that counts.

ANARCHY

THE INFAMY IN IRELAND A GREATER DANGER THAN THE WAR

The Nation, October 2

The impulse of decent Englishmen here is to say nothing of the political effects of the Irish outrages; and simply to offer a prayer to whatever gods they know that some day or another they may be disinfected of this Black and Tan Government and its works. But the results are pretty calculable. The Government cannot escape them. One may dismiss its half-apologies, which are three quarter confessions. The black and tans are simply a cellar-organization. They are not the front-porch agents of Downing Street any more than Mr. Philip Kerr is a paragon agent of the Foreign Office. The Government enlisted them, paid them, and clothed them. Probably it did not provide the infamous journal in which they were egged on to their work. But it found the men who planned it. Put honor aside, for no man in power today regards her. But it is still a political consideration that friendly relations with America will become impossible until this efface has been purged away.

What is the political remedy? There is none. The country's political life is in the hands of a man equally deficient in conscience and intellect, whose guide is expediency, totally divorced from the sense of right. Against him, the Lads of the Liberalism, who have been looking out from their ruined sanctuaries on the sack of Balbirrigan and Trim, can do nothing. The Labour Party means well, but it is simply beginning to be a party, and has no moral force to arrest the political decadence of England is not yet given to it. And the trouble is that there is no great independent and upstanding power in British politics. The Parliament is a debased George III. type; while the quality of the Cabinet (which is not a Cabinet at all, but a quorum for getting Georgian decrees stamped as Bills or administrative orders) may be judged by the fact that every "Liberal" in it prefers his salary to the honor of his country. In our institutionalism there is little hope. The War has killed it, and the destruction of the party system, with its limited but real morality, and its delicate intellectual appeal, seems to forbid its revival.

No self-respecting man can have any dealings with a Government which reveals itself in such apologies as those of Sir Hamar Greenwood and the Daily Chronicle. I was told the other day that the most distinguished living exponent of Imperialism had frankly given it up, and to scores of thinkers and journalists who (like myself) have for six years tried to think of the modern British power as a (much battered) vessel of the Lord, or at least have aimed at fashioning it that way, it now appears merely as gulls among the gulls. Having got rid of our dirty rage of righteousness, and stood revealed for what we are, we can perhaps begin to realize our responsibility not merely for the 100 or so Irish towns and villages our servants have gutted or assailed, but for the 100 or so murdered Irish policemen whom these acts have "avenged." This is what is done in the name of the British Empire, because all Empires come at some time or another to the stage when such things happen. And we can add that at least the mass of the British people do not do them or wish them; that they are very different people from Lloyd George; and that they do not deliberately desire to serve his ambition, or to cover up his blunders, by such crimes as were committed at Mallow and Balbirrigan.

What, then, of public opinion? This infamy in Ireland has placed the British people in a position unfavorable to a moral judgment of politics. For it is in far greater danger than from the War. The Government which writes the dread word Anarchy on its banners has lost control, moral and political, and can never regain it. It is itself the thing it seeks to suppress. All that one can look for is that the people will (literally) govern themselves this winter, and summon to their aid such natural pieties and sensibilities as the War and the rule of Lloyd George has left them. There is one good omen. The press is improving.