

The Catholic Record

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A CHAPTER IN IRISH HISTORY: Ireland's long and varied history perhaps there is no chapter more important...

One in Canada is better equipped for the task than this still youthful Irish Canadian priest...

Dr. O'Gorman indulges in no flights of rhetoric, makes no impassioned appeal; but on the contrary, gives us a sober, temperate, restrained recital of facts.

To those accustomed to read and hear that the Irish were shirkers and slackers in the War it will come with something of a shock to find that native born Irishmen led native born Canadians in voluntary enlistment.

Better informed, we believe that he would have said: "Ireland's war effort was not merely wonderful; it is unparalleled in history."

It is unnecessary, though the temptation is great, to call attention to Dr. O'Gorman's admirable treatment of many other phases of the recent history of the present Irish movement.

The direct conclusions and logical inferences from Dr. O'Gorman's temperate historical sketch are presented with less restraint and greater righteous indignation by ex-Premier Asquith as the following despatch shows:

London, March 10.—Former Premier Asquith, who was recently re-elected to the House of Commons for Paisley, spoke scathingly last night of Irish conditions before the "Eighty Club," of which he was re-elected president.

The great obstacle to frank and friendly co-operation between Great Britain and the United States, he asserted, was Britain's failure to apply to Ireland the principles they had both agreed at the peace conference were the governing principles of civilization.

A MOMENTOUS DECISION: Dark as are the clouds which lower over Ireland, the 17th of March, 1920, was illumined by some bright rays of hope and good omen.

On the morrow of St. Patrick's Day the United States Senate by a vote of 45 to 38 incorporated into its resolution of ratification of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations this reservation:

"In consenting to the ratification of the treaty with Germany the United States adheres to the principle of self-determination and to the resolution of sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for a Government of their own choice, adopted by the Senate on June 6, 1919, and declares that when self-government is attained by Ireland, a consummation, it is hoped, is at hand, it should promptly be admitted as a member of the League of Nations."

For reasons having nothing to do with the Irish reservation, the Treaty failed of ratification. The President, in an obstinately autocratic spirit that has disheartened and disgusted his warmest friends, practically denied to the Senate the coordinate treaty-making power given it by the Constitution.

No page in Canada's glorious War history is more glorious than that which records the valor and patriotism and magnanimity of these ex-patriated French religious. No retraction of baseless calumny was ever more crushing than the facts and figures marshalled by Mr. Murphy in reply to Mr. Rowell's reckless accusation.

It is easy to understand the exultant tone of the following cablegram sent by Eamonn De Valera to that whole-souled, single-minded and indefatigable Irish patriot—Arthur Griffiths:

"A Te Deum should be sung throughout Ireland. We thank Almighty God, we thank the noble American nation, we thank all the friends of Ireland here who have worked so unselfishly for our cause, we thank the heroic dead whose sacrifices made victory possible."

"Our mission has been successful. The principle of self-determination has been formally adopted in an international instrument. Ireland has been given her place among the nations by the greatest nation of them all."

He was entirely willing to accept the principle of self-determination as applying to Ireland.

This is quite clear from the N. Y. Times report of the proceedings:

Mr. Lodge then moved to amend so that the reservation would constitute an acceptance by the United States of the doctrine of self-determination so far as Ireland was concerned.

Senator Borah objecting to such limitation of the principle of self-determination, Mr. Lodge thereupon said:

"I made an effort to detach the question of Ireland from all other questions in the world, so that we could get a vote upon it, in the hope that we might adopt a reservation favorable to Ireland, and expressing our sympathy with her efforts and desires for self-government. The Senate having kept that language in, and making this a general declaration, has made it impossible for me to vote for it, desiring as I do to ratify the treaty."

The Globe, or any one else, is welcome to all the comfort to be derived from quoting Senator Lodge in the premises.

Significant also was the vote on Senator Sterling's amendment to strike out of the reservation the expression of hope that Ireland might soon have its own Government. This was rejected by a vote of 70 to 11.

MR. ROWELL STILL SQUIRMS BUT DOES NOT RETRACT

The duel between the Honorable Charles Murphy and the Honorable Newton Wesley Rowell covers many political issues with which the CATHOLIC RECORD does not concern itself.

There is just one question in issue between Mr. Rowell and us, and that is the deliberate, definite and specific charge he made against a body of Catholic gentlemen, the expatriated members of French religious orders who found an asylum in Canada.

In his North Bay speech, Dec. 6th, 1917, Mr. Rowell charged that these gentlemen "used that asylum to undermine Canada's strength in the struggle" in which we were then engaged.

Mr. Murphy investigated the facts and found that all these maligned clergymen of military age and fitness went back to fight for France, that many of them had already laid down their lives in that struggle at the time Mr. Rowell charged them with abusing Canada's hospitality and undermining Canada's strength.

No page in Canada's glorious War history is more glorious than that which records the valor and patriotism and magnanimity of these ex-patriated French religious. No retraction of baseless calumny was ever more crushing than the facts and figures marshalled by Mr. Murphy in reply to Mr. Rowell's reckless accusation.

Mr. Rowell admitted this; but he did not withdraw or apologize.

He never made the slightest pretence of substantiating his charge.

But he has never retracted it.

At the last session of Parliament Mr. Rowell made a labored effort to deal with the matter.

But he did not offer a jot or tittle of proof that his accusation had any foundation; nor did he have the manliness or self-respect to withdraw it.

We analyzed that speech at the time. Mr. Murphy has read that analysis into Hansard. There let it stand. In so far as the political historian may be interested we are content to rest our case on what is there set forth.

In his latest speech in the House of Commons Mr. Rowell made this reference to his famous—or infamous—accusation:

"My hon. friend devoted much time to my North Bay address. I dealt with that matter at the last session of this House, and it is not my intention tonight to go over the matters I then discussed. 'As I said in the House last session, and as I said in Bowmanville the year before, at the time I spoke I did not know that members of religious orders had gone over to France to fight in the War. I said that, had I known that, I would have paid them the tribute that I did to the other clergy of the Roman Catholic Church and which was undoubtedly their due. My view—and a fair reading of my statement will show it—was that I was not referring to the men who had gone overseas but to those in the province of Quebec who had remained behind. But I said then, and I repeat now, that if my language was capable of the construction that it applied to the men who had gone overseas, I regret it, because I would be the last man in

the world to say anything disrespectful to or anything other than the warmest word of appreciation of men who had gone overseas to serve their country as these men did."

For all we know Mr. Rowell may consider this ample reparation for his reckless accusation against the body of men about whom "he did not know" anything in particular except the parroted slander which chimed in with his prejudice and suited his political purpose.

He does make a pitiful confession of complete ignorance of what the men whom he maligned had done or were doing; but his balking at the straight and narrow path of manly reparation is infinitely more pitiful still.

How much more satisfactory to Mr. Rowell's friends and admirers would have been the simple, straightforward admission:

"Mr. Speaker, when I charged those gentlemen of the French religious orders who had found an asylum in Canada, with treason to the land of their birth, and monstrous abuse of Canada's hospitality, I really knew nothing about them except certain rumors which I now recognize were entirely without foundation. I am immeasurably proud of their glorious record in the War and I regret that I was ever misled into making the charge that I made against them. I avail myself of this opportunity of withdrawing, fully and unreservedly, that groundless charge, and of tendering these gallant men the most ample apology it is possible to make to them."

The acclaim from political friend and political foe, from French and English, from Catholic and Protestant, from the exiled sons of France themselves, would have gladdened all honest hearts and have swept like an ozone-laden breeze through the ill-ventilated corners of Canadian public life.

But Mr. Rowell preferred the shifty evasions which we have quoted.

If he thinks that he has thus repaired a wanton injury we do him the justice of reproducing his words.

However, if that is Mr. Rowell's thought, we must admit that a man may regard himself as a great Christian statesman, an apostle of Uplift and Service, a very devotee of Self-Sacrifice, and still have notions of truth and honor not dreamt of in the philosophy of men who moult through the lower reaches of human endeavor with just common, everyday, average instincts of decency and duty.

JUDGE RUSSELL'S LETTER

Judge Russell, of Halifax, on whose address to the Canadian Club of Moncton we commented last week, has written a letter to the Evening Mail of that city, correcting the report of his speech. He says he was commenting on the Irish grievance as stated by Professor Turner, of the University of Michigan, which is as follows, as quoted by Judge Russell:

"His statement of the Irish grievance to the effect that, although it was admitted that the people of Ireland were enormously over-represented in the Imperial parliament, nevertheless, being of a different race and religion from the majority of the members of that august body their affairs did not receive and could not receive satisfactory attention at the hands of their fellow members."

Professor Edward Raymond Turner has shown some tendency to be fair; but he has shown a vast ignorance of Irish politics; and the above statement of the "Irish grievance" is proof of that ignorance.

It is nonsense to say that the Irish grievance is, that Irish affairs cannot receive satisfactory attention at the hands of their fellow members. The Irish grievance is, that the country is administered under an antiquated, corrupt system of Boards instead of government departments of a modern type; that the whole civil service of Ireland is officered on lines of religious test; and that every attempt, in forty-five years, to pass acts to ameliorate that system, has been voted down by a combined vote of the two English parties; thus forcing the Irish members to form a third party in the Commons; and to accept the fate of a third party; which is never to be listened to except when they hold the other parties at their mercy; and that, in the nature of things, can happen only once or twice in a generation.

Exclusion on religious grounds from the direction of the affairs of their native country is a very mad denying form of persecution; and it is

of no use to point to land acts, or any other acts, in amelioration of other grievances, whilst that grievance remains.

The trouble is that Judge Russell and Professor Turner have never gone into the facts of the case; but are gravely exchanging guesses. Judge Russell ought to examine the blue books which deal with the civil service of Ireland. He ought to acquaint himself with the mysterious mechanism of the Board system. He ought to find out how the taxes of Ireland are raised and how they are spent. He ought to find out how many Catholics hold a public office in that much-exploited country. He ought to search the mysterious and intricate workings of Board Regulations, and shipping regulations and railway regulations; and all the other paraphernalia by which Ireland is ruled for the benefit of, and in the interests of, English capitalists.

Now, he won't find out all or any of this from Professor Edward Raymond Turner, who knows no more about it than Judge Russell; but he can find out a great deal about it from Hansard; from the published works of Irish M.P.s; from such articles of those of Mr. John F. Taylor, K. C., in the "Nineteenth Century;" and from many other sources which he and Professor Turner seem never to have heard of.

We quote him further: "I proceeded to say that this was exactly what the population of Ulster felt would be their grievance if the proposals of the Sinn Fein party were put in execution by instituting a single parliament for the whole of Ireland. Their misgiving was, as I had frequently heard it expressed, that they would occupy the same position in such an Irish House of Commons as the Sinn Fein party and probably the Irish people generally felt that they occupied in the British House of Commons. I then proceeded to say that I thought that in both cases the grievance was probably more imaginary than real and that the minority in either case would enjoy the same influence as the province of Quebec had always enjoyed in the parliament of the Dominion of Canada in which although they were in a minority their rights had always been respected and conceded by the English-speaking majority."

Judge Russell ought not to use that inaccurate and deceptive phrase, "the population of Ulster." If he has been reading the papers of late, he has no doubt read of the laughable promptitude with which the "Ulster Unionist Council" abandoned all talk of a "Ulster Parliament," and gave up the idea of a legislature for the nine counties when they were suddenly brought to realize that in such a legislature, the "Unionists" would be, very probably, in a minority.

But even with that correction made, his proposition won't do. Judge Russell tries to be impartial; and his impartiality consists in putting on the same footing the century-old claim for self-government of Ireland, and the claim of a part of the population of a few counties to be treated as a self-governing unit; though they are clearly, upon every sort of political, social, and commercial considerations, bound up with the nation of which they form a part.

Judge Russell attempts to liken to each other two things which can only be contrasted.

He refers to Quebec. All the references which have been made to Canadian politics and parties, in the discussion of Irish politics, have been unhappy and inaccurate. Mr. Lloyd George led the way with his absurd variation of Canadian history when he told the Commons that Lord Durham's Report had led to the establishment of separate legislatures for Quebec and Ontario; and others have followed his lead.

In order to make a parallel case of Quebec we should have to re-arrange Canadian affairs as follows:

(1) Cut out Quebec from the administrative control of all the Canadian Departments of State except the Department of Militia and Defence and the Department of Naval Affairs.

(2) Establish in the City of Quebec forty-five Boards: Post Office, Harbors, Agriculture, etc., etc.

(3) Fill the multitude of offices under those Boards with officials in the proportion of 80% of Protestants and 20% Catholics; including every office from the highest judicial office to the lowest menial task.

(4) Make the patronage of those offices party patronage of the politicians of the rest of Canada and the minority of Quebec.

(5) Give no representation in the Cabinet to those Boards, so that

there should be no man in the House or Senate who has the responsibility for what they do, with one exception; the Chief Secretary for Quebec.

(6) Appoint to the office of Chief Secretary for Quebec, not a Quebec M. P., not a French-Canadian; but always a Scotch, Irish or English M. P.; and always an M. P. for a seat outside Quebec.

(7) Reject utterly every motion, every bill, every suggestion, made by the members elected by the majority of Quebec; form a majority combination of both parties to vote down every attempt of that provincial majority to pass legislation, and even every motion for judicial investigation of administrative corruption.

Keep that up for a hundred years; and then say, if you will, to the people of Quebec: "Oh, you need not fear: You have influence here; we have passed four or five good bills for Quebec in the last hundred years. Cheer up; the first century or two of this sort of government is the worst."

Then you would have a parallel case in Quebec.

Judge Russell does not do well to enter into the financial relations between England and Ireland without taking up the Report of the Royal Commission on Financial Relations (of which our own Edward Blake was a member,) which found that Ireland had been overtaxed two hundred million pounds up to that time—about 24 years ago—of which not one cent has ever been repaid.

Judge Russell might come to the conclusion if he would direct his unquestionably keen mind to the matters we have indicated to him, that he agreed with Lord Dunraven, who, in the days when he was strongly opposing Home Rule, described the present system of governing Ireland as a grotesque "anachronism."

Judge Russell will probably admit that if Quebec were situated as Ireland is, it would give her small comfort to have a representation in the House, which though large, was not large enough to secure any change in that "grotesque anachronism."

Moreover, both under the Act of 1914 and the present Bill, that "grotesque anachronism" is in its main lines, continued. The matters and services to be placed under local legislative control are so limited that scarce a province in Canada would be content with such limitations.

Judge Russell finishes with the proposition that it would not be statesmanship to coerce "the Ulstermen." That is to say, the county majorities of four counties out of thirty-two, in a country which is, upon every consideration of law, politics, history, geography, trade, and commerce, a unit, and which has always, and for all purposes, and in all ages, been treated as a unit, ought not to be coerced into acquiescing in the political system which is the choice of a national majority; which majority includes the minority of even these four counties. More than that, these four counties are not to be coerced into refraining from coercing the county majority of two other counties and dividing them from the national majority with whom they have voted for generations.

Is it not curious that so many people who start out to be impartial, end by supporting the most extreme partisan claims?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

LOVERS of poetry (and they are not confined to any one rank or condition of society) must needs be interested in anything that concerns those who have given to the world its sweetest strains. We are reminded of this truth in looking over an old note book wherein are recorded sundry reflections on John Keats, culled from various sources. One in particular which has to do with the poet's brother, George, who about a hundred years ago emigrated to America, settled at Louisville, Kentucky, and died there, deeply regretted, in 1841, may be of general interest.

WRITING many years ago, Mr. James Platt, whose own name is not unknown in literary circles, recounts his discovery in the Western cemetery, Louisville, of the burial place of George Keats. Both because of his relationship to his more famous brother and of his own poetic gifts, this grave deserves to rank among the literary shrines of America. It appears, however, to have fallen into complete oblivion. Standing beside it the pilgrim's mind would naturally first revert to that lowly grave in

the far-away Protestant cemetery Rome, where lies all that is mortal of the author of "Endymion," "The Eve of St. Agnes," and other immortal poems, and the affecting lines of that most imaginative of elegies, the "Adonais" of Shelley, irresistibly recur to mind:

"Go thou to Rome—at once to Paradise,

The grave, the city, and the wilderness; And where its wrecks like shatter'd mountains rise, And flowering weeds and fragrant censers dross; The bones of Desolation's nakedness, Pass till the spirit of the spot shall lead Thy footsteps to a slope of green access, Where, like an infant's smile over the dead, A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread."

OVER THE GRAVE of the less well-known, though scarcely less gifted (as some assert) brother in Kentucky, is a weather-stained headstone bearing this simple inscription:

"In memory of George Keats, a Native of England. Born 1st March, 1778. Died 24th December, 1841." Close by is another and smaller stone bearing the one word "Isabella," but at the foot of George's monument is carved the name, "Isabella Rosalind Keats," with dates of birth and death, showing her to have been but seventeen when she died. This is the grave of George Keats' daughter, who was a beautiful and accomplished young girl, and is said to have borne a striking resemblance to her uncle, the poet, both in look and character of mind. She is said to have had considerable talent as a painter, and to have given promise of poetic ability also. "Her name," opines Platt, "suggests the romantic feeling of the family with which Keats influenced a generation of English and American poets (including so masculine a man as Tennyson himself) and doubtless her name lent something of education to her disposition and character. Her name suggests, too, the romantic poem of 'Isabella, or the Pot of Basil,' and her story was not less sad than the heroine of her uncle's beautiful but somewhat immature production." The real Isabella's death was sadder in its circumstances than even that of the poet's, who died abandoned and alone in Rome. It is related that she was found late one evening, in the parlor of her father's house, mortally wounded in the breast from a gunshot accidentally discharged. She died in one or two hours. The whole world, touched with the beauty and tenderness of the name's associations has long enshrined it, as even in its sadness, a precious possession.

OF GEORGE KEATS' wife no mention is made in this connection. We know, however, that they were closely united in bonds of sympathy and affection, and of the wife's qualities we have testimony in John's sonnet, "To G. A. W.," written before her marriage. George himself is described by contemporaries as a refined and cultivated gentleman, still remembered and honored in Louisville and whose home, "one of the most elegant and tasteful in the city," was in his owner's lifetime the centre of such literary and art-loving society as the place possessed. We get pleasant glimpses of him in Lord Houghton's Life of the poet, where also are to be found many of the latter's letters, full of tender appreciation of the much-prized brother in far-away Kentucky. To him also is inscribed one of the more youthful sonnets of the early-dying, yet deathless poet, who by his genius and character has falsified his own affirmation that his name was "writ in water."

MATTHEW ARNOLD ON CATHOLIC CHURCH

Matthew Arnold once wrote: "Catholicism is that form of Christianity which is the oldest, the largest, the most popular. It has been the great popular religion of Christendom. Who has seen 'the poor in other churches as they are seen in Catholic churches? Catholicism envelops human life, and Catholics in general feel themselves to have drawn, not only their religion from their Church, but they feel themselves to have drawn from her, too, their art and poetry and culture. 'And if there is a thing specially alien to religion, it is divisions; if there is a thing specially native to religion, it is peace and union. Hence the original attraction towards unity in Rome, and thence the great charm when that unity is once attained. All these spells for the heart and imagination has Catholicism for Catholics, in addition to the consciousness of a divine cure for vice and misery.'"