

by their industry and intelligence. True, indeed, many recognise that the majority have not a fair share of the plums and that the minority have a privileged position; but against this it is contended that be the origin of the privilege as it may they have won it and held it for a couple of centuries and should not be asked to resign the fruits of their victory to a pack of idle peasants.

Again, it is urged that though much was said in the course of the war about the rights of small nations and the like, the fact remains that Ireland stood aloof from the war, her sons shirking their plain duty or even sympathising with if not actually supporting Germany, and consequently have no claim to consideration in the settlement of the world. To a certain extent this view is sometimes expressed by warm partisans of President Wilson, who moreover try to explain away his apparent indifference or hostility by adding that Ireland is after all a very small place and a very unimportant place, and should not be allowed to embarrass him while engaged in solving mightier problems.

It is also urged that the English connection is of such ancient date and has been so useful to Ireland that it would be against the best interests of the latter country to bring about any marked change in existing position: and besides, it is added, how could Ireland hope to protect her own shores against invasion and other possible dangers without the protecting wings of the English fleet.

But the argument that really weighs with men of education and influence is that based on the danger a free Ireland would be to England and English interests, affording a future base for the invasion of that country, and always ready to prove a standing menace to the future peace of the world. They admit, of course, that Belgium and Holland are in equally close proximity to England; but they point out that these two countries have little influence outside their own borders and have little or no wrongs to revenge, whereas Ireland has powerful ramifications in various parts of the world, cherishes keen memories of the past, and would always be ready to welcome any and every chance of settling old scores the moment an opportunity arises.

It is worth noting that the feature in Anglo-Irish relations of the present day that has most impressed Italians is the imprisonment of Irishmen without trial and the treatment meted out to men who are merely political prisoners; and as a possible item in future policy it is no harm to bear in mind that Italian parliamentarians are very much alive to the contrast between England's interest in the Slav nations and her attitude towards Irish aspirations. It is quite within the bounds of possibility that Italian statesmen may seize on the contrast and urge it home at a convenient moment.

GO, PLOUGHMAN, PLOUGH.

Go, ploughman, plough,
The mereing lands,
The meadow lands.
All life is bare
Beneath your share,
All love is in your lusty hands.

Up horses, now,
And straight and true
Let every broken furrow run;
The strength you sweat
Shall blossom yet
In golden glory to the sun.

—SEOSAMH MAC CATHMHOAIL.

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MISSION WORK ON THE DARK CONTINENT.

The January meeting of the Academia of St. John's Seminary was held on the evening of the 29th, with President James Grimes in the chair (says the *Boston Pilot*). After a short business meeting the remainder of the session was taken up with a very interesting essay on "The White Fathers," and an illustrated lecture on "Abyssinia."

The essayist, Mr Daniel Donovan, outlined the foundation and work of the White Fathers. This wonderful society was founded in 1867 by Cardinal Lavigerie. The scene of their first labors was Northern Africa. Algiers was the focal-point of their efforts, and here many Islamites were persuaded to exchange the Crescent for the Cross. There gallant soldiers of Christ gradually pushed southward until they had reached the outskirts of the burning Sahara.

Mysterious City of Soudan.

Their great goal in Northern Africa, however, was Timbuctoo, the mysterious city of Soudan. To reach it meant a journey of 1200 miles across the Great Desert. The first two attempts resulted in the martyrdom of six zealous priests, and it was not until the French victory in 1894 that permanent results were attained in the Soudan. From that time the work has met with amazing success, so that to-day the Vicariate of Soudan presents the fairest Christian garden in the upper half of the continent.

Meanwhile, Equatorial Africa was not being overlooked. The White Fathers pushed into this perilous country, and so untiring was their energy that, where 40 years ago a cross had never been seen, five splendid vicariates flourish to-day—a monument to the unquenchable spirit of these workers in Christ's vineyard.

Uganda Missions.

Uganda also came under the influence of these tireless missionaries; and almost overnight 160,000 of its inhabitants have found in the shadow of the Cross that peace which Heaven alone can give.

Such is the work of the White Fathers. They have grown from a nucleus of three seminaries to a community of 500 priests and 250 Brothers. Over a quarter of a million neophytes have been guided by them to the crib of Bethlehem, and 136,000 catechumens are annually instructed for Baptism. Eighty-three thousand children are being taught the true wisdom of God and man in 3000 schools. The sick, the orphans, the aged, and the lepers are receiving Christian comforts in 300 charitable institutions.

"Abyssinia."

The lecturer, Mr. George Casey, delivered an illustrated travelogue on "Abyssinia." With the aid of many slides, he vividly portrayed the conditions in which the people of this wild country live. The domestic and religious customs of the Abyssinians were shown to good advantage. The labors of Father Bateman, a zealous missionary, were shown in their humorous and serious side, to the great enjoyment and edification of the audience.

After the lecture, Rev. Joseph F. McGlinchey, D.D., Spiritual Director of the Academia, entertained the members by recounting some of the difficulties which missionaries in Africa have to overcome.

Life would be too easy, heaven too lightly gained, if the victor's crown could be won by a single struggle. In that battle the heart's best blood must be drained; the wearied soul must stand to its arms again and yet again. There will be many an apparent truce, and perhaps many a sore defeat, before the end, which sometimes seems so far, is won at last.—Christian Reid.

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