

ITALY AND IRELAND

Hitherto a profound silence has reigned in the European press on the subject of Ireland's national aspirations and intentions (says *Nationality* of recent date). The censorship, the refusal of passports, and the poison of anti-Irish propaganda have blinded Europe to the facts of the Irish situation. England has everywhere been represented as the apostle and defender of liberty. Ireland, if remembered at all, was not supposed to be a distinct nation, but a sort of discontented Yorkshire, inhabited chiefly by law-breakers and criminals. But the silence is being broken at last. The truth at last is beginning to leak through. A week or two ago long and carefully considered articles were published in Italy, full of facts, quotations, and arguments, in which the Irish cause was set forth in great detail, and was boldly advocated.

The *Popolo d'Italia*, one of the most widely read papers in Italy, printed two articles, each a column and a-half long, with double headlines extending across two columns. In the first of these ("Towards an Irish Republic") the overwhelming triumph of the Republican Party at the General Election is made clear. Dr. McCartan's communication to the United States is given in full. No one (says the writer) understands anything about Sinn Fein because the leaders are kept shut up without trial in English gaols, while the Irish people are held down by martial law as in a straight jacket, and are prevented from communicating with the outer world by a censorship of the severest kind. Arthur Griffith is quoted on the "wall of paper," and the writer asks whether the Sword of Justice, which has hewn down so many barriers of granite, is to be baffled by this trumpery and immoral obstruction. The antiquity of Ireland's nationality and culture is emphasised, her age-long struggle for freedom is described, and the pamphlet on the ethics of Sinn Fein is cited to show the lofty character of the national ideal. On the other hand, the *Times* is quoted to show that the English are still relying on the system of forcible repression they practised generations ago, and particulars are given of the army of occupation in Ireland, its numbers and equipment. The meaning of the tricolor is explained, as well as Ireland's resolve to hold out against English tyranny to the last; and finally, the article, in which argument is piled upon argument and quotation upon quotation, affirms the right of Ireland to present her case to the Peace Conference.

The second article ("Can Ireland Stand Alone?") deals at length with the allegation made by the *Morning Post*, and by ignorant politicians of the type of Walter Long, that English tyranny is the only alternative to Irish bankruptcy. The area and population of Ireland are compared with those of other small European nations, and figures are given to show how Irish revenue is drained away remorselessly into the English Treasury, and the implacable thoroughness with which Irish development has been suppressed is indicated. The Irish Nation (says the writer), whom the English revile as bankrupts and beggars, but whom in truth they have bled white, "pays England every year an enormous sum for the privilege of having maintained over them an alien tyranny which they abhor." The nationhood of Ireland is again insisted on and England is warned that "not with fetters and the prison will you ever extinguish the eternal flame of patriotism in the heart of a proud and ancient nation."

Another Italian newspaper, *L'Italia*, in its "Notes on International Politics," devotes the greater part of a column to a discussion of the Irish situation. It says that on the Continent you may meet with people of every nationality—even from China, Japan, Siam, or Lithuania—"but a Sinn Feiner you will never see, for the very simple reason that he requires a passport in order to cross the Channel, and England will never allow him to have a passport." The threat of the *Times* that the Irish Republican movement will be crushed as effectively as the movements of '29, '48, and '67 is again reproduced with scorn, and a sharp contrast is drawn between England's professions as "the

liberator of oppressed nationalities" and her secret oppression of Ireland. The paper says that the result of the General Election and the proclamation of the Republic are facts "too eloquent to admit of reply," and urges that the same principles of justice should be applied to Ireland as to other oppressed nationalities.

England is not likely to welcome the frank discussion thus initiated in Europe on her secret treatment of the Irish Nation. As the *Statist* lately pointed out, she is now the only Great Power left who, contrary to the opinion of the whole civilised world, is holding down millions of unwilling subjects by the sheer power of the sword. But the damning revelation, so long delayed, could not be postponed for ever. It is coming at last. "Just a little exposure," said President Wilson at the Sorbonne University, "will settle most questions." May the God of Nations grant that it may be so in the case of Ireland.

OBITUARY

MRS. JOHANNA NOLAN, KUMARA.

There passed away peacefully at her residence, Tui Street, Kumara, on April 16, a widely-known and highly-esteemed resident in the person of Mrs. Johanna Nolan, who had attained the ripe age of 75 years. The late Mrs. Nolan had suffered a great deal with heart trouble, and was receiving medical attention up to the last attack, which caused her sudden and unexpected death, in the presence of her family. The deceased was an exemplary Catholic, and being of a kind and generous disposition, she was held in the highest esteem by all who knew her. She also held a warm place in the affections of the Sisters of Mercy, who were so often summoned to her bedside during her sudden illnesses. The late Mrs. Nolan was predeceased by her husband some years ago. One daughter and two sons—Miss Nolan and Messrs. William and John Nolan—are left to mourn the loss of a devoted mother, and to them the sympathy of the whole community is extended. The last sacred rites of Holy Church were administered by Father O'Hare, who also officiated at the interment in Kumara Cemetery.—R.I.P.

MR. EDWARD O'CONNOR, HOKITIKA.

The death occurred on Saturday, May 17, after a brief illness, of Mr. Edward O'Connor, of the Southland Hotel, Hokitika. The deceased, who had reached the age of 74 years, was born in Kilkenny, Co. Kerry, Ireland. He came out to Melbourne in the ship *Champion of the Seas*, in 1866. In the following year he came to Hokitika, where he engaged in goldmining and contracting till 1879. He then became licensee of the Imperial Hotel, and six years later bought the Southland Hotel property, opposite, which he successfully conducted up to the time of his death. Deceased was married in 1879, and leaves a widow, four daughters (Sister M. Bernard of the Convent of Mercy, Lyttelton, Misses Mary, Catherine, and Johanna O'Connor), and three sons—Edward and Patrick (on active service) and Martin, and two brothers—Mr. Patrick O'Connor, of the police force, Dunedin, and Mr. William O'Connor, Rimu, to mourn their loss. The deceased's eldest son, James, made the supreme sacrifice on Gallipoli as a member of the N.Z. Expeditionary Force. The very large gathering at the funeral on May 21 testified to the esteem in which the late Mr. O'Connor was held. The Hibernian Society was strongly represented at the obsequies, which were conducted by Father Clancy.—R.I.P.

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