

have deliberately left them out, because I do not believe that anything that we can now say on this side of the Channel is going to have any effect upon the fortunes of the Bill. Its passage will be secured or will fail according to developments in England upon subjects wholly irrelevant to Home Rule or to Irish opinions, Unionist or Nationalist. To this general statement there are two partial exceptions. I dealt with one of them just now, when I showed how Irish Unionists who were willing, even at the last moment, to make the best of a bad job, could influence the Bill for good. The other exception is an argument which I observe you use pretty frequently to abolish persons who wish the Bill to be amended with Unionist assistance. You seem to believe that the central fact in the whole situation is the civil war which is going to break out in Ulster, and which is going to make Home Rule impossible. Well, sir, I live in Ulster, and

I Don't Believe in the Civil War.

Is Ulster, then, not in earnest in her opposition to Home Rule? Of course, she is in earnest in opposing what she fears will be a reign of terror. If you believe that the proposed Irish Parliament would commence oppressing Protestant and destroying Ulster industries, then you naturally prepare for a rebellion. If the Irish Parliament were fool enough to give any genuine cause of complaint to Ulster, then civil war would really be within sight. My view is that these fears are imaginary, and that when Ulster finds herself jogging along under Home Rule as peaceably as she ever did under the Union (perhaps more so), then the rifles will be made into firewood and the swords into pea-stakes. It is perfectly true that Ulster would be a very serious proposition indeed, if there were a prospect of her fears being realised. But, before the occasion for any rebellion could arise, the Bill must first have been passed. Therefore, even if you should be afraid of the situation in Ulster, it is necessary to prepare for the intervening period, during which it will still be possible to secure valuable amendments. The critical moment will come, not when you expect Ulster to be in revolt—i.e., after the Bill is passed—but when we come to see that the only choice lies between the Bill as it stands and the Bill amended. If things should continue to move along the lines they now appear to be on, the genuineness of Irish Unionist patriotism will soon be put to a very severe test. If they refuse to help in improving the Bill, they will be guilty of doing definite injury to the prospects of good government in Ireland during the period of re-adjustment to the new conditions.

When will a move become necessary? The time will, I believe, come before long—probably between May and July. I have written in the hope that some of those who read may think over the problem quietly before the moment for action arrives.

FOOTPRINTS OF THE CELT IN MALTA

I never felt more proud of my Irish blood and of my Catholic faith than on the day I first landed in Malta. If I did, it must have been the day after (writes a correspondent of the *New York Freeman's Journal*, who attended the Eucharistic Congress). The Union Jack floated from every fortified hilltop. Several British battleships lay at anchor in the harbor awaiting orders for Constantinople: and, as our boat hove to, an officer in English buttons came aboard and asked each passenger as we passed in line before him in the cabin: 'Are you a British subject?' The question was put in English with a Maltese accent, and I was glad to be able to answer, 'No, I am an American citizen.' It was well into the night when we had passed this inquisition, and told the cabman to drive us to the Hospice of the Blue Nuns. This was some two or three miles distant. The cab passed along ramparts and beneath forts skirting the inner quarantine harbor until it emerged on the farther side and began the climb of Sliema Hill, the highest point on the North-east coast.

Church and School of St. Patrick.

On the way to Sliema that night we passed a large institution, newly built and surmounted by the symbol of man's redemption. Looking out of the cab window I read in large letters high above the entrance, 'Church and School of St. Patrick.' Truly, I said, if the flag of England has encircled the globe, there is something else more dear to me that has followed it into every corner, and dogged its footsteps with a holy vengeance. Owing to the late hour we put up at a hotel adjoining the Sisters' hospice, and next day moved into the quarters provided for us by the good nuns.

The Mother Superior is an Australian born of Irish parents, two other Sisters are English, and the remainder are all from the Emerald Isle. On the very first day I visited the seamen's ward, where I found an old Irish sailor with his rosary on the stand beside his bed. He was a John White from County Wexford, and if there was any part of the world that he had not been in during his forty-five years of seafaring I did not succeed in finding it out. There was an Englishman and a Swede in the same ward.

In answer to some question I put in regard to religion, John said: 'Oh Father, I can always hold my own with them when they come to talk of religion. I always keep that with me,' and he pointed to a little book on the table. 'When the officers and all are around and we talk about religion, I always say to them, where are the good men that ever left the Catholic Church and became Protestants? We get the best of your men. Look at Cardinals Manning and Newman; and then I say to them, did you ever know or did you ever read of any Catholic wanting to be a Protestant or sending for a Protestant minister when he was going to die?'

One of Nature's Noblemen.

John was one of Nature's noblemen, and, indeed, he may have been descended from some noble chief of a gallant Wexford clan. He showed it in every act, and was as different from the other seamen in the ward as day from night. I dropped in one morning to see him when he was preparing to leave for his home in Wexford, and he said: 'Oh Father, I have decent people to go to. I come of good stock. I drank good milk.'

As I left him, I thought of Dean Swift's saying: that he could discern the descendants of the old Irish nobility in the laborers who worked on the Dublin quays. And, after all, may there not be much in that old Irish pride of race and pedigree? 'I came of good stock,' said John, 'I drank good milk.' Who will deny that it matters much whether men have drunk the milk of mothers whose blood has coursed down the centuries through the channels of chastity.

These Blue Nuns, who do nursing also in the home, are properly known in religion as the 'Little Company of Mary.' Their hospital building at Malta, just completed last year, is the gift of a New Englander named Clapp, who married a Maltese lady at Washington, became a Catholic, spent his last days at Malta and left his money to erect a hospital where these Irish virgins of Christ dress the wounds of British seamen.

Next door to the hospice, and occupying a beautiful plot of five or six acres, is the convent school of the Mesdames du Sacre Coeur. Including the day scholars they have a school of three hundred pupils, and the Rev. Mother Superior is a Madame Stewart, hailing from Armagh, the primatial city of St. Patrick.

When I had settled down in my room after making the acquaintance of the good nuns and after my interview with John, I found that thought was still haunting me which had warmed my Irish blood on the night previous. It has often been expressed by lips no less eloquent than those of Webster. It is that if England has carried her drumbeats and martial airs around the world, Ireland has followed with the faith of St. Patrick, and raised the Cross of Christ wherever the Union Jack has been planted. With this thought I inquired for St. Patrick's school, and soon found myself looking up at the statue of Ireland's Apostle that guards its

George Barrell

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