

Irish News

NEW IRISH NOVITIATE OF MISSIONARY SISTERS—LARGE COMPENSATION AWARDS—DEATH OF A GREAT IRISH NUN—"ULSTER'S" CLAIMS.

The new Novitiate of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary was recently opened at Killeshsudra (Co. Cavan) by the Most Rev. Dr. Finnegan, Bishop of Kilmore. After the celebration of Holy Mass, his Lordship received seven postulants into the new congregation, founded for the conversion of the native women and children of Southern Nigeria, and for the pagan mission of Africa. The seven Sisters, wearing their white habits, received the Cross of the Rosary, and an appropriate sermon was preached by Father Kearney, C.S.Sp., of Blackrock College, Dublin. After the ceremony the Dominican Sisters from Cabra, who are in charge of the new Congregation, entertained the Bishop and clergy.

The large sum of £79,800 was awarded recently as the amount of compensation for the destruction of Castle Bernard (Castle O'Mahoney), Co. Cork, the residence of the late Earl of Bandon, K.P. Of this sum, £37,500 was given for the destruction of the Castle and £42,300 for the loss of its contents. The whole amount has been paid, and there was no stipulation attached to the award.

At Clifden (Co. Galway) Circuit Court Lord Killanin was awarded £17,400 for the destruction of Spiddal House, Connemara, by armed men, on April 28, 1923, £14,850 being allowed for the house and £2600 for the contents. Lord Killanin, according to his counsel, was now an exile in London, broken in mind and body, and would never live in Ireland again. Judge Power, in making the award, said that it was a most melancholy case, and he awarded the amount without any conditions as to rebuilding.

On October 23, at the Wexford Circuit Court, claim for compensation by Senator Sir Thomas Esmonde for the burning, in March, 1923, of his mansion at Ballynes-tragh, near Gorey, Co. Wexford, was heard by Judge Doyle. The original claim was £77,496, while subsequent claims for loss of personal property were lodged by Col. L. G. Esmonde and Mr. Osmond G. Esmonde, and other relatives. After several negotiations, the Ministry of Finance agreed to a specified sum, subject to proof of malice. Mr. J. L. Esmonde, B.L., asked for costs on each of the claims, and eventually Judge Doyle allowed the claims to stand with a view to an arrangement as to costs being come to.

By the death of Mother M. Clare Elliott at Sion Hill, Blackrock, the Sisters of St. Dominic have lost one of those venerable pioneers in the work of Irish education who have done so much for the higher education of Irishwomen during the past forty years.

Mother Clare had reached the venerable age of 90 years, and it is 60 years since, at an unusually early age, she was first elected Prioress. She, therefore, had a leading part in all the developments of the work of the Order and its expansion during more than half a century.

During her first priorship, in 1867, six of the Sion Hill nuns sailed for Port Elizabeth, South Africa, to establish a convent there. Three years later ten Sisters were sent to Dunedin, New Zealand. Both of the missions have flourished exceedingly, and Mother Clare never lost her interest in them. In 1882, under her far-seeing guidance, the now famous convent in Eccles Street was founded. As an educational centre it has served not only Dublin and Ireland, but also the greater Ireland beyond the seas. There was brought to full success the secondary education of Irish Catholic girls.

So marked was the success that when, in 1893, the late Archbishop of Dublin desired to see the organisation of a University College for Irishwomen, so as to enable them to take full advantage of the degrees of the Royal University, it was to Mother Clare that his Grace turned for the work. The result was the establishment of St. Mary's University College, where further educational laurels were won and the cause of women's education advanced.

Through all her achievements and with all her progressive spirit, Mother Clare remained always the simple, gentle daughter of St. Dominic. She was a wonderful woman, but always a true religious. Scores of nuns were trained by her for both the home and the foreign mission. Her community regarded her as their Mary Aikenhead.

Mother Clare belonged to a respected family of North Dublin. She was related to the late Right Rev. Dr. Forde, V.G. Modest and retiring as she was, her work and name were well known in the Rome of the 'sixties. She filled a long life in the vineyard with the most fruitful toil.

In the first of two articles he is contributing to the columns of the *London Star*, Captain Wedgewood Benn, Liberal M.P. for Leith, subjects "Ulster's" pretensions to an analysis in the light of constitutional and other facts.

"It is said," he writes, "that Ulster is a self-governing State, with an area of six counties, reluctantly accepted but irrevocably granted, and that to tamper in any way with her powers and boundaries is unconstitutional is a breach of pledges, is illegal and unjust."

"We may well ask why, if Northern Ireland has this independence,

- (1) The Home Office represents her in Parliament?
- (2) Her members sit and vote at Westminster?
- (3) She secures grants for unemployment and police from British funds? and
- (4) The taxing power remains in London?

"Is it possible that Mr. Snowden decides the rate of Customs duties but Sir James Craig decides whether they are to be levied? That Mr. Walsh demands supply for the British Army, but that Sir James Craig decides what boundary it is to defend?

"If the Act of 1920 cannot be amended by the British Parliament, how comes it that the Act of 1914 was repealed in a single unnoticed clause, that the Southern Parliament was created in 1920 and destroyed in 1922 without a word from the area concerned, that a Governor and Privy Council were created for the benefit of Northern Ireland by an Act specifically amending that of 1920? The words of the Judicial Committee (whose authority is the highest) may be cited —

The Government of Ireland Act, 1920, which it is the purpose of the Act of 1922 to alter and amend.

"There is a further fatal flaw in this constitutional plea. If the Act of 1922 could not affect their position, why did the North pay any attention to it? Why did they admit its authority by availing themselves of the right to option out under Article XII?

With whom was the solemn contract made to hand over six counties? Was it with Ireland? Was it with Ulster? Was it by the consent or desire of the border counties, Tyrone and Fermanagh? Clearly not with Ireland, which, as a whole, has been unflinchingly against partition. Clearly not with the disputed areas. And as to Ulster it returned a Home Rule majority. Why, therefore, were six counties selected?

Captain Craig's Confession.

"The reasons were very frankly stated in March, 1920, by Capt. Craig. The Unionist Council in Belfast rejected three counties, and accepted six because that was the maximum area in which they could be sure of a majority.

"What sort of sacro-sanctity belongs to a boundary drawn despite the wishes of the inhabitants to suit the desires of a political caucus?

"A mere glance at the Act of 1920 will dispose of the suggestion that the Treaty conflicts with it, and is in some strange sense illegal. Section 4 of the 1920 Act withholds from the Northern Government any power respecting treaties with any part of his Majesty's Dominions. Section 6 declares the power of the Parliament of the United Kingdom to make laws extending to Northern Ireland, even on the reserved matters. Section 75 declares the supreme authority of the Parliament of the United Kingdom to be 'unaffected' and 'undiminished'.

"And, lastly, as to justice and fairness—the strength of the Ulster case, which for 40 years prevented the grant of Home Rule, was this—that a minority must not be coerced. The Unionists of all Ireland then formed 26.1 per cent.; the Free Staters in Northern Ireland now form 34.4 per cent. How strange that a party which has appealed so successfully to the British sense of fair play should now, in its turn, refuse to its own minority even a limited opportunity to select its form of government!"

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