

1. In every Irish National movement for a hundred and fifty years Protestants have taken a leading part. Thus, Grattan was a Protestant, and the volunteers who won an Irish Parliament for him were Protestant to a man. Moreover, the Irish soldiers who fought against England in the American War of Independence were largely Protestant. Mitchel, Smith O'Brien, Davis, Parnell, Biggar, were Protestants, just as Jemmy Hope and Putnam McCabe and Henry Joy McCracken before them were. In the movement to-day there are Protestants among the rank and file and among the leaders. We need only mention Blythe, Barton, Hobson, and Darrel Figgis, who have been in English gaols because they want a free Ireland.

2. The subjugation of Ireland was undertaken by Catholic England first. Catholic England forged a papal document in order to justify her invasion of Ireland. Thus, the struggle began between two Catholic countries, and not between Catholics and Protestants. It was never sectarian. It was *economic* in the days of the Henrys as it is to-day. Ireland was persecuted by Catholic England as well as by Protestant England.

3. Cardinal Bourne and Cardinal Gasquet are not Protestants and yet they are on the side of the Orangemen to-day. The Duke of Norfolk, the leading Catholic layman in England, took the platform beside the Carsonites against the Catholics of Ireland. To-day one of the bitterest enemies of the Nationalists is Denis Henry, the Catholic Irish law officer who plays second fiddle to Greenwood.

4. While we have the Bournes and the Gasquets and the Norfolks against Irish freedom, we have Presbyterian ministers like Mr. Irwin fighting and even going to gaol because they stand with Sinn Fein for a free Ireland.

5. English Catholics are never weary of trying to get the Pope to condemn Sinn Fein. If Sinn Fein was a Catholic movement their activities at the Vatican would be very foolish. Only a person so ill-informed as the Rector of Knox Church nowadays pretends that Sinn Fein is a Jesuit movement against Protestants.

Any reasonable person who considers the evidence we have touched upon will recognise that the assertion that Sinn Fein is sectarian proceeds either from dishonesty and malice or from sheer ignorance. While bigots injure us by insisting on the sectarian aspect of the question, our own people are often a stumbling block inasmuch as they do not do all they might do to placate Protestants and dispel their prejudices and errors. We want *all* in the movement. It is for all Irishmen and for all friends of Ireland, be they Jews, Quakers, Presbyterians, or Catholics. De Valera has time and again refuted the falsehood that the movement is a religious one, as he has pointed out that insistence on this notion is most injurious to its success. It is an all-for-Ireland movement and only an enemy would try to create discord by introducing the sectarian issue.

Fitzalan and Carsonia

ACT I.

The opening of the Carsonia Parliament went off tamely indeed. The Unionist *Irish Times* says:

"There was no bunting, there were no favors, and there were no crowds. It was not until after ten o'clock that people began to gather outside the City Hall. Even then there was little evidence of popular interest. One can often see as large a crowd watching a raid on a public house in Dublin."

Compare that with the cabled accounts of the stupendous reception and cheering crowds that greeted King George. Even the poor old *Irish Times* admits that the proceedings were marked by public apathy. It was clear that even the Orangemen were in no way excited over Lloyd George's gift; for they had the disheartening foreknowledge that they were the recipients of a bankrupt scheme, and their dying industries and their slender bank accounts reminded them that Sinn Fein would kill their Parliament as it killed their trade. "Small but stately" is all the Unionist organ can find

to say for the procession. The "Parliament" met in a footy little room in which there was just room for them to sit. The elements of farce were not wanting. A battery of cameras and an army of photographers got in front of the Speaker's chair. The *Times* tells the tale of the farce:

"The Speaker gravely requested all the members to remain quiet for a few minutes, as a photographer wanted to take a photograph of the House. All eyes were lifted to the gallery whence a voice was heard beseeching the Parliament of the North of Ireland to be 'All steady a second, please!' The House froze into awkward rigidity. A camera clicked, the Speaker relapsed into reposeful austerity, and the voice broke the almost painful silence with, 'Just a second, Mr. Speaker.' The second expanded itself into about a minute and a half while the gentleman in the gallery rigged up an enormous magnesium ribbon."

After the photo had been taken the House adjourned and the curtain fell on the first act.

ACT II.

In the City Hall Banqueting Chamber. Fifteen Ministers and Under-Secretaries, and about twenty-five private M.P.'s for Carsonia are assembled to meet the Viceroy. Nearly all present had sung "To Hell with the Pope" during the elections. Some of them had urged the expulsion of all Papists from Carsonia. Enter the Papist Viceroy. Hungry-looking, cadaverous Orangemen feed voraciously. Craig rises and proposes the health of the Papist Viceroy. Fitzalan on his legs puts his two feet in it with remarkable success. His speech might be an extract from *The Eloquent O'Dempsey* or some similar farce. *Inter alia*, he said:

"Ladies and gentlemen [through force of habit, of course!] we are not of the same religion. (Laughter and applause from the Orangemen.) I glory in mine. I daresay you glory in yours. (Hear, hear and wild applause.) A most remarkably funny thing occurs to me. If I were to change my religion I believe everybody in the room would look on me as a bounder. If you were to change yours I would not look on you as any worse than you are. (More laughter.)

Isn't it *The Eloquent O'Dempsey* again? Was ever such an asinine speech delivered at the birth of a Parliament? But any other words would have been an international loss: what he said suited the occasion and made the farce more ludicrous. He then dropped a tear and spoke lugubriously of the sins of Ireland. Amid cheers he hit out at Sinn Fein. But there was deep, dark, solemn silence when he denounced the Black-and-Tans, who are very popular in Belfast:

"We know the force in this country commonly called the 'Black-and-Tans' are accused of committing serious and grave crimes. . . . It is true—I do not deny it for one moment—let us be frank about these things—that crimes, horrible crimes, have been committed by members of this force. You may find explanations, but there is no excuse for any force under discipline committing these crimes."

Seeing the long, frozen jowls of the To-Hell-with-the-Pope men he now thought it safer to change the subject. Once again he waxed comic. For his subject was comic: it was the Carsonia Parliament itself:

"The Act of Parliament is an historic Act. I don't think it will be the less historic because nobody seems to want it. (Laughter, loud and long.)

In fact it wants amending already. (More laughter.) . . . I know you here did not want it, and that you only accepted it on the advice of your great leader, Lord Carson—and your present Prime Minister."

In these dignified and remarkable words Lord Fitzalan dealt once and for all with the great topic of a Carsonia Parliament. He made a farce of the whole thing. Perhaps he could do no better and no worse. But it was unconscious genius. He said exactly the sort of silly, footling things that fitted the occasion. He was right in saying that the Act was historic: so was his speech.

ACT III.

The Viceroy fled to England. He stayed there a long time: some said because of his disgust with what

A. Newlan Hancock

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