

sands of years confessed a common kindred before the all-spotless, all-mighty, all-merciful Throne. The man trembled violently, and seemed to hesitate; then, as if worked to desperation, he plucked the old priest by the soutane, whispering in a thick voice in his ear:

"For God's sake, quick, Father Phil! A man is dying!"

The old priest started. His first confused impression was that some damned soul had just addressed him. But Father Phil had lived too long in both worlds, and seen too much of their troubles, to be very much perturbed by summonses either from the living or the dead. He groped for his biretta on the altar-step, and silently drew the stranger into the adjoining sacristy, where a taper was lighted. The stranger shrank back as if the sun out of heaven had suddenly flashed in his eyes.

"What! Owen!" cried the priest. "Is it the old man? What has happened, boy? Why do you look so frightened?"

"It's Quish—Quish the bailiff!" The words struggled out in a rasping gurgle. The boy's face seemed to have absorbed fifty years of cares and hardness since the night we saw him in his father's cabin at Cnocawn. "Quick, Father, or you'll hardly catch him!"

The priest turned his eyes full on the old-young face cowering before him, and all the blood in young Owen's heart seemed to fly to that face under his scrutiny. "O—oh!" he cried, in a voice that rent his hearer's heartstrings. "Oh! you unhappy boy!" Without another word, he flung aside his soutane, and seized his black-green overcoat and hat. In his haste the old hat rolled on the floor. The young lad knelt on the floor to pick it up. He remained on both knees, with a downcast face of misery, holding out the hat in his hand. The old priest looked at him, took the hat with a shudder, and murmured "God forgive you!" The other rose, and a dark scowl disfigured his young face horribly.

"Amen, Father," he said, half sullenly, "but he was an informer!"

The priest turned on him a dreadful look. The young fellow's powerful frame fell in under it as if that Spanish contracting iron cage was crushing his bones. "Don't tell me!" he cried, with the dread emphasis of an exorcist. Then, seeing him broken: "is it at his mother's place he is—the body is?" he asked, more gently.

"It is, your reverence—but he is not dead—you will be in time," said the other, eagerly.

"Quick, get round my pony," said Father Phil, placing the viaticum and the oils for the Last Sacraments in his breast.

(To be continued.)

Go and help Jesus. Why should a single soul be lost for which He died? I say, why should one be lost? There is Precious Blood to be had for the asking, and what it gives is grace. When the Fountain of all grace is springing up like a living well of joy in the heart after Holy Communion, ask Him to open all men's eyes to the beauty of His grace, and so you will cause His grace to multiply, and with the multiplication of grace His interests to prosper.—Father Faber.

AN APPEAL TO IRISH FAITH AND LOVE OF ST. PATRICK. RAETIHI

In the raging bush fire that swept this district in 1918 our little church (St. Patrick's) at Raetihi was burnt to the ground. We are now making an attempt to raise funds to replace that little church in a permanent material which will withstand the brunt of future fires as the Irish Faith has withstood the brunt of the fires of persecution. To us, who have the Faith from Ireland, the name of Patrick is sweet music to our ears. Here is a practical way to show our gratitude for our Irish Faith and our love for St. Patrick, by helping to raise a church worthy of our Faith and of our glorious Saint at Raetihi.

Send a brick (5/-) to-day for St. Patrick's Church, Raetihi. All donations acknowledged in the *Tablet*. Address for donations—

FATHER GUINANE,
Ohakune.

THE AMERICAN COMMISSION ON CONDITIONS IN IRELAND

INTERIM REPORT

(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER V.

Physical Consequences to Imperial British Forces in Ireland

An English witness, Miss Ellen C. Wilkinson, placed in evidence before the Commission figures laid before the British Parliament recording that approximately 500 members of the Imperial British forces had perished between the proclamation of the Irish Republic and November, 1920. Mrs. Annot Erskine Robinson, testifying with Miss Wilkinson, on December 1, 1920, said she understood the number to have reached 600. The number was put by one witness as low as 232. We have no reliable means of establishing the accuracy of the British official record, but as presumably it is not an understatement, we are justified in concluding that not more than 600 of the Imperial British forces have been killed in Ireland from May, 1916, to December, 1920. These 600 casualties would seem to have occurred in a force of at least 78,000, in a period of four and one half years, or at the rate of not more than twenty-six hundredths of one per cent. per annum.*

The Imperial British forces in Ireland are the titular custodians of "law and order" there, which their "duties" consist in maintaining. Evidence of the nature of these "duties" has been presented as well as evidence gravely reflecting on the conduct and discipline of the Imperial British forces, and in considering the causes of the alleged 600 British casualties, it would appear to us necessary to stress these duties and to emphasise the licence which replaces discipline in these Imperial British forces. We would also respectfully call the attention of our Committee to the invidious use of the words "police" and "constabulary" by the British authorities in Ireland, as terms for an armed service now exclusively employed on military duty.

"Policeman" and "Constable."—We have considered evidence of eye-witnesses and depositions from victims establishing that the "police" or "constabulary" includes in its ranks burglars and highway robbers, gunmen and petty thieves. It was testified before us that the "police" or Royal Irish Constabulary were charged by British-appointed coroner's juries with the murders of Lord Mayor MacCurran, and Messrs. Walsh, Lynch, Dwyer, McCarthy, and Rooney, and others. It was further testified that in other cases murders were committed by these so-called policemen and no jury was summoned. In the cases of Galway, Balbriggan, and other cities and villages these "policemen" added arson and looting to murder. The presence of District Inspector Cruise at the "reprisal" in Galway and of District Inspector Lowndes at the sacking of Ballylory in charge of the sacking "policemen" was mentioned in evidence before us. The barracking of these "police" with the "Black-and-Tans" and their co-operation with the

*It is clear from the evidence that Irish resistance has been non-violent to a surprising degree. It has found expression among other things in the boycott of British Governmental agencies and the refusal of the Irish railwaymen to operate trains carrying Imperial British troops. Thereupon the British authorities discharged the men and in many cases virtually discontinued train service. This state of affairs continued for many weeks during 1920. According to testimony of Mr. Dempsey, himself an engineer, the railway union finally receded from its position from no selfish motive but because it feared that Ireland suffered by lack of train service more than the military, who had an abundance of motor-lorries. The most dramatic examples of non-violent resistance were furnished by political prisoners, who carried on repeated hunger strikes to win freedom or other concessions from the Imperial British Government. In the cases of Lord Mayor MacSweeney and Messrs. Fitzgerald and Murphy the strikes were persisted in until death ended them.

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