

Walsh, Mr. Morgan, and others regarding the murders of Lord Mayor MacCurtain, Patrick Walsh, James Lynch, John Sherlock, the Bantry hunchback boy, Thomas Dwyer, and others shows that assassination in the midst of the family was a British practice in Ireland. It would appear to us that to copy this practice in Ireland can have the effect only of degrading the Irish people and their cause. We would be glad to think that the instance we have mentioned of this practice by the Irish is unique and will not be duplicated.

Effect of Assassinations.—From the scanty material at our disposal it is difficult to estimate the effect of these assassinations upon the Irish cause. Assassinations would appear to be an unreliable method of removing specific criminals and ending their harmfulness. The gaps left in high places can always be filled. The removal of Swanzy and Smyth has brought in more Swanzy's and more Smyth's.

It would appear to have discouraged certain of the lower ranks. The testimony before us shows the resignation of about 500 members of the R.I.C., perhaps not wholly unconnected with the danger of their duties, as expounded by Smyth, Lucas, Dénsey, and other commanders. But the places of those who resigned have been filled up by Englishmen necessarily less familiar with the country, but, as the evidence showed, seemingly more ruthless.

According to the testimony of Mr. Ginnell, corroborated by D. F. Crowley, a former member of the R.I.C.:

"A reward of £10,000, or about \$40,000, was offered by the English Government in every part of the city of Dublin, especially in the poor slums, for certain information and for certain men, dead or alive; and the reward was never claimed, although hundreds among those people knew where the man named could be found. The expression that a man was to be found "dead or alive" meant that he might be shot at sight, and that the reward would be given to the person who shot him and produced the body. That was the meaning of it. It was an incitement to murder. It was a licence to kill."

The fidelity of certain people was doubtless favored and the cupidity of spies discouraged by the danger of assassination which waited for informers. The security of Irish leaders may thus have been enhanced, but at the cost of the security of the general population to an extent demonstrably greater than leadership alone could make good. Such immediate success as this policy seemed to achieve appears to us of doubtful value compared with its demonstrated failure both to safeguard the lives of the Irish people in Ireland, and to sustain the moral appeal of the Irish cause in other lands. We would point out the difficulty of controlling this policy of secret tribunal and summary execution; and the tendency of it to extend its scope to include not only enemies but also envied friends of the Irish cause.

Summary.—The Imperial British forces in Ireland have suffered three categories of casualties, totalling apparently not more than 600: (1) accidental, incidental, and disciplinary casualties; (2) casualties incurred in regular military operations; and (3) casualties due to discriminate assassination.

Of the casualties in the first category we hold the Irish people guiltless.

The casualties in the second category, inflicted by the Irish in military operations, which they appear to have conducted honorably, and upon the legality of which we are debarred from passing, seem to require from us only the same expression of our sympathy with the relatives which we sincerely proffer to all victims of the war in Ireland.

We hold that the British have incurred casualties in the third category, and in so far as those assassinated were spies, provocateurs, and murderers, and as such were conscientiously fulfilling their appointed duties as British agents, we hold the British Government negligent in failing adequately to protect its agents to whom it assigned such dangerous duties. We are of the opinion that these discriminate casualties are sustained at the hands of organised citizens of the Irish Republic, acting allegedly as an extra-governmental body at war with the special enemies of Irish peace and security. But in so far as the Government of the Irish Republic is responsible for the acts of its citizens, it would seem to us to be responsible for these deplorable assassinations, and to suffer because of them in the public opinion of the world.

We further find that in the four years since the Irish Revolution the British casualties have averaged not more than twenty-six hundredths of one per cent. per annum of the forces engaged and in no year exceeded three per 1,000 of these forces. These figures would seem to us to indicate a spirit of restraint in the Irish people.

(To be continued.)

The Imperial Idea

In a letter recently published, and attributed, rightly or wrongly, to Sir Henry Wilson, there is a point that has a certain interest, over and above the ordinary provincial bragging not unfamiliar in the queer patch that calls itself "Ulster" (says the *New Witness* for July 1, editorially). A curious and almost innocent illusion, that a man can impress others by merely praising himself, is a mark by which we all recognise the half-baked or half-barbaric civilisation; we recognise it in Prussians, in certain Colonials, and in the stale Suburbia of Belfast. If there were nothing in the letter but the usual theatrical stuff about "We Ulster boys," with a capacity to "teach" everybody everything, it would not be worth while to pause upon it here. What makes the letter interesting is a certain truth or half-truth contained in it. It is the fact that one of the things which the Ulster Boys have to teach is a thing called "the Imperial idea." And one of the ignorant and savage tribes, to whom it needs to be taught, is the English nation.

Now this is in a sense true; a great deal truer than the man who wrote it was aware. The Imperial idea, so far as it is an idea, is really much more at home in the culture of Belfast than in the culture of Birmingham; let alone the culture of Canterbury and Glastonbury and Stratford-on-Avon. The Imperial idea is in every way suited to the clear atmosphere of Belfast, to its high imaginative architecture, to its inspired creative art, to its mellow and stately school of manners. And we insular English people, limited to the landscapes of Constable, seeing no more of the sky than was visible to Turner, forced to find our heroes only in petty and parochial types like Nelson and Dr. Johnson, and having reached no further in the revelation of humanity than the production of Shakspeare, must bear the scorn of Ulster as best we may.

But the thing, whatever we call it, which has been called Imperialism in England for the last forty years, the thing that has inspired Mr. Kipling and instituted Empire Day, that thing does exist, and that thing is exactly suited to what Sir Henry Wilson is said to have called "his own corner of Ireland." It is much more at home there than it is in any corner of England, especially in any very English corner of England.

Empire, both in the higher and the lower sense, is a thing for which the English are exceptionally unfitted. The higher needs a clarity, and the lower a cruelty, that are not English at all. Sometimes the clarity and cruelty may have been for a time combined; as is said to have been the case in some of the Spanish conquests in South America. But no two things could be more contrary, within the common culture of all Christendom, than the English and the Spanish spirit. What the English really did, so long as they were really English, was something quite different. What they established in India, for instance, was not an empire; it was a trade truce. We never made any serious attempt to give English ideas to the Indians, as the Spanish did to give Spanish ideas to the Red Indians. We never solemnly and solidly contemplated the picture of all those brown men becoming Anglicans. But the Spaniards did solemnly and solidly contemplate the pictures of all those red men becoming Roman Catholics. We are not here discussing the moral merits of the two things; there is much to be said for both. It is essential, at so serious a crisis in our destiny, to get rid of that detestable state of universal vain-glory, or claiming all the virtues of everybody; and realise exactly what it was that we could do and did do, even if we have no other desire than to go on doing it. As Englishmen, and not merely as Europeans, we had a very genuine genius for travel and for trade; the English good temper, the English sense of humor in incongruous circumstances, did make it easier to sail to the Cannibal Islands, and to bargain with the King of

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