

IRISH NEWS

THE IRISH QUESTION NOT ONE OF RELIGION.

The following is an interesting extract from a letter published in *The Post* (the organ of the British Post Office Workers' Union) for July 9, 1921, Vol. iv., No. 77, written by Mr. J. Green, who recently retired after a lengthy service, being 11 years postmaster at Kilrush, Co. Clare, Ireland:—

"My happiest years, as a whole, were spent in good old Ireland, where my wife and I made many friends, with whom it was hard to part. I may be allowed here to remark, in passing, that after over 11 years' experience of the country, I am firmly convinced that the conceding to Ireland of the fullest possible measure of self-government would result in the setting up of a lasting and fruitful friendship between the two countries. Those who have watched the march of events since Asquith's Home Rule Bill was passed could not possibly wonder at the present condition of that unhappy and much maligned country. God Save Ireland (to, and for, the Irish) is my earnest prayer, feeling as I do that they as a people have been trifled with too long.

"Of the much-talked-of religious persecution I have absolutely no knowledge. I know the Protestants had the lion's share of the business in my part of the country, and the best possible understanding existed between the Catholics and Protestants. My best friends were among the former, and I am an English Protestant whom they put at the head of the poll in a local election."

CATHOLIC SEAMEN BEATEN AND KICKED.

A brutal attack was recently made by Belfast shipyard workers on Catholic seamen, about 15 of whom, firemen and sailors, all belonging to Belfast, had signed on as portion of the crew of the s.s. Baltic, which left for Liverpool, after having been reconditioned. A large number of shipyard workers rushed on board the vessel, shouting "Where are the Fenians?" and using threats and vile language.

The Catholic seamen were singled out, beaten, and driven from the vessel. When they got on shore the conditions were even worse, for 100 more joined in the attack, and the unfortunate victims were knocked down and kicked in the most savage manner, while some of them were thrown into the water.

The victims only escaped with their lives with the utmost difficulty. One of them, Fras. Ward, was treated in the Mater Hospital for his injuries.

THE CATHOLIC MAN HUNT.

A recent week saw a recrudescence of the brutality that is always latent in Belfast amongst the bigoted majority. Adown the years certain periods were marked by such "frightfulness" against Catholics that '57, '62, '72, and '86 are known to all Belfast people as riot years, and these dates serve as epoch-making marks. But all the horrors of these awful times pale before the present-day riots. In the past brutal beatings have been inflicted on unoffending Catholic workmen, with the result that the injured meekly left the notorious city. But now life is cheaper, and nothing will satisfy these wolves in human form but the blood of their victims. Even here they will not content themselves with merely slaying, but they must torture and mutilate ere their fiendish bloodthirstiness is quenched. The peace atmosphere in Ireland has added fuel to their July madness, and an orgy of cruelty is at present being indulged in which out-Herods that of Herod. Catholics, men and women, are set upon in the main streets, in trams, and in their workshops, knocked down and kicked into insensibility. Happy are they if they have a breath of life when taken into hospital, and so injured are the hospital attendants to "kicked" cases that a special ameliorative treatment is given the poor unfortunates, who seldom or never regain their health and strength. Add to this Hunnish treatment the crowning infamy of incendiarism, scores of Catholic homes being burnt out, and you have Belfast of July, 1921.

And who are the chief agents in this latest pogrom? The unhesitating reply comes: "The Specials"—a body whose name will go down in the history of Belfast as the bitterest enemies the persecuted Catholics have ever had. Recruited from the ranks of the Orange Ulster Volunteers, their numbers have been increased by the hooligans from the Queen's Island, who, dismissed their regular employment by slackness of work, are welcomed into the ranks of the Specials and paid at the rate of £6 per week, all found. All that is expected from them is to keep the

Catholics down, and that by every ingenious form of brutality they more than willingly do. A mild form of their activity is the holding up and searching of any pedestrian they meet. Should a remonstrance be indulged in the daring offender is hauled up on summons from an obliging magistrate and the charge of insulting a Special is followed by a smart fine. Needless to say that the Special's work is taken as pure unadulterated truth. So, emboldened by this consideration, the Special goes one better and seeks to prove himself a close friend of law and order by raiding the homes of innocent people. In times like the present there are always many unscrupulous persons who seek to gratify private spite by giving false information about their neighbors. This is eagerly seized on as a pretence for the Specials to terrorise the householders. Unfortunately for them things went too far, for when young Catholic men were taken from their homes and foully done to death by nameless horrors an outraged Catholic community resolved to protect themselves against these miscreants, and so effectually have they, aided by their stout-hearted womenfolk, done this that, in the face of overwhelming odds, they have routed the cowardly Specials from the Catholic districts. All honor to these heroic hearts! Privation keen and long continued they have silently endured, but when the policy of extermination, ruthless in its intensity, was sought to be inflicted they rose in just wrath and repulsed the tyrants.

The rest of Ireland has only the faintest idea of what the Belfast Catholics are daily suffering. The events of the day are wilfully distorted in the Orange evening paper, which serves up a dish suited to the palates of the majority. Every incident is twisted to show that the Catholics are the evildoers of all mischief, and it is easy to see how this reacts on ignorant minds who never read anything but their favorite budget of hot, strong anti-Irish and anti-Catholic news.

Indeed, one of the tasks Belfast Catholics have in the future before them is the establishment of an evening Catholic paper. It is only natural that the hurrying events of these troubled times should be eagerly sought after. Every hour brings its quota for good or ill, and the down-trodden Belfast Catholic cannot wait the coming daily paper for confirmation of his hope and fears.

Hence it is that the paper opposed to his dearest opinions finds ready sale in Catholic quarters. But a good time is coming, and these Pressmen will yet find themselves hit where they will feel it most—in their pockets.

A NOTE OF WARNING.

In entering into a preliminary conversation with the Prime Minister of Great Britain at the official residence in Downing Street the President of the Irish Republic takes an international step which will affect the future relations of Ireland with other nations (says *Young Ireland*, the journal edited by Mr. A. Griffith, T.D.).

"But our history contains many warnings against reliance on English overtures, treaties, negotiations, truces or conferences. The last truce, we believe, occurred at the Siege of Limerick, 230 years ago, and we know what happened the Treaty. We had negotiations with them before that, at the time of the Confederation of Kilkenny. The Tudor sovereigns had many parleys with the Irish chieftains. In *Hibernia Pacata* we have the revelation after several centuries of secrecy of the intrigues of Carew and his trysting with The MacCarthy More, who was trapped and deported to London, where he died in the Tower after 40 years' captivity, which had a disastrous effect on the war of independence, which was lost at Kinsale. The leaders of the Irish Republic are well aware of their country's history.

"Times and methods are supposed to change, but we have yet to learn that England has changed. The world looks on with its sardonic smile on the overtures of the English towards us. While England is regaling the press with the fable of the lamb carolling on the lion's mane, the amused world will wait for some explanation of the sudden change of manner of the English Premier, who says he 'shall be happy to see' those whom his lieutenants are wont to describe as a 'gang of murderers.' The new attitude came without notice.

"Surely there must be some explanation forthcoming from Mr. Lloyd George. He is not a chameleon. There must be some reason for the change in his make-up. Meanwhile, the Irish Republic marches on."

I desire a husband whose estates are heaven and earth and sea—whose farms will yield their crops for ever, whose riches increase daily, and will never diminish. If you can find me such a husband—not a man, sinful, wayward, and mortal.—St. Aldegundis.

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