

IRISH NEWS

RELIEF FOR BELFAST CATHOLICS.

Divine Providence has come to the aid of the sorely-tried Catholics of Belfast in the shape of a bounteous gift from the "White Cross" fund. This was originated (says the *Irish Catholic*, for August 6) by large-hearted Americans, many of whom are of Irish descent, and their representatives journeyed down from Dublin to see for themselves the damage done. With horror they gazed on the ravaged district, and heard from the lips of the sufferers the cruel stories of unprovoked barbarism. What amazed the free-born citizens of the United States was the patient resignation and quiet endurance of these persecuted toilers. Each and all told a tale of misery sufficient to move the hardest heart; yet they all expressed themselves thankful to God and His Blessed Mother for their lives being spared. Every little home had a picture of the Sacred Heart enthroned, before which they said the Rosary nightly. And again, the fugitives flying before a machine gun, snatched up their most cherished possessions, which were always religious objects of devotion, such as an indulgenced cross for a happy death, a Rosary of the Seven Dolors, or a statue of their patron saint.

In connection with this a moving incident occurred in the hottest hour of that awful Sunday. A poor woman who had long suffered from nervous breakdown was alone in her home with one little child, a girl of three years. Her husband was out at 12 o'clock Mass, and she was too weak and frail to call for help. The brutish mob broke into her home and stole all they could lay hands on. Then, with fearful blasphemies, they called on her to clear out, and at the same time snatched the child from her side. One of the scoundrels, less brutal than the others, yelled: "Don't you see that it is a girl? Look at her long curls." With an oath the infant was dropped, and another brute shouted: "If it had been a boy we would have dashed his brains out against that wall." Thus the Cromwellian massacres are repeated in this year of the world, for all Irish people are familiar with one of the pious sayings of that scourge of Ireland, "kill off the children," the remainder of the infamous phrase is unprintable. With the terrible shock to her broken nerves, the distressed mother became utterly helpless. Unable to move a single step, she grasped her little one with her left hand, and with her right she drew to her breast a little statue of Our Lady of Lourdes—her favorite throughout her short term of life—and sat motionless, whilst the fiends in human form drenched the walls of her little home with petrol. When they had accomplished this hellish work they systematically set to burn the home, not caring a jot about its helpless occupants. Cloths saturated with petrol were set alight and pitched into different corners. Rapidly they consumed the woodwork of door and window, the while the mother and child watched with terror the creeping flames. By God's providence both were saved, as the Fire Brigade arrived in the nick of time, and the manly firemen at once caught up the mother and child and passed them into safety over the back yard walls.

And this is only one of the fearful episodes told to the pitying Americans. No wonder, then, that they used their powerful cameras to bring home irrefutable evidence of the villainy of the Belfast hooligans, and by this time these realistic pictures are being copied by a world-wide Press. It is a remarkable fact, however, and one that has been widely commented upon, that up to the present not one of the Belfast Orange papers has ever noticed that any outrage has been committed on the Falls Catholics. Rather, do they hope that by their silence all will be forgotten in a few weeks, then the hue and cry will be raised that the Catholics have risen on the Falls and beaten the Orangemen. But the disinterested men from U.S.A. have squelched that invention, and it remains for some budding Orange spouter to find that all the riots are the work of Rome.

Meanwhile the refugees are being carefully and tenderly looked after. Kind-hearted neighbors, all unem-

ployed, brought them cooked food and hot milk ere the White Cross workers got busy. Through the agency of the invaluable Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the munificent gift of £2,000 is wisely divided according to the needs of the victims of "man's inhumanity to man"—and woman—so that at the moment no one is hungry or without shelter. Daily visits are paid to the homeless ones by the Bishop and clergy, and in the evenings impromptu concerts are held to while the sad hours away and to bring a temporary forgetfulness of their misery to the hearts of the victims of Belfast's latest pogrom.

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BRITISH ATROCITIES IN IRELAND.

A recent visitor to Ireland from Scotland, writing to a friend in New Zealand, gives the following appalling account of his experiences:—

On Saturday morning, June 4, 1921, at 8 a.m., Thomas Keane, a prisoner of war, was executed in the Limerick Military Barracks. Thousands of Limerick citizens, including the prisoner's young wife—an expectant mother—the prisoner's aged and feeble mother, relatives, and friends went to the Military Barracks early on the morning of the execution, to pray for, and show sympathy with their passing comrade. About 7.15 a.m. several military motor lorries loaded with British "Black-and-Tans" drove up to the Barracks. The sight of several thousands of devout Catholics, men, women, and children kneeling in the mud in front of the Military Barracks praying for a good loyal brother, was too much for the well-trained bigoted feelings of the brutal British "Black-and-Tans." So the brave British "Black-and-Tans" of the bull-dog breed, jumped off their lorries, and made a mad rush at the people, kicking and beating the kneeling men, women, and children with their rifles. The "Black-and-Tans" rushed from group to group, kicking them into the mud, and beating them with their rifles. Hundreds were thus brutally treated by the armed and uniformed forces of the British Crown. They fired volley after volley to frighten and terrorise the people. They also punched scores of women in the mouth, with their clenched fists. Other lorries loaded with "Black-and-Tans" were subsequently rushed up to the Barracks as a reinforcement. These snatched the Rosary beads out of the women's hands, broke them, and threw them into the mud. They tore a banner of the Sacred Heart out of the women's hands and danced on it in the mud. Mrs. Daly, a frail, old woman, 65 years of age, mother of Commandant Daly, who was executed in Easter 1916, was dashed against a stone wall, her head knocked in the mud, and severely hurt. Her Rosary beads were torn out of her hands, broken up, and thrown into the mud. During the attack, a machine-gun was trained on the people from a military motor lorry. The "Black-and-Tans" called the people the vilest names, and used other filthy and disgusting language. As the people knelt in prayer they were sneered, jeered, and scoffed at. Notwithstanding the cruel, cowardly abuse and brutality of the British soldiers, the women continued to collect in groups and to pray, but the attack was continued until after the execution. This dreadful, brutal outrage took place without any provocation whatever, and the people made no attempt to retaliate. The feeble, old mother of the executed man was sitting on a chair near the Barracks. The "Black-and-Tans" took the chair from under her, and broke it up. The poor wife of the executed man was driven from the Barracks by them and as she was walking down Wolfe Tone Street with a woman helping her on each side, uniformed soldiers armed to the teeth, rudely and brutally pushed her on. Being told who she was, they continued their abuse, and drove the three women along the street in front of them with a rifle held across their backs. Some of the women protested to the District Inspector of Police against the outrageous conduct of the "Black-and-Tans," and he said that it was a Military Order which they were forced to carry out. Evidently these are the British ruling classes' modern methods of torturing and terrorising the Catholics belonging to the old Irish, Celtic race, who object to be ruled and robbed by the British capitalists, and British ascendancy. I can produce hundreds of witnesses who are prepared to corroborate on oath all the statements I have made in this letter re the British atrocities at Limerick on June 4, 1921.