

Lisburn.—One of the worst sufferers from the Ulster pogroms was the prosperous linen town of Lisburn just outside of Belfast. To this city Inspector Swanzy had been transferred from Cork after the death of Lord Mayor MacCurtain. As he came out of a Protestant church one Sunday in September—the evidence is Mrs. Robinson's—"three motor cars came up filled by men who were veiled, by men who were strangers to the district. They held up the congregation and District Inspector Swanzy was shot dead. The Orange population rose against the Catholic inhabitants of the town and the Sinn Fein and Nationalist leaders and burned their houses; although the murder was admittedly committed by men who were strangers in the town. The town burned Sunday night and a large part of Monday, and no attempt was made to extinguish the flames, although Lisburn is quite near to Belfast, and the skies were lit up for miles around."

As a result of her investigation Mrs. Robinson estimated that one house out of three had been destroyed. "The picture was one of absolute devastation." The plight of the homeless was pitiable. In a Catholic charitable institution she saw numbers of women refugees, driven out of their homes in Lisburn.

"I saw the Belgian refugees who came to us in Manchester. But those people were absolutely the most hopeless looking lot of people I have ever seen. You see, in the north-east it is almost impossible for a boy who wants to enter a skilled trade to get a place if he is known to be a Catholic. . . . And, of course, these women were the wives and mothers of unskilled laborers; and it has been very difficult to get a home together. Now they saw the effort of long years of toil swept away. They lacked life. And then the children. They were absolutely without anything to do. . . . The misery in that hall was very, very depressing."

**Economic and Political Cause of Religious Strife.**—While on the face of it this is an appalling record of a revival of religious strife, all the witnesses who appeared before us agreed that the Ulster pogroms were not primarily due to a spontaneous flare-up of smoldering bigotry, but were rather promoted by those whose economic and political interests were opposed both to strong labor unionism and to Irish Republicanism. Certain manufacturers and Unionist politicians, it was alleged, had taken alarm at the solidarity of labor, Protestant and Catholic, shown in the great shipyard strike of 1919. The result of the urban and county council elections held under proportional representation had evidenced the present strength of labor and of Sinn Fein in Unionist strongholds. Miss Toksvig, who made especial inquiry into the Belfast situation, quoted a large manufacturer as follows:

"I know, and all the manufacturers in this city know, that the trouble is not a religious trouble except as it has been fostered by them to serve their political and their economic interests. . . . I warned them a long time ago that they were rousing up a monster they could not control and which some day might turn upon them. The large manufacturers have worked together to keep up strife between the workmen, using the religious issue as a means . . . to prevent agitation among laborers to improve their conditions and wages, and [to prevent] Home Rule agitation."

This statement, Miss Toksvig said, was corroborated by others. In effecting this division among the workers, the politicians and manufacturers have had the aid of a large section of the press and of the clergy.\* As illustrating the growing alarm of the employers over the economic issue, Mrs. Robinson called attention to features of the Home Rule Bill, recently enacted by the British Parliament, intended to secure the capitalist interests of Ulster against labor legislation in the parliament to be set up for the six Ulster counties—three of which, several witnesses alleged, are predominantly Republican in sentiment.

**The Problem Not Wholly Religious.**—Even from Protestant Ulster comes evidence that its opposition to Irish Republicanism is not wholly religious. Sir Edward Carson would seem to have accepted a Home Rule Act which gives

his party approximately what they want in Ulster at the price of delivering over the Protestant minority in the rest of Ireland to the majority rule of their Catholic neighbors. If the bond of unity were the Protestant Faith rather than the tangle of interests which supports the feeling of the dissimilarity and superiority of Ulster to the rest of Ireland, no such agreement would have been made.

**"Ulster Superiority."**—Limited as was the evidence placed before us, the Commission was made aware of the strength of the Ulster feeling of superiority in which condemnation of Catholicism is one element. This conclusion is borne out by a careful examination of the statements of the Ulster delegation† to the United States embodied in the pamphlet, *Facts About Ireland*, put in evidence before us. Whether or not that sense of superiority is well grounded in fact has been scientifically examined by W. A. McKnight, whose pamphlet *Ireland and the Ulster Legend* was introduced in evidence. The author undertakes to show the truth about Ulster conditions by careful tables compiled from Imperial British Government Blue Books and other records whose accuracy is certified by a public accountant. These tables deal with taxable wealth, immigration, money expended on education, public health, illegitimacy, illiteracy, etc. They would appear to demolish the widely spread view that the average of material prosperity and social wellbeing is higher in Ulster than in the rest of Ireland. In many respects other provinces made a better showing.

**Sinn Fein's Conciliatory Policy.**—So far as the Commission could judge the Irish Republicans do not seek to demolish the "Ulster legend" by direct attack. They desire to win, not alienate, Protestant Ulster. They have offered her guarantees as to not only religious freedom but the protection of her economic interests. Mr. Laurence Ginnell, a member of Dail Eireann, himself a Catholic, testified: "We want the Orangemen. We know they will be one of the strongest elements in our new constitution. If English power were out of Ireland the south and the west and the midlands would harmonise with the people of the north within twenty-four hours." He pointed to certain concrete evidence of the growth of Irish national feeling in Protestant districts of Ulster, and in particular adduced the election of Louis Walsh, of the Ballycastle district in County Antrim—a Protestant county—although Mr. Walsh was a Roman Catholic and a Republican. Miss Toksvig less optimistically believes that although the intense religious feeling in Ulster "was started artificially . . . the present generation is not going to forget about it soon."

**Ireland Outside Ulster.**—As regards the rest of Ireland outside the region immediately about Belfast, the Commission was impressed by the evidence of lack of any religious strife. In Ireland there were, according to the census of 1911, 1,147,594 non-Catholics as against 3,242,570 Catholics. 890,880 of these non-Catholics (as compared with 690,816 Catholics) are in Ulster, leaving 256,714 non-Catholics (as compared with 2,551,754 Catholics) in all the rest of Ireland. This small minority is, of course, physically at the mercy of the Catholic majority. Yet there is on record not one single case of attack upon the life and property of any Protestant on account of his religion. The Catholics were aware of the Ulster pogroms, they suffered under Imperial British forces predominately Protestant in religion who did not spare their priests, convents,\* and churches, yet they were guilty of no reprisals of any sort upon their Protestant neighbors.

And the evidence as to religious peace is positive as well as negative. English, Irish and American witnesses with one voice denied that religious differences made for confusion or discord outside of Ulster.

**Religious Peace.**—Constable Crowley, formerly of the R.I.C., expressed an opinion unanimously held by the witnesses before us, when he said that "Religious peace was very great." Perhaps the most striking evidence on this whole subject is to be found in the testimony of Miss

† The tour of this delegation was in itself evidence that Ulster Unionists do not regard the Irish issue as merely a British "domestic problem."

\* On this point we have evidence from Miss Bennett, a Protestant.

# Brownette Bros.

NAPIER'S LEADING FOOTWEAR AND REPAIR  
SPECIALISTS.  
EMERSON ST. (Opp. Working Men's Club), NAPIER.