

IRISH NEWS

-ORIGIN OF THE BELFAST POGROM.

The real causes of the Belfast pogrom are clearly explained by Professor John McNeill (M.P. for Derry City in the Six Counties' Parliament), in an address to the Dail Eireann Cabinet, on the occasion of presenting a deputation of representative men from the counties of Tyrone and Fermanagh, to protest against the inclusion of these Nationalist counties in Carsonia.

Dr. MacNeill drew attention to certain words in a speech that Mr. Lloyd George made the other day. "If you had severance it would lead in Ireland itself to the most cruel and terrible civil war that Ireland has ever seen. We cannot witness civil war at our own door." In this utterance, said Dr. MacNeill, the British Premier wished it to be believed that he and his political associates and the British military domination over Ireland, which they uphold and seek to prolong, are saving Ireland from civil war. When he said these words he knew the facts—no man better. What are the facts? The main fact is that he and his political associates are the plotters and planners of what he calls civil war in Ireland in order that they might be provided with this very plea, and that they might weaken Ireland by fostering and encouraging a fanaticism they despise. The very words in which he pretends to deplore civil war in Ireland will be understood in Belfast as an incitement, and he is well aware that they will be so understood. His words may deceive those who are ignorant of the workings of British policy in Ireland. They will not deceive the Irish people. There will be no civil war in Ireland, and for a very good reason. We know—we are in no doubt about it—that every act of fanatical violence in Ireland is an outcome of British policy, and its fountain head in the Councils of London. British politicians and statesmen have their hand on the main switch of Belfast fanaticism. In that hand the Irish people recognise its only enemy, and when that hand arms and lets loose fanatical disorder, we no more see civil war in the outcome than we have seen civil war in the British Premier's world-renowned campaign of the "Black-and-Tans." We see—and we intend that the world shall see it—in it one more evidence of the blessings bestowed upon Ireland by the British connection. The very argument that the British Premier, relying on the ignorance of those whom he addressed, brings forward against severance is a most powerful argument in favor of severance. Not even Oriental fanaticism presents at this day a spectacle as degraded as the condition to which Belfast has been brought by British political contrivance—a state of things as deliberately planned and as deliberately set in movement as the building and launching of a battleship. In Belfast and a few neighboring towns, in pursuit of the British policy of civil war, thousands upon thousands of workers have been driven from their work, and have been deprived for many months of the right to work—have been cast upon the generosity of the world, and especially upon the generosity of America. Their houses—where they were unable to defend them—have been sacked and burned; their women and children driven forth; whole streets inhabited by them have been destroyed; they have been forced to live for months in a state of perpetual precaution by day and night against fresh onslaughts on the part of the British Government's friendlies. All this, and more, has been brought about with the knowledge and approval—I should say with the foreknowledge and fore-approval—of the British Premier and his Government. It is all as much a factor in their Irish foreign policy as the "Black-and-Tan" campaign of outrage and ravage in the rest of Ireland. The policy is as old as Pitt and Castlereagh, but the present Premier and his Government have been the first to crystallise it under a local regime.

THE L.S.D. OF THE IRISH SITUATION: A CANDID STATEMENT.

(By Sir Godfrey P. Collins, C.M.G., M.P., in the *Daily Mail*, London.)

The Irish issue is essentially economic. If Great Britain and Ireland can come to an agreement about the financial aspect of self-government there is an end to the Irish question.

The chief economic consideration is whether each Irish Parliament should be allowed to collect its own revenue and manage its own finances. Compared with that main consideration, the demand for a yearly contribution from Ireland to the interest of our national debt is only superficially a financial question; the actual aim is not so much solid pounds, shillings, and pence as to score a debating point against the Irish nation, to put them in the position of vassals paying tribute to the British Empire.

The overseas Dominions do not pay such a tribute, nor would the suggestion be considered for a moment. Why should Ireland be forced to do so—Ireland, who wins her freedom later than Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Newfoundland, and South Africa? Any yearly contribution in the future must be the spontaneous offering of the Irish people through their accredited representatives.

Let us not forget that, however much Ireland is costing us in reputation, she costs us nothing whatever to-day in pounds, shillings, and pence.

On the contrary, even including the £7,000,000 paid for a police force which she does not want, we are spending on the civil government of Ireland only about half as much as we take from her in taxes. In 1920, after spending £16,000,000 a year upon our army of occupation, a credit balance still remains.

The cardinal and commonly neglected truth is that at last, and in spite of us, Ireland finds herself self-supporting. During 1919, the latest year for which all the figures are to hand, Ireland exported more domestic produce per head of population than any other country in the world. Canada was next, New Zealand third, and Australia fourth. Great Britain stood ninth. In the vital figure of the excess of exports over imports, Ireland came fourth, after the United States, Canada, and Sweden.

Here we have the answer to the suggestion that if Ireland were left to look after her own commerce she would set up a tariff against the rest of the world. The least discerning of Ireland's enemies has never insinuated that the Irish do not know a good bargain when they see one; quite clearly, then, a policy of free-trade is their only possible policy.

And if that is the case as far as other nations are concerned, especially would it be so with this country. Ireland produces what we consume, consumes what we produce. We are an industrial country; she is an agricultural country, so dependent upon Great Britain that her first concern would be to safeguard the large trade that has grown up between us.

In 1919 we bought from her cattle and beef to the value of £27,468,000—more than we got from any other country, except the Argentine.

All told, we bought from her £93,709,000 worth of farm produce, food and drink; after the war, as before it, more than we got from any other country, save the United States.

If a nation in political subjection can create so vast a trade, a free Ireland will assuredly not spend her first hours of liberty in devising foolish tariffs. She will prefer a policy of enlightened self-interest, setting herself proudly to develop a heritage completely hers.

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Father Murphy wishes to thank very sincerely all those who contributed in any way to the success of the recent sale of work.

J. C. MURPHY,
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