

evils flow as from capitalist concentration of wealth. For these reasons chiefly, I cannot support any movement which aims at world revolution. The damage to civilisation done by revolution in one country may be repaired by the influence of another in which there has been no revolution; but in a universal cataclysm civilisation might go under for a thousand years. But while I cannot advocate world revolution, I cannot escape from the conclusion that the governments of the leading capitalist countries are doing everything to bring it about. Abuse of our power against Germany, Russia, and India (to say nothing of any other countries) may well bring about our downfall and produce those very evils which the enemies of Bolshevism most dread.

"Experience of power is inevitably altering communist theories, and men who control a vast governmental machine can hardly have quite the same outlook on life as they had when they were hunted fugitives. If the Bolsheviks remain in power, it may be assumed that their communism will fade, and that they will increasingly resemble any other Asiatic government—for example, our own Government in India."

These conclusions, however, were not in agreement with most of the members of the British Labor Mission, who went to Russia as ardent Marxians and returned as such. At an overcrowded meeting held in the Albert Hall, London, under the auspices of George Lansbury's *Daily Herald*, the prevailing sentiment was almost fanatically Bolshevistic. It is worthy of note, however, that through the mission a message was sent to the British workers from Prince Kropotkin, in which that veteran revolutionist not merely protested against foreign interference in Russia but also criticised "the attempt to build up a Communist Republic on the lines of strongly centralised State Communism, under the iron rule of the dictatorship of a party."—*Current Opinion*.

The Antiquity of Irish Freedom

(By REV. DR. J. H. COTTER, in the *Irish World*.)

English propaganda has, particularly in England, strenuously tried to establish the idea that the present movement in Ireland is just a spasm of an impulsive race that does not know its own mind and hence does not know its own wants. This lying propaganda holds that Ireland's present aspirations are a mushroom growth, entirely disconnected with Ireland's past history, and as a sequence has not the logic of facts to excuse it, tradition to respect it, nor the hope of perpetuity to commend it. All this is apiece with the same infamous propaganda that has destroyed entirely Ireland's history and would fain have her a barren land in Time's barren waste, or a dead sun in the firmament of nations.

Let us see if the present year in Ireland is a time "sadly out of joint" with Ireland's past. Love of liberty in Ireland is as old as Ireland. To confine ourselves to modern times, a century and a half had passed since Brian at Clontarf smashed the power of the Danish invader, when England in 1169 began her butcheries of the Irish and their island. Since Strongbow's evil day blackened Irish skies down through the gigantic and glorious deeds of the Geraldines, the O'Neills, the O'Donnells, the O'Sullivan's, the Sarsfields, and the chivalrous and heroic Collins of our own hour, Ireland's flaming sword shone with the brilliancy of liberty. No bribe ever tainted it, no dishonor ever flecked it, no cowardice ever tarnished it, no sense of slavery ever blackened it. Beautiful as the dawn on Ireland's coasts to the eye of the exile returning is Ireland's sword that 752 years ago leaped from its scabbard and has never since been sheathed.

Through weal or woe its point has ever been to the tyrant and the invader that has no more right to Ireland than has the burglar who would smash your door a right to your home.

Ireland's orators, the interpreters of Irish times, show that liberty was not born yesterday in Ireland, but has an honored longevity. Let us hear liberty's music from their lips, since the infamous Act of Union in 1800 made Castlereagh, Pitt, Cornwallis' names to be execrated in all time for falsehood, bribery, robbery, and cruelty.

Hear Henry Grattan, whose golden words, although spoken 140 years ago, particularly answer those of to-day who think Ireland should be grateful for England's dirty

fistful thrown into her face by Lloyd George and his Cabinet:—

"I shall hear of ingratitude. I name the argument to despise it and the men who make use of it; I know of no species of gratitude which should prevent my country from being free, no gratitude which should oblige Ireland to be the slave of England. In cases of robbery and usurpation, nothing is an object of gratitude except the thing stolen, the charter spoliated. A nation's liberty cannot, like her treasures, be meted and parcelled out in gratitude; no man can be grateful or liberal of his conscience, nor woman of her honor, nor nation of her liberty."

Again he thunders into the ears of all time:

"The King has no other title to his crown than that which you have to your liberty. Anything less than liberty is inadequate to Ireland and dangerous to Great Britain."

Would that the people of England to-day read well and thought well on this grand truism that welled up from the heart of Ireland's eloquent patriot whose last speech was his greatest and his last period the greatest of all, declaring:—

"I am here to lay the shattered remains of my constitution on the floor of this House in defence of the liberties of my country."

Tone, whose unselfish course ended in his sacrifice by England, boldly declares in his defence speech:—

"From my earliest youth I have regarded the connection between Ireland and Great Britain as the curse of the Irish Nation, and felt convinced that while it lasted the country could never be free nor happy."

Pursuant of his exalted idea of Irish liberty, Tone held in his exhortations to Admiral Hoche to come to help him in his struggle for his country that Ireland would establish a republic as her form of government. To hear him argue the question with the French authorities reminds one of de Valera's very words expressing his own high mission at the present hour.

Emmet continues the grand tradition of liberty in Ireland in his speech from the dock where he fell a martyr for freedom's cause.

A young man of 23, he extemporaneously poured forth periods that will last while men love their native air. Here is one picked haphazardly from many brilliant and beautiful things.

"I appeal to the immaculate God—I swear by the throne of Heaven, before which I must shortly appear—by the blood of the martyred patriots who have gone before me—that my conduct has been through all this peril governed only by the convictions which I have uttered and by no other view than the emancipation of my country from the superhuman oppression under which she has so long and too patiently travailed."

Charles Phillips in his estimate of the character of Napoleon tells Ireland: "You are taught by him that there is no despotism so stupendous against which you have not a resource."

O'Connell gives his link to the golden chain that binds Ireland to heavenly liberty: "I have but one wish under God, and that is for the liberty and prosperity of Ireland. I am for leaving England to the English, Scotland to the Scotch, but we must have Ireland for the Irish."

Meagher in his speech on "Abhorring the Sword" profoundly declares: "To be strong, a people must be self-reliant, self-ruled, self-sustained. The dependence of one people upon another even for the benefits of legislation is the deepest source of national weakness. It may exist, it will not thrive. It may hold together, it will not advance. Peace it may enjoy for peace and serfdom are compatible, but it will neither accumulate wealth nor win a character. It will neither benefit mankind by the enterprise of its merchants nor instruct mankind by the examples of its statesmen."

As in the past, Burke, Sheridan, Curran, Plunket, Butt, Sheil, and many other great orators have been liberty's oracles, so Dillon, Davitt, Sullivan and Parnell have voiced Ireland's love of liberty—a love that no English prison can make pallid, famine freeze nor death itself subdue. Liberty like truth is ever hale and hearty in Ireland. St. Augustine's definition of truth fits her—"Ever ancient and ever new"—is that splendid spirit without which man grovels and a country is a nothing—with which the individual reaches the full stature of a man and his country has in deed and truth the power of a nation.

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