

DOMINIC FANNING: Mayor And Martyr (SPECIALLY CONTRIBUTED)

QUESTION OF LIME AS A FERTILISER HUG AND KISS BUT IT WAS ALL A MISTAKE

Things That Matter MUCH satisfaction was caused by the announcement in our columns on Monday that definite steps are being taken with a view to setting up a Conciliation Board for Limerick. The rather prolonged silence on this matter gave rise to a suspicion that the whole idea had been more or less quietly dropped. We are in a position to state that for this fear there was no real justification.

The suggestion for the establishment of special machinery for the maintenance of industrial peace in the city was made several months ago by Mr. M. J. Keyes, T.D., who was at the time Minister for Local Government. Our Labour Deputy was speaking at a meeting of the local Trades Council and he urged that either the old Conciliation Board be resurrected or an entirely new one formed. What he urged met with the unanimous approval of all present, as was only natural to expect.

The Employers' Federation, it is understood, also endorsed the views put forward by Mr. Keyes, so that there was no reason whatever why early developments were not to be expected. The most gratifying feature in regard to the suggestion made at the Trades Council meeting is that nothing whatever was said of it in any quarter by way of adverse criticism or cynical comment. The fact is, of course, that nothing could give greater pleasure to the citizens in general than to have in their midst a voluntary tribunal for the settlement of any local labour dispute that might arise from time to time.

Bearing this in mind, a number of active believers in the methods of conference and conciliation have been interesting themselves of late towards securing the early and practical implementation of the admirable suggestion made by Mr. Keyes. Their efforts deserve every commendation and, from what we hear, give every promise of full success. A number of meetings have already been held and others are to take place with a view to making the necessary arrangements for giving Limerick a boon that it badly needs and which should prove an unmixt blessing for this important centre.

The old Limerick Conciliation Board had to its credit a fine record of valuable achievements. It amicably settled numerous strikes and prevented many others from arising. It would have done even greater work only that in one respect its hands were more or less tied. One of its rules was that it could not intervene in disputes unless and until its good offices were invited by the two parties immediately concerned. This meant in practice that the side with a bad or doubtful case could always ensure that the Board's efforts for justice and fair-play would be kept from operating.

The work and experiences of the old Board provide much

LIMERICK's history unfolds a grand record of achievement down the ages, but let us not blind ourselves to the fact that here and there this record is beset by deeds that are inglorious. It would not be altogether correct, historically, to present the forebears of this city as a mighty, high-spirited race, untroubled by the ills of war, without reminding ourselves at the same time that Limerick was renowned in the art of treachery, too.

Both these human traits are very well exemplified in the siege of 1651. Here we had men who were mighty in every sense of the word and who proved such by their actions from one day to the next. Yet, beside them stood men who betrayed them in order to save themselves. It is well to remember that such traitors were Limerick men, too. The victims to this treachery are now forgotten except on the musty pages of mildewed tomes in some Limerick library, but this city hopes to call these musty pages to life when a tercentenary commemoration here will reveal once again that very high-minded men of this period have by their valiant stand put such traitors to oblivion and shame. One layman should be indulgent in his imagination and our estimation for what he accomplished then—his name was the epitomisation of all that is noble and brave. He was one of the victims of this 1651 treachery and his name was Dominic Fanning, Mayor of Limerick.

HELED TO MAKE HISTORY. The Mayors of Limerick, all down the ages since the inception of this office in 1186, have helped to make history of the city. Around their personalities was woven the thread of Limerick's fighting story from generation to generation. The vast majority of the men who donned the robes of his superior office were, indeed, worthy men, but here and there in this long mayoral line certain individuals did things which certainly shed lustre on their office—things which Irish history will always be reluctant to pen. But if a man ever deserved to be ranked amongst the greatest of those who have helped to make the history of the city, it was first citizen I imagine to Dominic Fanning must go the palm. There were other great men to come after him down the ages to our own time, but I wonder if they had the abiding influence on the popular imagination or did they accomplish by their actions the same amount as Fanning did, which rounded off eventually to a lasting good for the whole land.

He was born in Mary Street in the very heart of the city, as it was then known, in the early years of the seventeenth century. The Fanning home, still standing, goes to mark the place of his birth. The name Fanning was a very popular and highly-respected name at this juncture in Limerick. They were important people for generations before ever Dominic came on the scene. Nothing worthwhile was done in Limerick City at that period without a Fanning having something to do with it. He took a prominent part in all the city's activities; of her trade and commerce they handled a certain share.

NOT FIRST MAYOR OF THE NAME.

Dominic Fanning was not the first of that illustrious cognomen to wear the mayoral chain, which goes to prove their interest in the municipal life of the city, and the esteem in which they were held by the citizens as a whole. In the role of first citizen the Fanning name was famous. In the past, mayors of this name had refused to take the oath of supremacy with the result that they were fined and imprisoned for such lack of courtesy and as a punishment for their disobedience. However, their sturdy resistance and their good example, in repudiating such an oath, bore fruit afterwards as the Mayor and sheriffs, went publicly to Mass without being molested by the authorities. This was a rather high standard had been set for him who inherited the Fanning name.

Most likely Dominic was educated by the Franciscan Fathers at their school on the Sand Hall not very far distant from his own home. It was here, perhaps, that the seeds of perdition were first planted in Dominic's soul, which grew afterwards into such a mighty force within him. He seems to have been a forceful and temperamental character who opposed at every step any move which was detrimental to his religion and his country's interests. These moves were many and dangerous, but Dominic Fanning was always on the alert to counteract their influence and their sting. His whole heart was devoted to the interests of the Irish cause and thus he was sponsored by every means at his disposal anything which would lead to its success.

EFFORTS OF A WILY LORD-LIEUTENANT.

Ormond, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was well known to Fanning.

He did not trust him. He knew he was a wily and able diplomat who cared little for this country's welfare in so far as such interests would be an advantage to him. Being a loyal champion of the English King, he tried to implement a demand made by this royal personage on Limerick. It seems that this King was in dire straits financially in order to hold his throne against the increased pressure of the Cromwellians. Money was sorely needed to continue the struggle. Thus he approached Limerick seeking its aid and in return he promised settlement in land titles and other securities. He went so far in March 1649 as to offer a treaty of peace to still further soften the hearts of Irish Catholics towards his plight. The articles of this Peace made some concessions but actually they were only a misnomer, and when the security of the Catholic religion was not even mentioned and the confederate state completely ignored this famous "Peace" derived from the convention of the Irish Bishops at Waterford the contempt it deserved. "PEACE" OFFER REJECTED BY BISHOPS

Ormond tried to impose this peace on the various towns throughout the land. Of course he knew he had something to gain by so doing. One of his chief obstacles in trying to implement this peace in Limerick City was Dominic Fanning. Rev. Dr. Lynch, Vicar-Capitular of Tuam, when passing through Limerick on his way home from Waterford, was visited by the clergy and the venerable fathers of the city in order to learn the attitude of the Irish Bishops towards this peace in their synod at Waterford some days previously. Dr. Lynch informed them that the peace was repudiated and gave them sound reasons for such action on the Bishops' part. He showed them the printed decrees of the Waterford Synod and gave copies to Dominic Fanning, who went immediately through the city and publicised its contents.

CORPORATION'S ATTITUDE.

By the Mayor, Mr. Bourke and the majority of the Corporation had already pledged their consent to the articles of the peace and were waiting at this moment in their robes of office to go out into the streets and proclaim it. The Limerick clergy took the initiative and turned down the peace beforehand, with the result that the Mayor and the Corporation, were fortunate to get away with the lives. They were assaulted by the populace to such an extent that some of them were wounded. The moving spirit behind the peace was, Fanning. Bourke was deposed from office as a result and with the unanimous consent of the townspeople Fanning was made Mayor. The determined refusal of the Corporation of Limerick on this occasion, evoked public opinion to such an extent that the peace was rejected by the country at large. To the ability and leadership of Dominic Fanning much of this credit is due. He had become leader of the popular party within the city but such leadership exacted much sacrifice from him in the years that lay ahead.

ORMOND REPULSED.

Suffice it to say that due to Dominic Fanning and some others with the wily Ormond was repulsed. The outcome of the whole business was that Ormond saw he had not a united front on this question. Besides, the confederate forces were split on this issue, too. Ormond flew to Paris and tried his intrigue from there, while the Nunzio, Rinuccini, seeing the split which came through the promulgation of the peace saw it was futile to remain in Ireland and thus left for Rome through the port of Galway in February, 1649.

Cromwell and Ireton take over the stage at this point. They came to save Ireland for themselves. It is with Ireton we are concerned in Limerick. On October 4, 1650, he encamped at Lough Glin and sent an embassy to Dominic Fanning with instructions to tell the citizens that they must receive a garrison. His request was refused and thus the major siege virtually began.

SPYERS BUSY IN IRISH CAMP. Spies were very active during all these months in the Irish camp and the Ormond faction in the city whom Fanning dealt such a blow to before were now planning his doom. They knew that the city would be sold by traitors and they knew also that Ireton was furnished with a list of his chief opponents in the city.

With the greatest of ease and without much fighting in his part Ireton took Limerick and put Fanning to death. He was doubly betrayed not only by the men who were supposed to be fighting in the same cause as himself but also by his servant. Dragged forth from the ancestral tomb of the Fannings down in St. Francis' Abbey he mounted the gibbet and died bravely—because he hated treachery and loved truth he became one of our first Limerick mayors to die for faith and fatherland.

HUNDREDS of valuable parish industries were destroyed when two years ago the Department of Agriculture decided to discontinue the burnt lime subsidy scheme, Mr. J. Hayes, Co. Co. Limerick Committee of Agriculture on Friday of last week.

Mr. Hayes was contributing to a discussion on the merits or otherwise of a burnt lime subsidy scheme, opened by the Chairman (Mr. P. Maguire, Co. Co.).

The Chairman said he hoped they had not forgotten the burnt lime scheme. There had been a considerable amount of controversy about the scheme while it was in operation but he thought it should be re-introduced in some form. Since work began two years ago under the Local Authorities (Works) Act, farmers had available valuable quantities of river sludge which, mixed with burnt lime, would make an excellent fertiliser. There was no doubt that there was a necessity for a re-introduction of the burnt lime scheme.

Mr. D. E. Quish, Co. Co.—We would want a fleet of special Guardians, with a few Superintendents thrown in to properly supervise such a scheme.

Mr. J. J. McNamara, Co. Co., said ground limestone was as good a fertiliser as the burnt lime. Apart from that the Committee had been in hot water for the past forty years because of the burnt lime scheme.

Chairman: In my area the people much prefer the burnt lime. Mr. J. W. Carty, Co. Co., said people had not yet got enough experience of the ground limestone to be qualified to speak on its effects as compared with the burnt material.

INSTRUCTOR'S VIEWS Mr. Parks, one of the Committee's instructors, said that the ground limestone was a better fertiliser than the burnt lime. Ground limestone, however, was a slower worker. In Northern Ireland the farmers had become so satisfied with the ground limestone that they'd never again bother with the burnt material.

The C.A.O. (Mr. M. Gleason) said he thought the discussion was futile because the Department had no fund with which to subsidise the production of burnt lime.

Mr. M. Dwane said he didn't think ground limestone was as all right for application to land as at present top-dressing.

Mr. Hayes said that when the Department, a couple of years ago, intimated its unwillingness to continue the burnt lime subsidy, he'd worked hard against that decision because he knew it would destroy a parish industry that gave employment to hundreds of people throughout the county.

Mr. Dwane agreed, mentioning that while the burnt lime scheme was in operation quarries throughout Co. Limerick gave good employment. Now they were idle.

RESPECTIVE BENEFITS Mr. J. J. Collins, T.D., said the primary reason for the objection to the re-introduction of the burnt lime subsidy was that the farmers had had to supervise it. That, he thought, wasn't a sufficiently good reason. Their objection should be based on the relationship between the benefits obtainable for burnt lime and ground limestone. They were not able to argue that way at the moment because they hadn't had sufficient experience of the latter. All they could say was that the ground limestone was slow-acting and that while the rich farmers in East Limerick could afford to wait for its latent benefits the small farmers of the mountainous areas could not do so. They needed the quick action of the burnt lime to get rid every year of the moss and lichen that infested even their best fields.

The C.A.O. said that their real difficulty was the money. The Department had ceased giving grants and any scheme now sponsored by the Committee would have to be financed directly from the county rates. Even a small scheme would cost between £2,000 and £3,000 annually.

ADJOURNED FOR PRESENCE OF MINISTER

Mr. Collins suggested that they leave the whole matter over to their next meeting when the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. T. Walsh) would be present. They could discuss the entire matter in the Minister's presence and possibly persuade him to re-introduce a lime subsidy scheme even on a moderate basis.

This was agreed to by the Committee, who adjourned the discussion.

Sent To Jail On Charge Of Begging

A PROFESSIONAL beggar who did absolutely nothing but made a general nuisance of himself round the country, was the description given at Newcastle West Court on Friday, 14th inst., to an elderly labourer who was sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment.

THERE was no more surprise person at Shannon Airport this morning (writes our Airpo correspondent) than Mr. Thom O'Malley, of Boston, when, after stepping off a P.A.A. Stratostrat he was greeted with a hug and kiss by Mrs. Agnes Foy, of O'Malley, of Westport. Co. Mayo. It was a case of mistaken identity but the mistake was not discovered until Mr. O'Malley and his son Michael, and Mrs. Foy and her two nieces, Celene and Agnes, had almost completed a meal at the Airport restaurant.

MISTAKE DISCOVERED AT MEAL.

"I was more than surprised to find a party at the Airport to me, but when Mrs. Foy rushed towards me and the name O'Malley was mentioned I took it for granted we were related. When Mr. Foy asked why didn't you tell me you were bringing Michael with you it made me all the more sure it was not until we were having a meal that I realised she was claiming to be my sister. I have two sisters but they reside in E. Co. and have done so for the past fifty years, so I knew there must be a mistake."

"I heard there was a Mr. O'Malley disembarking and I took it for granted that he was my brother who I have not seen for almost forty years," said Mrs. Foy. In an excitement I forgot to ask in the "plane came from."

MADE THEM EXTRA FRIEND

Michael O'Malley's comment was—"At least the mistake has made us extra friends here." He explained that his father and himself intended visiting relatives in Galway. "The strange thing about it all is the number of coincidences in the story. Both my dad and Mr. Foy's brother emigrated from Ire land in 1912 and both have a son named Michael. Though both have different Christian names it was easy to make a mistake in the excitement of the moment."

Mrs. Foy, who had been waiting her brother's arrival for a number of hours, later made no mistake when Mr. Owen O'Malley, of Chicago, disembarked off another P.A.A. flight.

MAYOR GREETS MAYOR OF NEW YORK

THE Mayor (Mr. S. Coughlan) motored out to the Shannon Airport to-day to greet the Mayor of New York, Mr. Vincent Impellitteri, who was passing through on his way to Italy.

The Mayor of New York was accompanied by Mrs. Impellitteri and a small party of friends.

The Mayor extended a cordial welcome to New York's "First Citizen"; to Mrs. Impellitteri and to the other members of the party.

The Mayor of Limerick was accompanied by Councillor Kevin Bradshaw and by the City Accountant, Mr. John O'Donnell.

The party was entertained to lunch by the Central Council of the G.A.A., which was represented by Very Rev. Canon Hamilton and Mr. D. Lanigan.

WORLD ROCKS