

# LETTERS

To  
the  
EDITOR

## Call to honour Bishop O'Dwyer's parents

DEAR Editor—An excellent editorial in your paper recently mentioned the problem of using, to advantage, the leisure hours which the five-day week has given to so many. That, followed by Mrs. Condell's "talking it over" article on the "Irish Independent," Monday, August 3, in which she discussed Mr. Jeremiah Newman's recent lecture on "Civics," given at the Limerick Training College prompted me to write to you on a matter which I consider of tremendous civic importance.

Limerick is proud of Edward Thomas O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick (1886-1917), who defied Maxwell, and who was the first authoritative voice in the country raised in defence of the men of 1916.

I feel sure that Limerick people would wish to see his parents honoured, in the way he himself wished to honour them, and in actual fact he left them in our care.

Recently, quite by accident, I found his mother's grave in Mount St. Laurence Cemetery in the place which he himself chose for her.

She lies just behind the little mortuary chapel, close to the path, sheltered by a hawthorn bush, but now, unfortunately, her grave, once so much honoured and cherished, lies overgrown with ivy and briars.

I feel quite certain that it is not through any lack of respect for one whose remains deserve honour, but simply through forgetfulness, or perhaps through want of knowledge of the fact that the grave is there.

I pass the matter on, with confidence, to Frank Glasgow and the members of the old I.R.A., when they pay their next Easter visit to Mount St. Laurence, perhaps they might nause to visit the grave of our patriot Bishop's parents, as they pass along that path. Because the remains of both his parents are there.

His mother died in 1889, three years after he had become Bishop of Limerick, and he probably wished to have her grave where he could visit it often.

One can imagine the care with which he chose the spot, and the many times he must have visited it between 1889 and his own death in 1917.

The inscription reads:—

Erected by  
Most Rev. Edward Thomas O'Dwyer,  
Lord Bishop of Limerick,  
in memory of his mother,  
Anne O'Dwyer,  
who died 5th June, 1889

Then on the following December, wishing to have both his parents together in death, he transferred the remains of his father and sister to that grave. The inscription on the back of the stone cross reads: "To this grave were transferred 17th December, 1889, from Cullen, Co. Tipperary, by Most Rev. Edward Thomas O'Dwyer, Lord Bishop of Limerick, the remains of his father, John Keating O'Dwyer, who died 18th February, 1872, and his sister, Mary Kate O'Dwyer who died 25th October, 1870."

Much of the social history of Limerick of the past hundred years and more, is written on tombs in Mount St. Laurence. The one I mention is only one of many examples. But many of them can no longer be even read, as they are covered with ivy and have been neglected for years. Great families have died out and there is nobody left to remember.

But is it not a civic responsibility of ours to remember? Or is it a virtue to "cast a cold eye" on death and to pass by?

For years Mungret Cemetery had been left in neglect and decay. Then three years ago members of the local Young Farmers were organised by a man of vision and inspiration and wonders were achieved in a few weeks of voluntary labour.

In Co. Clare, the week before November 1st is devoted every year to the cleaning of the graveyards by local voluntary labour in preparation for Cemetery Sunday.

Those two examples gave me the idea that some of our five-day-week leisure could be organised for this worthy civic cause.

The few men employed at

Mount St. Laurence do a great job, but they could not possibly do all that is to be done, especially with old neglected tombs.

They would, I am sure, welcome the help of a few dozen men who would give a few hours of voluntary work occasionally, under their direction, and supervision.

Mr. D. B. O'Malley, our splendid Parliamentary Secretary, of whom we are so proud, has a deep interest in the preservation of monuments, and in honouring what remains to us of the past. He realises, too, the importance of inculcating those ideas in the youth of to-day.

I feel sure that if a Local Monuments Committee were organised that he would be glad to be its patron. I am sure, too, that such a Committee would have the approval of our distinguished Dr. Jeremiah Newman and that he would regard it as "an enlightened concept of civics." It would be at least one step towards putting his recent magnificent and inspiring lecture into practice.

Mrs. Condell writes—"Our youth are malleable, and from my own experience very anxious to serve, if only we give them a chance to do so."

How right she is! We have splendid young men amongst us. All they want is direction. We have seen examples of what was achieved through inter-firm organisation and activities. We have leaders in every firm. Let us give them a chance of showing civic spirit by making Mount St. Laurence a place to be proud of, a place where interesting tombs are not covered up and defaced by ivy and briar.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was anything but a morbid man, yet he showed and he said that his visit to Arbor Hill was the occasion which impressed him most during his colourful visit to Ireland in June, 1963.

Would we not have been ashamed in Limerick if he had seen the forgotten grave of the parents of our 1916 Patriot Bishop?

M.H.

## Red Cross Director replies to Mr. Moloney

Dear Mr. Editor—I welcome the opportunity presented by Mr. Moloney's long letter to

the absence of Red Cross members on the occasion of the recent Munster Hurling

way and, as your correspondent states, their Organisation has given splendid service

ck, and Miss Ursula St. Joseph's Church, ceremony, and the



ura Owens, Glenstal, Donnycarney, Dublin, Rev. M. McGurk,