

Limerick Leader

WHY THE SAVOY AFFAIR MATTERS

THE MANAGEMENT of Limerick's Savoy deny racial discrimination. What they do not deny, however, is that on Friday, October 26th last, a doorman, when asked if it were true that blacks were not allowed into the public lounge, insisted: "Yes, that's right - I have my orders from the management." Nor, in view of the evidence of six people, can it be denied.

Immediately after the incident the Limerick Leader approached Mr. John McGeehan, manager of the entertainment complex. He could quickly have defused the situation by explaining that it was all a mistake. He did not do so. His ambiguous silence was eventually broken by rash allegation.

For example, Mr. McGeehan belatedly claimed that the four African students were denied entry on October 26th because of bad language the previous night. Yet a garda who visited the Savoy on October 25th says he heard nothing offensive from the Nigerians. Indeed, the only bad language heard by journalists investigating the affair has come from the management side.

And what of the complaint by Mr. Tony O'Mara, proprietor of the Savoy, that the Limerick Leader "blew up" the story? What, in other words, is so terrible about the barring of four people from a public lounge?

Mr. O'Mara misses the point. The Savoy affair is important not simply because of its potentially devastating effects on race relations in Ireland and Nigeria, on international links and on Limerick's rapidly growing reputation as a seat of learning. What matters most is that human beings were stripped of their God-given dignity.

"You don't allow blacks in here," the doorman was asked. "Yes, that's right," he answered. "I have my orders from the management."

NEVER ON A WEEKDAY

LIMERICK COUNCIL of Trade Unions, who are planning a PAYE demonstration on December 15th next, are right to renew the

JOHN B

OUT IN THE OP

Her merry laugh rings soft and clear
And, like the dulcet voice,
It falls like music on the ear
And makes the heart rejoice.
Oh, may no cares the joys
abate,
Or gloomy fears retard
The fondest hopes of blushing
Kate,
The Maid of Sweet Coolard.

The author of the foregoing died almost a hundred years ago. He was known in Listowel and all over North Kerry as The Blind Hennessy. He was totally blind at the time of his death, which was, alas, pitifully premature. He was only forty-two years of age when laid to rest in Listowel graveyard.

When he died, there were few, if any, poets capable of writing in the fine lyrical vein which he adopted with so much ease. Everything he wrote was well above the commonplace and I can recall few pedestrian poems by this newsagent cum reporter cum poet.

Name

His full name was Denis C. Hennessy, and it is indeed remarkable that his only published work has never been reproduced. It was called "The Lays of North Kerry and Other Poems and Sketches."

At the time of its publication, it was proscribed by both Church and State, which is rather odd, when you come to think of it, because D. C. Hennessy was a devout Roman Catholic and this was the very Church which frowned upon his only opus.

He was also a dedicated Nationalist, but he was not above paying tribute to the local landlord, which also makes it difficult to comprehend why his work was unfavourably received by the State. Lord Listowel was an exceptional landlord, it must be said. When he and Lady Listowel visited the town in the seventies of the last century, D. C. Hennessy composed the following tribute:

Just now when we find other land-
lords are bent
On laying on the screw of oppres-
sion still tighter,
By raising the rents over fifty per

He me stil sof cle vel

when the trustee Listowel handed Gurtinard to the town in nineteen could probably be now no obligatic kowtow to the when a landlord destiny in his gr blame to that m tribute to ensure nesy's chief sou the newsagent's where this wri endeavouring to sios about him.

He also worke ter until his sigh then for a numb