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## "DAMN THE EMPIRE."

SOME weeks ago I read of a man having been fined £1 at Howth for chalking on a wall "God Bless Germany." Presumably the Christian on the bench considered that the safety of the realm was imperilled by praying for the *spiritual* welfare of Britain's enemies. Looking at the action of the accused man from the standpoint of Christianity, I think it denotes an admirable and exemplary frame of mind, this written prayer of his. He does not pray for England's defeat make note, he doesn't pray that the iron heel of Prussian despotism may be placed on the neck of the British Empire, he doesn't even pray that Germany may gain *material* benefits from the war and reconquer the world's markets. No! He simply prays "God Bless Germany," and as he is charitable enough and Christian enough to pray thus, so also I assume was he enlightened enough to believe that the blessing of the Almighty could be conferred only on a people and a nation deserving of it because of their virtue and their moral strength. If Germany is deserving of God's blessing on this account it seems to me that "our" Empire is in a peculiarly false position in making war on her, and if she does *not* deserve it the offender who prayed for it should be censured by the Ecclesiastical and not by the civil authority.

"Gott Strafe England," we are told is the prevalent aspiration in Germany. I cannot say what this conveys to the German mind. But some Irish minds interpret it to mean "Damn England" or "To Hell with the Empire." Well, for my part if I had an enemy deserving of my hatred, an enemy who continuously and persistently injured me, it

would really be small solace to me to reflect that one day that enemy would be damned in Hell. I might say to him "You are *deserving* Hell for this," but I wouldn't like to think that I would become altogether so hardened as to pursue him beyond the grave and pray for his eternal damnation. Rather would I hope for his conversion in this world, and his realization of the evils he had done me.

There are, I know, large numbers of good Catholics who smile sceptically when the "Conversion" of England is mentioned. I largely share this scepticism myself, I fear, despite the steady progress which the Church is making in England. I am *suspicious* of English Catholics, because English ideals, as reflected in modern English literature, in the English Press, and in the English Theatre are not in harmony with Catholic teaching. I have heard and read sermons by English converts, and I must say that some of them seem to treat sacred subjects in a manner which betrayed a lack of that reverence which characterises our Irish Priests. One sermon which I recall was Fr. Bernard Vaughan's on "Religion and Advertising," another was delivered by Fr. Donnelly, English despite his name, in University Church, Stephen's Green, a few months ago. Those who have read Fr. Vaughan's sermon and heard Fr. Donnelly's will, I think, agree with me.

By these strictures I do not seek to convey that England is predestined to damnation. No man and no nation is. Many a man's conversion has been wrought through some stroke of sorrow, some hour of great affliction has opened for him, when no



human consolation could satisfy him and in that hour he has found peace in God. So too with nations, and presumably with Empires if such latter curses can have any permanency at all. They have their life, they develop their "Civilization," they "Protect" small nationalities, they endow "National" education schemes, and generally have a "ripping" time, and God's name is invoked only for form sake on the prospectus. But "The Day" comes at last, the day of *conversion*. "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small," and no man, at least few men and few nations have ever yet had a "ripping" time that the penalty was not exacted from them in due course.

The more hardened the sinner, the more difficult his conversion. Often it can only be wrought through humiliation and disaster; whether these shall be accessory to the conversion of England, or whether she shall advance in virtue coincident with an "Allies'" triumph in the war, time will show.

In any case, I would have it known that the Editor of this paper does not join in the cry "Damn England," rather do I pray that whatever be the cost, and no matter how humiliating; in the worldly sense, the process may be, may God convert and bless England.

ED. DALTON.

## WHO SAID HUNS?

I am reading with interest the many resolutions appearing in the Press condemnatory of the Orange attack on the Christian Brothers a few weeks ago at Ballycastle, County Antrim. The drunken Orange roudies to the number of 30, all garbed if you please in the saving Khaki, made a savage attack on a half dozen of the Rev. Brothers, who were having an evening walk, but only three of the ruffians were put in the dock and sentenced, two to 2 months each and the third to a fine of £1.

The details of the outrage bear comparison with any of the "German Atrocities" concocted by frenzied London fictionists. The actual perpetrators of the crime, though deserving much severer punishment in order to cool their zeal in the cause of religion, are themselves the victims of much worse scoundrels. They are the "Martyrs of a catch cry," the infuriated, ignorant zealots of British party politicians. They have been taught by designing knaves that the Priests and the Christian

Brothers are the tools of the Evil One. They hate the Devil, and they curse the Pope because they believe he is in league with the Devil. The Britisher has faith in neither God nor the Devil, but he knows that the ignorant Ulster Orangeman has, and he inflames his bigotry and his masculine passions in order to keep up the British game of accentuating the racial and religious differences between North and South in Ireland.

It is unnecessary that the Britisher show his own hand in Ulster. He can bribe the native born tools and make it worth their while to perpetuate strife in the North. The opposition to Home Rule is the opposition of self-interest, the opposition of men who are paid from British funds to foment discord. Their efforts have been successful, mainly because the Parliamentarians through the A.O.H. crippled the Sinn Fein propaganda of a few years back which was steadily counteracting the insidious British campaign of "Divide and conquer." The Parliamentarians went across the Irish Sea to "Convert" the British Democracy, but the wily Britisher stole a march on them and re-created the Ulster menace at home. The *Conversion* or the *Coercion* of Ulster will have to be faced in the early future. In condemning this particular outrage, however, I would be sorry to think that thereby any hatred of the Ulster Protestant body as a whole should be engendered. The unfortunate ignorant fools who assaulted the Rev. Brothers can find, or rather *could* find before the war, their prototypes in Dublin. As long as Ireland is the battle-ground of British politics, as long as Ireland relies on the verdict of the British Parliament as to her claims to self-government, so long shall we have the paid creatures in our midst whose business shall be to inflame the passions of the ignorant mob and incite them to violent assault on all who have the courage and independence to take Ireland's destiny out of the hands of British party politicians, and teach the doctrine of national self-reliance.

The blackguards who attacked the Sinn Feiners in Dublin with butcher's knives and with oaken batons, a few years ago, were no better than the Ballycastle blackguards. The blackguards who attacked the Suffragettes in Dublin on the night of the Asquith meeting in the Royal, who assaulted and indecently molested respectable ladies in the streets, and tore the clothes from their backs on the same occasion, who endeavoured to throw a young girl into the Liffey, in which they were thwarted by some of Larkin's men; those blackguards were not *Orange* men, hating Home Rule and cursing the Pope, oh, no! These were the "Brotherly love



and true Christian-charity" followers of Devlin and Nugent incited by Redmond's "Ablest journalist in Ireland," and led on by Councillor Peter Reilly to their brutal acts in the interest of British Whiggery.

The actual perpetrators are the lesser offenders. It is the cowardly and corrupt instigators who are the real ruffians. In Smithfield in Dublin, a few years ago, a gang of toughs armed with horse-whips and knuckle-dusters were held in readiness in a stable-yard for an attack on a Sinn Fein meeting. Stephen Hand, the "Register purifier," could say why the order for attack was not given. In the columns of the Dublin "Evening Telegraph," it was urged that the Dublin ladies who advocated Woman's Suffrage should be publicly horsewhipped in the streets. This was probably the suggestion of J. P. Placehunter and Felon-setter Gaynor, Redmond's "Ablest journalist in Ireland," whose peculiar forte was writing anonymous letters to himself as sub-Editor of the "Telegraph."

The drunken bloods of the North are at the service of Orange Gaynors, Orange Hands, and Orange Nugents. It is one of the unfortunate incidents of the British Party Game, and is scarcely a reproach to *Ireland* that they thrive here. Ireland is not responsible for them. The wonder is that there aren't more. Circumstanced as Ireland has been for many centuries, and more during the 19th and 20th than ever, she is bound to be beset by a battalion of half-breed-parasites, sons of bailiffs, sons of peelers, and barrack-yard foundlings, etc., etc., whose services shall ever be at the disposal of the firm with plumpest money bags, no matter what the consequences of these services may be to this nation.

There are only two ultimate parties in Ireland, those who profit by Ireland's degradation and those who suffer by it. Ireland's greatest degradation is to witness the energies and efforts of her people being dissipated in West-British politics; while this continues we must be prepared for the half-brick and knuckle-duster as an effective means of convincing opponents.

## THE GLOWING SPARK.

The demand for Vol. I. of THE SPARK has taken me unawares. I have issued considerably more copies than I intended, and still the orders are coming in. Readers will understand that the delay in supplying their orders is unavoidable, but every effort is being made to fulfil them at the earliest moment.

## SEANCHUS.

Numerous correspondents write me in anticipation of personal replies. They must understand that my failure to reply to them is not due to any lack of appreciation of their kind letters, but to my utter inability owing to other cares which demand my attention to keep level with a rather heavy correspondence. I can assure them that I am grateful for their kindness. To those others who have written abusive letters I am also grateful, because their letters indicate that THE SPARK has been felt. Earwigs; political or otherwise don't like sparks, but I am afraid I haven't sufficient respect for an earwig's opinion to consult him as to my line of conduct.

"J.E.D."—You can obtain a number of penny booklets dealing with German social reform, etc., from the Catholic Truth Society, 24 Upper O'Connell Street. I think it is in his "Triumph of Failure" that the late Canon Sheehan gives an interesting picture of social life in Germany.

"Inquirer" (Stradbally).—Thanks for your letter. Later on I shall deal with the subject you suggest. Meantime you would save time by reading up some of their pamphlets. There is a Sinn Fein Society in Dublin which meets, I think, in Harcourt Street. Write them as to membership, and they will probably send the literature you require.

"Pembroke."—Yes, there are two of the same name, but they are wholly dissimilar in their political views and otherwise, so you won the bet. Don't let this encourage you, however, to indulge in gambling.

"P.L."—You are severe on the super-intellectuals. Why? Surely there is room for them. Some of them actually read THE SPARK. Of course they criticise it, and from a very great height, but that is always safer than "doing your bit" in the publishing line yourself. I have no objection to "poetry" at all, as a matter of fact I have already published some good verse in THE SPARK. I could write much better "poetry" myself than yours, but I lack the daring to print it. I also want to keep THE SPARK alive, and retain the good will of its readers.

THE EDITOR.

The Croke Aeridheacht, postponed from 25th July, will be held at Croke Park to-day (Sunday). The special attraction of the Aeridheacht is the camog match, North v. South (Dublin); in addition to which other pleasing attractions will be introduced. Throughout the evening St. James's Brass and Reed Band will discourse selections of Irish music.

The McHale branch of the Gaelic League are running their annual excursion to Galway on September 12th. Further particulars next week.



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### BOOK REVIEWS.

FROM WOLFE TONE'S DAY TO MINE. A  
History of Irish National Degeneracy. By John E.  
Redmond, M.P., Leader of the Irish Parliamentary  
Party, author of "Nominations," "The Danger of  
Home Rule in Operation," "Selections from the  
Statute Book," "Max Green and College Green,"  
"Subservient Independence," "Rifles—Ancient  
and Modern," "Tactics for Volunteers," etc. Mr.  
Redmond's name on the title page of a book is a  
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picture of the Redmond family, under the guidance  
of Mr. Green, Chairman of the Irish Prisons Board,  
overlooking the exercise ground of Mountjoy Jail,  
happy in the thought that on the far side of the wall  
are Sean Mac Diarmoda, Sean Milroy, A. New-  
man, Liam Mellowes, Denis McCullagh, and Ernest  
Blythe; while another double page picture shows  
on one side the family party at high tea, and on the  
other side the "Aliens" at hard labour.

THE PARLIAMENTARY LAMB. By William  
Field, M.P. A companion volume to Mr. Pat  
O'Brien's "Strawberries and Cream". An edition  
de luxe, bound in French calf, and enhanced by an  
introduction from the pen of the Butcher of Om-  
durman. We think it was a happy thought of Mr.  
Field's to have the price of the book determined by the  
current price of mutton chops, which at the moment  
of writing the volume was being sold at 8¾d. per lb.  
As the price of meat is rising, and the matter is in  
the author's heaviest style, an early rush is antici-  
pated, and arrangements have been made to cope  
with the expected demand. Intending readers are  
warned not to wait till the war is over, even on  
the plea of the necessity of investing in the War  
Loan. The frontispiece is a unique photograph of  
Mr. Field fresh from a visit to the barber's, and is  
entitled "The Shorn Lamb".

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Liffey Street, and published at 4 Findlater Place,  
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