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HYPOTHETICAL TREASON

WHEN you come to think of it, is there not a wonderful power—I suppose power is the word—in a short simple phrase that grips the imagination and puts no strain on the memory? Just try to recall some of the phrases that have “stuck” and which have got or will get their place in history. Do you remember that one which the fierce old Roman Cato worked in at the end of every speech—“Carthage must be destroyed.” In season and out of season he used the one phrase, and in the end he got his wish. Carthage was destroyed with a vengeance. John Mitchel had as high an opinion of the Carthage of his time as old Cato, but his oft repeated prayer for her destruction has not been answered yet. To-day the Germans crystallised their hatred of England into three words—“Gott strafe England”—which serve amongst the Kaiser’s people as the “Dia’s Muire dhuit” of the Gaelic League. When Sir Edward Carson was instructing his followers to resist even to the death that Home Rule Act, which he has since described as an “Act but not a fact,” some member of the late Liberal Government said that he (Carson) was guilty of “Hypothetical treason” in that he preached rebellion only if, as, and when certain circumstances should be brought about. Well, Sir Edward Carson is now Attorney-General for England, and presumably the safe repository of British Law, with the unusual qualification of a jury-packer under the same Law and a hypothetical traitor against it. His words and his counsel as given to trusting Ulster folk will turn in handy when his High Pathetic Colleague in the British Cabinet, Augustine Birrell, the *Obiter Dicta* expert, will seek to jail men for resisting conscription when it comes.

The Registration Bill has been “placed on the Statute Book,” but unlike the Bill for the Better Government of Ireland, which got there before it, it is meant for use—active use, I mean—and not as a sop to gullible people like Mr. John Dillon. It had hardly been passed through the English House of Commons—helped through, be it remembered, by those of the Irish Party who were on the spot—when Lord Kitchener hinted pretty broadly that it gave him machinery to apply pressure to those of military age and physically fit who had not yet joined the British Army. The English papers take that view also, and even those of them which are opposed to conscription admit that the Government are now free to compel military service. Lord Lansdowne, a Home Ruler of the fine old school, told the noble lords of England that the new register would shorten the interval between the decision to resort to compulsory service and the actual application, but he admitted that there was no reason whatever to expect throughout Ireland the same kind of general enthusiasm and support for the measure that they expected in England. Now, the Marquis of Lansdowne was one of Carson’s backers when Carson was the arch hypothetical traitor. It is an interesting position for these two “patriots” proclaiming that one Act is not a fact, and pledged to make another Act a stubborn fact. It seems Ireland is bound to produce hypothetical traitors in any case—and there seems no doubt that they exist in the case of the Registration Bill, which they recognise as a long step towards conscription, although they feel loth to put the views of Lords Kitchener and Lansdowne before those of Mr. Brayden of the “Freeman” on a subject their

knowledge of which cannot compare with his (I fear there are some cranks who will say Kitchener and Lansdowne are straight on this question, while Mr. Brayden is a "Freeman" journalist, which is a polite term for an uncomplimentary reference.) The Government are right in recognising that Ireland is pretty full of hypothetical traitors who will resist conscription every way they can. Mr. Asquith the last time he came over to see us asked for the "Free gifts of a free people," a phrase which has gained as much notoriety in Ireland as his other phrase "Wait and see." Well, on this question of Conscription, Compulsory Military Service, National Registration, or whatever you like to call it, we know our own minds, and one can with equanimity "Wait and see" how far that England which feared to coerce "Ulster" will venture to coerce all Ireland. The "discretionary" powers given to the Lord Lieutenant and Lord Lansdowne's admission show that they expect opposition, and it will be up to all the hypothetical traitors not to dis-appoint them.

MR. BIRRELL REPLIES.

(Questioned in the English Parliament by Mr. Ginnell regarding some happenings in Ireland, Mr. Birrell said that the competent Military authority was responsible. He (Mr. Birrell) was not a "competent Military authority.")

Sorry, Larry, I can't satisfy your curiosity,
I'm not a competent Military authority,
But, I must say without the use of much verbosity
O'Rahilly is playing some little game.

Perhaps he is a man of notoriety,
And gifted with the usual share of piety,
And might be voted very good society,

But I believe he had some leanings towards
"Sinn Fein."

Redmond told me things were very satisfactory,
Till O'Rahilly and his friends became refractory
And although I do not want to be detractory,

They're a very serious menace to the State.
If I'm wrong, of course, I'll offer an apology,
I'm noted for my use of etymology,
But I must admit, and this is no codology,
Recruiting isn't up to much of late.

Now you know I never cared for Popularity,
I prefer a bit of dabbling in hilarity,
And although I joke with reasoned regularity,

I'm very, very serious all the same.
Don't you think it would be fatal to propriety,
Although perhaps it might cause some variety,
If a Chief Sec. should be shuffled off skyhighly,
By some fellow with an antiquated name.

Now you've spoken with a bit too much ferocity.

You know, hanging I consider an atrocity,
So, therefore I must say without audacity,

Your suggestion I've considered, and reject.

If you'll acquaint the competent Military authority,

That you'd like to see a bit of swingiosity

Carried out without undue impetuosity,

I've reason to believe he won't object,

WHY REDMOND DECLINED.

In the "Chicago Daily News" of June 14, which the Post Office for reasons unknown, has let through to me, we find an article by Mr. W. H. Brayden, Editor of the "Freeman's Journal," which will interest his friend Sir Matthew Nathan. The adaptable Brayden writing for a paper which circulates among the Irish in America, describes Dublin Castle as—

"A system of Government in defiance of public opinion by means of corruption and foreign force."

Mr. Brayden then discloses why Mr. Redmond did not accept a seat in the British Cabinet. The reasons were—

(1) Mr. Redmond was pledged not to do so, and had he broken the pledge he would have broken his party.

(2) Mr. Redmond was *not* offered the Secretaryship of the Colonies, which post he was better fitted for than "Any other British Statesman."

And—

(3) "It is doubtful if his (Mr. Redmond's) communications with Mr. Asquith reached the stage of naming any office."

Thus we learn on the authority of the Editor of "Freeman's Journal"—

(1) That Mr. Redmond was in communication with Mr. Asquith as to a seat in the British Cabinet.

(2) That it is doubtful if the Redmond-Asquith communications named any particular office.

(3) That Mr. Redmond was not offered by Mr. Asquith the post which Mr. Redmond was specially qualified to fill, and the post his acceptance of which would have "aroused enthusiasm in the British Empire" (part of the Empire being on Mr. Brayden's authority, Ireland)—the Secretaryship for the Colonies.

(4) And that Mr. Redmond knew that if he took the Cabinet job a section of his followers would revolt against him.

This explanation of why Mr. Redmond retained his virtue by Mr. Brayden in the "Chicago Daily News" of the June 14th, may be profitably

compared with Mr. Redmond's story that the first he knew of the matter was a midnight message from the Castle, and that he "unceremoniously refused." It may also be compared with the reasons Mr. Brayden assigned in the "Freeman's Journal"—for consumption at home.

Perhaps, Mr. Redmond, when he has told Mr. Brayden what he thinks of him for his indiscretion in the Chicago "Daily News" will explain to the Vote-of-Confidence Brigade, Brayden's pregnant statement that—

"It is DOUBTFUL if his (Mr. Redmond's) communications with Mr. Asquith had reached the stage of NAMING any office."

THE "BITTER END."

The Parliamentary Party, said Mr. Connolly, at the Anti-Conscription meeting in Beresford Place, have declared they will resist Conscription to the bitter end. But their bitter end may safely be assumed to be such time as Mr. Asquith tells them to give in. He did not agree with those who said Conscription would not be introduced. It would, but it would be given another name. The new Registration Act would be worked in this way: From the register the military officer in command in each district would be able to ascertain the names, ages, places of residence, nature of employment, and names of employers of all people in his district. Then he would consider it desirable that a certain number of men in that district should join the army. He would not impress them in the crude old-fashioned way, but would call on the employers to dismiss so many young men of suitable physique from their employment, who would then have the alternative of starving or enlisting. By this means the resentment of the people would be turned not against the Government, but against the employers. He did not think they would try this coercion first in those districts which contained a large percentage of "rebels," but in the "slave districts" where it would be expected it would be taken lying down.

Alderman Thomas Kelly said he was a man of peace, and no blood tribute would be paid by his family. While he lived no power would be allowed to mark the blood-stain on his door-post. He appealed to those fathers in the audience who had grown-up sons to make up their minds to resist any attempt to conscript the remnants of the youth-hood of Ireland.

FORECASTED VOLUMES.

HOW I ROSE FROM THE RANKS. By Second Lieutenant Stephen Gwynn. A thrilling story of perils escaped by remaining in Ireland during the Great War.

NATIONAL REGISTRATION. By Stephen Joseph Hand. A treatise on the compiling of Registers. In this timely volume the distinguished author gives to the Authorities and to the public in general the benefits of his vast experience. Special chapters are devoted to such highly technical branches of the subject as "Objections," "Stuffing," "Stiffs," etc. In the section headed "Knocking Off" the author makes out a strong case against Compulsory Registration, giving a list of the several classes whose names should not be allowed to appear. An Appendix on "Removals" deals with the methods by which those who have gone away, even beyond the Jordan, can be brought back (by proxy) to do their duty.

KILLING MADE EASY. By Sergeant Michael O'Leary. In this chatty volume—it can hardly be described as a military handbook—the gallant sergeant demonstrates that the only limits to performances in the way of Hun-slaughter are those put by the vivid imagination of "Live" Journalists.

SAVING THE BREWERIES. By the Editor of the "Evening Telegraph." The secret history of the organised resistance to Mr. Lloyd George's liquor tax proposals. The author freely admits that if the destruction of the breweries had been accomplished life would not have been worth living.

NATIONAL ECONOMICS AND NATIONAL ACROBATICS. By Lieutenant Professor T. M. Kettle. No one can question the author's qualifications to discuss the subjects which give the title to this work: for years he has "professed" the one and practised the other.

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE WITH THE WAR LOAN. Issued by the "Freeman's Journal," Ltd. A brilliantly-written pamphlet dealing with the necessity for the maintenance of a faithful and unpurchasable Press during hard times, and demonstrating clearly the "Freeman's Journal's" claim to an increased subsidy proportionate to the higher amount now being spent on Secret Service in Ireland.

THE FELON'S TRACK (New Version.) By J. P. Gaynor, B.L., Editor of the *National Volunteer*, from which journal the matter here published is reprinted. A handy book of reference for Chief Secretaries, Under-Secretaries, District Inspectors,

G-men, and other guardians of Irish Nationalism. Gives all essential particulars such as name, address, occupation, employer, etc., of men against whom the public should be warned. The list include Cranks, Factionists, Political Outcasts, Assassimators of Mr. Redmond, Stabbers in the Back, Sinn Feiners, Larkinites, Enemies of Home Rule, Pro-Germans, Pseudo-Catholics, Mr. Laurence Ginnell, and the Editor of the *Catholic Bulletin*.

LITTLE IRELAND AND LITTLE BELGIUM.

So much sympathy and admiration has been recently aroused in Ireland for Belgium amongst the class which in 1910 were denouncing the Belgians as monsters whose atrocities in the Congo put them outside the pale of humanity—that a few items of information about that country will be welcomed.

The first is that the natural fertility of the soil of Belgium is but 65 per cent. that of the soil of Ireland. From this a series of facts follows.

Belgium has an area of barely more than one third of Ireland. If Ireland instead of being divided into four unequal provinces were divided into three equal parts, each part would be practically as large as Belgium.

Belgium on this space sustained a population of seven and a half million people.

The trade of this small Belgium amounts to between 450 and 500 millions sterling per annum.

The army of Belgium amounted to 350,000 fully equipped men.

The revenue of Belgium amounted to about 31 millions sterling, or nearly three times the revenue of Ireland.

Hence it will be seen that if Ireland had been in the position of Belgium Ireland would have had a population of 22 millions of people, an army of over a million men, a trade of some fourteen hundred millions annually, and a revenue of over 90 millions.

Of course, this would have been preposterous. Ireland is much happier as she is forming a portion of the Empire. But Ireland as a potential pre-war Belgium. Pshaw! Unthinkable.

CUMANN NA mBAN.

A new branch of above has been formed for the Fairview district, and meets each Monday at 8.15 p.m., at Father Matthew Park. Gaels of the district sympathising with the work are invited to join.

ROSSA FUNERAL

The body of O'Donovan Rossa will fittingly rest in Irish earth. Arrangements to this end are being made by a representative National Committee in Dublin. The funeral has been provisionally fixed for August 1st, and all bodies intending to participate should notify the Hon. Sec., Delegates and Contingents Committee, 41 Parnell Square, as early as possible, that is during the next few days. I trust that the Committee may by facilitated in making adequate arrangements for the final and solemn home-coming of all that is mortal of the noble Fenian leader.

A RESOLUTION.

The Glin School Board (Limerick), has unanimously adopted the following:—Proposed by Laurence Meany, seconded by Jos. Reane—"That as our fellow-Irishmen in the South, East, and West, and Nationalist Irishmen in the North have been given every opportunity of defending the Empire on the battlefields of France and Belgium, and as we understand a section of our countrymen, namely, the Ulster Division and our Irish M.P.'s, who have volunteered for the front, have been left behind on a back seat as worthless; we call on the Government to give them the same facilities of distinguishing themselves and proving their valour on the battlefield, and of showing that they really have the welfare of the Empire at heart." Copies to be sent to Messrs. Asquith, Redmond, and Sir Ed. Carson.

FORTHCOMING EVENT.

An aeridheacht and military display will be held at Croydon Park on Sunday, August 8th in which the following will participate: Irish Volunteers, Irish Citizen Army, na Fianna Eireann and Cumann na mBan.

THE OIREACHTAS.

The annual festival of Irish Ireland will be held this year at Dundalk. It will open on Sunday week, July 25th, and extend until July 30th. A special train will leave Amiens Street on the opening day at 10.45, the fare being 3s. 4d. The venue being so convenient I hope this year's Oireachtas will draw a big Dublin contingent.

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