

## INTERVIEW WITH MR. SHERIDAN.

(From the *Irish World*.)

KNOWING that an interview with Mr. Sheridan at this time would be interesting to our readers we have submitted a number of questions to him calculated to elicit his views and future plans, every one of which was readily and cheerfully answered, and is printed below:—

Reporter.—Do you know this informer Carey who says you were introduced to him at the Angel Hotel, in Dublin?

Mr. Sheridan.—I never met the man in my life. His references to an interview with me in the Angel Hotel, Dublin, and his statement about my promising to forward him some atoms from London are sheer fabrications, and convince me that his story has been concocted in Dublin Castle, and that Carey, in order to save his miserable neck, volunteered to swear to it in the witness-box.

Reporter.—As a matter of fact, have you been in the disguise of a priest in Ireland, as alleged?

Mr. Sheridan.—Yes. I found it necessary to visit Ireland for two reasons, which I will give you, and being aware of the fact that a general order was issued from the Castle to the police to arrest me if found in any part of Ireland—at that time the British Government was arresting every Irishman who was thought to be of service to the Land League cause—I assumed the disguise of a priest, and went to Ireland, first, for the purpose of arranging for the recovery of some property of which I had been robbed during my imprisonment and exile; and, second, for the purpose of putting down agrarian acts and upholding the “No Rent Manifesto” by the process of social ostracism, that being, in my opinion, the most potent, as well as the most moral weapon within the people's reach. I also found it necessary to inquire into some alleged neglects and abuses in connection with the expenditure of Land League funds, arising out of the fact that the Ladies' League in Dublin, as well as Mr. Egan and myself in Paris, had been deprived of the assistance of our trained organizers who were then locked up in prison as “suspects.”

Reporter.—How came your name to be mentioned by Mr. Forster in connection with Irish crime after the Kilmainham treaty?

Mr. Sheridan.—Mr. Parnell fully explained that when replying to Mr. Forster in the House of Commons. In substance his reply was, as I can remember, that it was impossible for the people to tamely endure the tyranny which the Government had been practising on them; that the men who could intelligently influence their actions were either imprisoned or in exile. Without my knowledge or consent Mr. Parnell mentioned me by name as one of those men who, in his opinion, could put a stop to acts of violence if allowed to return to Ireland, explaining that my intercourse with and knowledge of the people, particularly in the West of Ireland during the Land League agitation, had given me an influence over them.

Reporter.—Why should Mr. Parnell have selected your name from amongst the other leaders not then in prison?

Mr. Sheridan.—Well, I believe that Mr. Parnell thought I possessed some influence in the West of Ireland, to which I belong, and that he was anxious I should have an opportunity to exert it for the suppression of acts of violence that were being then committed on land-grabbers and other obnoxious characters. Besides, I have no doubt but a kindly consideration toward myself may have influenced Mr. Parnell in some degree, knowing as he did the great financial loss and injury I had sustained by my imprisonment and enforced absence from Ireland.

Reporter.—Do you think, if you had been allowed to return to Ireland, that you could have prevented many of these acts of bloodshed?

Mr. Sheridan.—I have no doubt but if myself and other active men then either in prison or exile were allowed to move about as usual amongst the people, society would be spared the horrible exhibitions, or most of them, that followed. Forster ruled otherwise, and on him, and him alone, rests the responsibility. Maamtrasna, Gurteen, Ballina, the Phoenix Park, and like tragedies throughout Ireland would be unheard of. In fact, Forster has on the floor of the House of Commons admitted his responsibility of the acts committed by the officers of the law, and I feel that history will charge him with the responsibility of the crimes committed by the people. He it is that should be on his trial for these massacres, the Phoenix Park included.

Reporter.—In your opinion have any of the Land League Funds been employed for the promoting of disorder in Ireland as alleged?

Mr. Sheridan.—Such a presumption can only emanate from one of two sources, viz.: either a total ignorance of the Land League policy and its leaders or an ill-concealed desire to disparage both.

Reporter.—Have you distributed any money in Ireland during your disguised sojourn there?

Mr. Sheridan.—I have. When Mr. Forster charged that I was engaged in fomenting disorder I was occupied in bringing succour to men, women and children whom he had left without a house or a morsel to eat. One case is noteworthy, as it occurred on Christmas Day, which is my only reason for selecting it from others. Finding myself in a poverty-stricken district in Munster, I discovered that no fewer than fourteen evicted families were forced to seek shelter on that Christmas Day under a fence in Valentia, an island on the west coast of Kerry. There the tender babe and aged grandaïre had to look for the manifestations of those “tidings of great joy,” which Christian men are wont to associate with that holy season. The telegraph wires flashed a word of cheer to the reverend pastor of the district, and the next post took him some relief for the victims of Forster's law. You will please to note this as a sample of the outrages committed by the man in “disguise of a priest.”

Reporter.—Have you witnessed any eviction scenes in Ireland?

Mr. Sheridan.—Yes, many. During my connection with the Land League I have visited the scenes of some of these evictions, and gathered carloads of women and children from under the fences in the depth of Winter. On one occasion I have seen the fever-stricken patient carried on a pallet from his poor cabin and placed on a dung

heap which was covered at the time with a foot of snow. While the Sheriff was going through the legal form of taking possession, the poor man expired with the snowflakes falling on his face.

Reporter.—That certainly was a hard case. Are such instances of frequent occurrence?

Mr. Sheridan.—You had better hear Dr. Nulty, Bishop of Meath, on that, whose description of an eviction I have been just reading. He speaks of their character and the frequency of their occurrence from his own personal observation.

Reporter.—Do you propose leaving New York to avoid being extradited as has been threatened by the English Government?

Mr. Sheridan.—I had intended going west previous to my reading of the informer Carey's references to meet the Dublin trials; but I have now decided on remaining in New York. If any emissary of the British Government wants to know where I am, he will find me at my desk in the *Irish World* office any day of the week.

Reporter.—Do you not think that the consequences might be serious if you were placed in the dock in Dublin?

Mr. Sheridan.—British courts of law in Ireland are organized simply to convict. Victims are wanted. I know that if the British Government got me into its clutches I would certainly be hanged, even though I disproved, as I could easily disprove, every charge which the informer Carey has sworn against me. My innocence or guilt would not affect the issue.

Reporter.—With such fears on your mind would it not be better to move to some country having no extradition treaty with England?

Mr. Sheridan.—If there were no other consideration than my individual safety I might be induced to think so, but I feel that my trial here, should it come to that, will result in giving the American people an opportunity of judging of the class of evidence on which irreproachable men are almost daily hanged in Ireland. Such an exposé, I imagine, would be productive of results for Ireland. Therefore I remain.

Reporter.—Do you entertain any hopes for the prisoners in Ireland?

Mr. Sheridan.—No; Dr. Nulty's life is no safer than James Mullett's if the English Government only deemed it politic to hang him. If Carey, Kavanagh, and Farrell found it necessary to save their necks to swear that Dr. Nulty killed Cavendish and Burke, they would do it. The Government has only to name its victims and the informers will swear according to order.

Reporter.—Supposing those men should be hanged, what do you think will be the result?

Mr. Sheridan.—That is a matter only to be guessed at. There is one thing, however, of which I have no doubt, and that is that Ireland was never so determined on the achievements of her independence and never so straight on the track to obtain it as she is at this hour.

The resignation of Mr. Healy, M.P., for Wexford, on his going to prison was rather an unusual thing, and many were unable to see the real meaning of it. Among those who were puzzled by the act were Mr. Healy's own constituents in Wexford. They were justly proud of having as their representative one of the ablest men in the House of Commons, and on hearing of his resignation they held a meeting to consider the matter. The following resolution was proposed by the Mayor of Wexford and carried with enthusiasm:—“That while we once more reiterate our entire approval of every public act of our faithful representative, and unhesitatingly condemn the petty tyranny of British officialism in sending him to a prison cell, we would strenuously enjoin Mr. Healy to retain his Parliamentary seat during his incarceration, even were his incarceration tenfold increased; and we decline to accept his resignation.” Mr. Healy was deeply touched by this expression, and sent word to his constituents that he did not wish to resign the representation of Wexford; that it was the proudest day of his life when the men of Wexford took him up, an untried man, and elected him as their representative; but it was not to individuals they were to look; they must strengthen, not weaken the hands of the Irish Parliamentary party. Mr. Sexton, speaking for Mr. Healy told the Wexford people that the Government must see that every cell they fill with an Irish member will result in the immediate election of another representative of the same principles. The men of Wexford saw the point, and consented, on the understanding, however, that no man would be accepted, temporarily or otherwise, to succeed Mr. Healy, without having previously received the approval of Mr. Parnell.—*Pilot*.

The growth of the English colonies and their relation to the Imperial Government were the questions discussed by Sir Alexander Galt (who represents Canada in England) recently, before a distinguished audience at Edinburgh. He asked his hearers to consider that the British Empire covered 8,000,000 square miles of the earth's surface, and was inhabited by 241,000,000 people, governed by 35,000,000 in the British Islands, and 10,000,000 of the same race in other lands which England owns. These colonies contribute to the empire 184,000,000 pounds sterling; but their great value lies in furnishing a field for immigrants. If these colonies, said Sir Alexander, become lost to Great Britain, they can never be recovered; and even now, while they are thoroughly loyal, they feel that the empire takes too little interest in their welfare and is largely ignorant of their condition and needs. They feel a sense of isolation and realize that, while the more important of them enjoy self-government they have no share in the government of the empire, no voice in questions of peace or war which affect their interests, directly or indirectly. In considering the necessity of extending self-government to these colonies, Sir Alexander Galt said:—“Ireland's demand must be considered; for quietness and prosperity there is of importance to Canada, the greatest of the colonies, which contains a population of 1,000,000 Irishmen, and borders upon a country containing 7,000,000 more men who sympathise so closely with their uneasy fellows at home that uprisings of more consequence than Fenian raids are possible.” The stern truth that Ireland must be allowed to look after its own affairs, is being gradually impressed upon the more thoughtful minds amongst Englishmen.—*Pilot*.