

should be ready to shoot down their fellow-countrymen. Such men, alas, there have always been, since, in the first days of the human race, Cain killed his brother Abel. But, he adds suggestively, 'Cain had not long to wait for his reward.'

As to the reason which finally induced the Boers to abandon the struggle, it was, according to De Wet's showing, not weariness of the war nor lack of patriotic spirit, nor even discouragement at the apparent failure of their efforts, but rather the plight of the women and the dread prospect of the complete extermination of their race if the women were allowed to die at the rate they were doing in the concentration camps, that eventually turned the scale. In the course of the Conference, De Wet himself spoke strongly in favor of continuing the war, but the one problem which baffled him and baffled every member of the gathering was: How were their women and children to be saved? As De Wet expresses it in his book, 'What were we to do? To continue the struggle meant extermination. Already our women and children were dying by the thousand, and starvation was knocking at the door—and knocking loudly!' It was accordingly decided to agree to the terms on which Britain was prepared to conclude peace. No one could help being touched at the General's pathetic description of the feeling with which the brave burghers said farewell to their long-cherished hope of independence. 'I will not attempt,' he says, 'to describe the struggle it cost us to accept these proposals. Suffice it to say that when it was over, it had left its mark on every face. . . . On the 5th June the first commando laid down their weapons near Vrededorp. To every man there, as to myself, this surrender was no more and no less than the sacrifice of our independence. I have often been present at the death-bed and at the burial of those who have been nearest to my heart—father, mother, brother, and friend—but the grief which I felt on those occasions was not to be compared with what I now underwent at the burial of my Nation!

The whole miserable business (he continues) came to an end on the 16th of June, when the burghers who had fought under Generals Niemvomodt and Brand laid down their arms—the Nation had submitted to its fate! There was nothing left for us now but to hope that the Power which had conquered us, the Power to which we were compelled to submit, though it cut us to the heart to do so, and which, by the surrender of our arms, we had accepted as our Ruler, would draw us nearer and ever nearer by the strong cords of love.'

A hope which every friend of humanity and lover of freedom will cordially endorse.

The Greatest Failure of the Century.

We have been quoting lately the testimony of a number of high authorities, both in America and in France, as to the utter failure of secular education to achieve the two most important ends of all true education, viz., the development of character and the production of good and honest citizens. Another important testimony is now available in the shape of a weighty utterance by a leading representative of the Jewish community in America. Rabbi Hirsch, a prominent leader of the Jewish body, delivered a lecture in Chicago recently, as we learn from the 'Ave Maria,' on the failures and achievements of the last century. He included amongst the failures the growth of divorce which, happily, is as strongly condemned by Jewish teaching as by the Catholic Church herself. 'What a contrast,' he said, 'to the wrecked homes shown in the records of the divorce courts is the family life of the Catholics and the Jews! To Catholic and Jewish women marriage is a sacrament to be lived, to endure, to exist perpetually.'

But even more pointed and forcible are the learned Rabbi's statements as to the failure of our much-vaunted education systems.

The greatest failure of the nineteenth century has been the failure of education. The eighteenth century closed with a belief in the efficiency of education, and the best minds of the day seem to have had dreams of universal education and called it a panacea for the social ills. We have largely realised those dreams, and have also discovered that an education of the head alone has not kept the promises which the philosophers of the eighteenth century believed it would keep. Education has not decreased the criminal classes, but has made them more dangerous. Our public schools may give an idiot mind, but they do not give him character. They give him the power to do harm without the moral force and will to restrain him from using that power. In educating the head and not the heart and soul the public schools are failing at a crucial point.

A remark the application of which, we are sorry to think, extends to schools much nearer home than those of America.

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Ireland During the Past Year.

Mr T. W. Russell, M.P., has contributed another article to the 'Manchester Guardian' on the Irish outlook, from which we take the following extracts:—

The death of Mr William Johnston, of Ballykilbeg—one of the most pathetic figures in modern Irish life—may be said to have closed one era in the history of the Orange Institution. Whilst Mr Johnston lived the Orangemen were in leading strings—the institution was a mere Protestant organisation for the defence of Irish landlordism. But since the death of the grand old man of the Orange party—or rather since his smashing defeat in East Down—the scales have been falling from the eyes of the brethren. The defeat of Lord Londonderry's candidate in East Down was followed by the rejection of his nominee in South Belfast, and the Democratic Orangemen, feeling the ground underneath them for the first time in their lives, have struck out on their own account. Colonel Sanderson cannot now speak in Belfast. In North Armagh he speaks to his own constituents amid constant interruption. The new Orange leaders tell him plainly and truthfully that he and his class 'joined the Orange organisation after the passing of the Land Act in 1881 in order that they might use the Order as a means of defence.' That they 'supported the Local Government Act only after the Government had undertaken to pay their poor rate.' This plain language shows at least an intelligent reading of the actual history of the thing. And, the foundation laid, the superstructure is rapidly being built.

But there, as things stand, is the position. These toiling thousands, drunk with party spirit, fierce with the views of the sixteenth century, are beginning to see things political darkly as through a glass. They see men as trees walking. They are coming into the light, staggering somewhat as they emerge from the darkness. But they begin to feel the breath of freedom. The old gang will doubtless die hard. The Protestant religion plus rackrents is, and will be for many a day, a potent cry. The Pope—even although, as John Mitchell once said, he serves no ejection notices—is still a potent personage in Ulster. But the great fact stands out clear and distinct that a breach has been made in the walls of the landlord Jericho. At church soirees and district lodges the landlords and the agents may still sing patriotic songs and toast the immortal memory of Macaulay's great Whig king, but they cannot save the situation. The agricultural Orangeman is gradually finding out that the frightful bogey of 'Russellism' does not mean repeal of the Union—means, in fact, a new Land Bill under which he is to become a freeholder instead of a slave; and, like a horse trained to pass a traction engine, he begins to make light of the landlords' sham fears about the Union—begins to doubt even his heroics about Protestantism. And thus very slowly but equally surely, this great wall of partition between classes in Ireland is being broken down. Men hardly realise it. There is no beating of drums, no waving of flags to herald the change. It is the still, small voice of common sense and reason triumphing over ignorance and folly. There will be a good many heads broken before the Ulster Orangeman stands out emancipated, disenthralled, and free.

Another, and perhaps the most promising, feature in the Ireland of to-day is the triumph of Mr Horace Plunkett over his enemies of every kind and degree. What may be called the agricultural revival is now, happily a great fact. Agricultural instructors and agricultural teaching are now spread all over the land. And the old difficulty—that any improvement means an increase of rent—is as potent to-day as it was in the fifties. Still, and in spite of all these obstacles, progress is being made. Almost for the first time science is being applied to Irish agriculture. The old plan of butter-making, for example, has all but disappeared. Co-operative creameries are now universal. The small farmer now gets a better price for the milk of his cows than he got in the old days for the butter he produced. And Irish creamery butter, like the Irish soldier, can go anywhere and do anything. Again, it has been reserved for a Scottish agriculturist to discover that the Irish farmer, by scientific culture, can put early potatoes on the London market so as to compete with those of the Channel Islands. 'Bee farming,' as it is called, is now becoming a great industry, and thousands of tons of honey are produced where the produce in past years could be counted by the pound. Poultry rearing is being seen to—not in the old haphazard way, when the eggs were the perquisite of the farmer's wife. It is now becoming a part of the working of the farm. Old things are, in fact, passing away. Technical and scientific education is transforming the face of the country; men of every creed and of every class are co-operating for a common end. There is no room for party spirit where such work is going on. Of course the prophet of all this work has been stoned. This goes almost without saying. To-day in respectable Dublin society Mr. Horace Plunkett's name is anathema. 'A convert on the way,' was the title applied to the right hon. gentleman not so long ago. Cursed by ill-health, broken in spirit by neglect, and tempted often to give up in despair, Mr Plunkett toiled manfully on. Daily his Department grows in influence and in usefulness. Daily men gather round him to bear up his hands. He is even now reaping the fruit of his labors, and those who snarled at his heels are being everywhere assessed at their true value. Apart altogether from the actual work done by the Agricultural Department in the improvement of Agriculture, Mr Plunkett has helped on the great reconciliation between classes in Ireland—has helped on this essential work by isolating the bigots who imagine that Ireland stands where she stood when O'Connell died.

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