

Pagan Irish from foreign sources. Caesar and other Roman writers described the Celts of Britain and Gaul, but knew nothing directly of the Irish Celt. If we suppose, and it seems reasonable to do so, that the Pagan Irish differed little from the people who lived in Ireland when the Anglo-Normans invaded the country, we shall get a fair idea of the men and women of ancient Eire. Giraldus Cambrensis, an English writer, son of a Norman baron, who accompanied Prince John to Ireland in 1185, thus writes of the physique of the race: 'In Ireland man retains all his majesty. Nature alone has moulded the Irish, and, as if to show what she can do, has given them countenances of exquisite color, and bodies of great beauty, symmetry, and strength.' Thomas Rinuccini, brother of the Papal Nuncio, writing from personal observations made during his visit to Ireland in 1645, has given us the following account of the inhabitants at that period:—'The men are fine-looking; they are swift runners, and bear every sort of hardship with indescribable cheerfulness. They are all devoted to arms, and especially now that they are at war. Those who apply themselves to the study of literature are most learned; and you meet persons of every profession and science amongst them. The women are remarkably tall and beautiful, and display a charming union of gracefulness with modesty and devotion. Their manners are marked with extreme simplicity, and they freely mix in conversation everywhere, without suspicion or jealousy.'

Let us quote Brownson once more: 'The power of endurance of the Irish race is most wonderful. Naturally the race is remarkable for its rare physical development; and it furnishes specimens of both manly and female beauty and strength unmatched in any other known race. The Irish, and their congeners the Scotch, surpass in physical strength and hardiness, it has been ascertained, every other European people. This may, in part at least, be explained by their general freedom from vice and immorality, by the pure and virtuous lives of the women of the race, for which they have been distinguished in all ages, before as well as since their conversion to Christianity, which goes to prove the primitive and normal character of Irish civilisation, and that it always remained free from the gross corruptions and abominable superstitions into which all other gentile nations fell.' (Works, vol. 13, p. 557.)

CARDINAL BOURNE'S VISIT TO THE FLEET

The following interesting record of the visit of the Cardinal Archbishop to the Grand Fleet is contributed by Mgr. Jackman to the *Cathedral Chronicle*:

For the first time since the 'Reformation' an English Cardinal has gone as the highest representative of the Catholic Church in England, to pay an extensive visit to the Grand Fleet. The last occasion on which an English Cardinal visited the Fleet was when Cardinal Stuart, the last of the Stuart line, stayed with Nelson in the Mediterranean. His Eminence Cardinal Bourne, accompanied by his private secretary, Mgr. Jackman, and the Rev. J. O'Reilly, senior Catholic chaplain to the Base, arrived, borne on a torpedo-boat destroyer, on board H.M.C. 'Venturesome,'* on Saturday, August 5, and was there received by the Captain and officers of the ship. The Cardinal did not embark at the port originally decided upon, but, owing to the roughness of the sea, was, in naval language, 'deflected' to another port, where the sea was more propitious. His Eminence's engagements began almost immediately on his arrival; for within an hour he had again left H.M.S. Venturesome to dine with the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir John Jellicoe. Here a number of the senior officers of the service were presented to his Eminence, who subsequently on different occasions had an opportunity of coming into contact with practically all the others of the higher commands at present afloat with the Fleet. During the three days of his visit, the

Cardinal conducted three public services—viz., Mass in the mornings and Confirmation on the afternoon of Sunday, and the blessing of the Catholic part of the Fleet Cemetery on the Monday afternoon. In addition he addressed several times each day groups of Catholic officers and men gathered on the different ships. He made a particular point of acquainting himself with the different aspects of a sailor's life, visiting the men's quarters, examining the guns, visiting a turret, and having explained to him the mechanism for supplying ammunition and for firing it, thus grasping, in a practical manner, all the elements which compose the work and play of officers and men with the Grand Fleet. A hospital ship was included in the round of visits, and so his Eminence was able to speak with and cheer the sick.

On Sunday morning early, Mass was celebrated on board H.M.S. Venturesome by the Cardinal's 'Flag-Lieutenant,' and a number of officers and men received Holy Communion. At 10 a.m., the public Mass was celebrated by the Cardinal in the 'Theatre-ship' made fast alongside.

For days before, the officers and men of H.M.S. Venturesome had worked with enthusiasm to transform the huge entertainment hall, capable of holding 1000 officers and men into a suitable chapel. The altar was laid out with altar-cloths and hung with banners, which had been either made on board or presented by the officers' wives. Flowers and heather abounded, and the empty cartridge cases and fire buckets doing temporary duty as receptacles for the heather were artistically swathed in ship's flags. The hall was incapable of holding even one-half of the Catholic officers and men of the Base who crowded in at an early hour. His Eminence was assisted by his secretary, and Mass was served by two officers. The service was celebrated under these unusual conditions without a hitch, as subsequently summed up by a non-Catholic officer present: 'The C.-in-C. was wonderful, the Flag-Lieutenant fulfilled his difficult duties admirably, while the two A.D.C.'s deserved decoration.' There were a large number of men at Communion. They had gratefully availed themselves of the presence of priests aboard to make their confessions. Addressing the congregation, his Eminence recalled to them that that day was the second anniversary of the commencement of war. He assured them that though they were far removed from the world at home, they were not forgotten, but were ever remembered in the prayers of their fellow-Catholics. On that day above all, Mass was being celebrated in every church of the Empire, the Holy Sacrifice being offered to God to safeguard them in their perils and trials. Some of their comrades had lost their lives at the call of duty, and those who remained had greater reason to thank God for their preservation. He urged them to live lives near to God's wishes, and reminded them that prayer for victory, important as it undoubtedly was, was not so important as a life so in accordance with the Divine Will as to be worthy of victory.

He then solemnly blessed the congregation and invited them to transmit the blessing to their friends at home. At the end of the Mass, his Eminence blessed a quantity of crosses, bearing the appropriate inscription, 'In hoc Signo vinces,' and a large number of special naval medals; all of which soon disappeared before the eager demands of the congregation.

At 6 p.m., Confirmation was administered in the Theatre-ship, and a great number of officers and men were present. Opportunity was taken of the service to allow many of the Catholics of the Fleet who could not be accommodated in the morning to see and hear his Eminence. Just before administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, his Eminence addressed the congregation and explained, simply and clearly, the nature of the Sacrament. By Baptism they became Christians; by Confirmation they became strong and perfect Christians; Baptism made them children of God, Confirmation enlisted them as soldiers of God. He enjoined them to continue to do their duty nobly to their country side by side with their duty to God. A feature of both services was the number of non-Catholic officers who were present.

* For obvious reasons, the names of ships mentioned here are fictitious.