

THE WAR OFFICE AND SIR FRANCIS VANE.

London *Truth*, in its issue of October 25, writes very strongly with regard to the Irish situation. It takes Mr. Duke to task for suggesting 'that the obstacle to Home Rule in July of this year, was that Irishmen were not agreed about Home Rule.' As *Truth* reminds the Irish Chief Secretary, miracles in the way of agreement were wrought between Mr. Redmond and Sir Edward Carson, and it was Lord Lansdowne in London who frustrated the agreement. Writing of the Sheehy Skeffington case *Truth* says that the recent report of the Commission of Inquiry makes this tragedy look, if possible, more horrible than before. The Germans in Belgium have produced nothing worse in the way of frightfulness, not even the murders of Miss Cavell and Captain Fryatt. Presuming that there will be some debate in Parliament on the report, we (*Irish Weekly*) are glad to say that *Truth* accentuates the point raised by us when the tragedy was first published. Writing of the report, *Truth* says:—

'It does not explain how it came about that Captain Bowen-Colthurst remained at large from April 26 (the date of the murders) till May 6, and able during that time to add to his iniquity in the hope of finding some justification for it. It does not state what "superior military authority" gave orders on May 6 for him to be placed under arrest—though then only open arrest—nor what military action (if any) has been taken since in reference to this culpable delay.'

All that the report states is that Colthurst was arrested 'as a result of a communication made to the military authorities in London by Major Francis Vane.' As soon as Sir Francis Vane heard of the murders he went to the Commanding Officer in Dublin, demanding that Colthurst should be placed under arrest. The Commanding Officer expressed his inability to do anything. A few days afterwards, Sir Francis Vane was ordered to hand over his own command—to Captain Colthurst! Straight off Sir Francis Vane left for England and reported the matter to the War Office, and thereupon Kitchener telegraphed to Dublin ordering the arrest of Colthurst. Such in substance is the statement of *Truth*, which proceeds—

'If these statements are correct, they imply that the military authorities in Dublin never had the slightest intention of taking any action against Captain Colthurst, but that, on the contrary, they screened him, with the evident intention of hushing up his crime. They got rid of Sir Francis Vane, who had shown a disposition to frustrate this intention: they actually promoted in his place Colthurst, who was then known to be a murderer, but not yet known to be a lunatic. In point of law they seem to have made themselves accessories to Colthurst's crime after the fact, and there is a *prima facie* case for putting some of them on trial on that charge. A word as to Sir Francis Vane. He is an officer who, as commandant of a disturbed district during the Boer War, took a line of his own, with very useful results on the course of events. In connection with the murders at Portobello Barracks, he is the one man who made a stand in the interest of justice. But for him Bowen-Colthurst would now be holding his commission in the Army, instead of occupying apartments in Broadmoor Asylum, and his crimes would have been condoned and denied by his superiors, to the lasting shame of this country in the eyes of Irishmen. I believe I am right in saying that for the course he took Sir Francis Vane was officially thanked. It seems about time that a little more justice was done to him.'

THE NEW BISHOP OF CORK.

Much pleasure is expressed in Ireland at the appointment of the Right Rev. Dr. Cohalan as Bishop of Cork, and from all parts of the country have come congratulatory messages from bishops, led by Cardinal Logue, priests, laity, and societies. The Bishop held a reception of his parishioners at South Cork the other day and told them how happy their wishes made him. He was born at Kilmichael 58 years ago, and was educated at Maynooth, where he remained as professor for

some 28 years. When the late Bishop's health began to give way two years ago Dr. Cohalan was called to assist him, and as Vicar-General of the diocese he already knows most of the administrative work, for on his shoulders the bulk of it devolved despite the heroic efforts of the late Bishop to do his share. Bishop Cohalan is a well-known writer on sacred subjects, and is also a religious journalist. He is an enthusiastic supporter of the Catholic press and of the campaign against bad literature which is being waged in Ireland.

Intercolonial

Before Christmas Archbishop Mannix cabled a round £3000 to Dublin to aid the Irish Relief Fund. This made a total of £6000 from Melbourne.

The Premier of Victoria, Sir A. J. Peacock, during the welcome to his Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Foley, Bishop of Ballarat, on the occasion of his first official visit to Creswick, paid a tribute to his Lordship's splendid qualities. He claimed his Lordship as a personal friend, and joined with the Catholic community in welcoming the Bishop to the parish.

The many friends of his Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Clune, Archbishop of Perth, W.A., and of his brother, Captain-Chaplain Francis Clune, C.P., will learn with regret that the latter has been wounded. His injuries are the result of an exploding shell. His sight has been affected, but at the time of cabling Father Francis was much improved, and there was every hope of preserving his sight.

A brilliant career was unhappily cut short recently, when Miss Ella McGoldrick, one of Australia's most gifted singers, met a tragic death by falling over the Queenscliff Headland, Manly, Sydney. The deceased was a native of Toowoomba, Queensland, 24 years of age, and sister to the Rev. Father W. McGoldrick, who is secretary to his Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Duhig, Coadjutor-Archbishop of Brisbane. Her marvellous voice attracted widespread attention, and Miss McGoldrick went to Sydney and placed herself under the tuition of Signor de Giorgio.

At a meeting of the City Council held on Saturday afternoon, December 9, Alderman R. D. Meagher was re-elected as Lord Mayor of Sydney. The only other candidate was Alderman Joynton Smith. The allowance was increased from £1000 per annum to £1500. Lord Mayor Meagher's election to a second term of office (says the *Sydney Freeman*) was no particular surprise, for it is doubtful if any occupant of the chair in the past has done better work or represented the rate-payers of the city of Sydney with more tact and dignity. Just as Richard Denis Meagher has disarmed the most hostile of his Parliamentary critics by the ability and fairness which he brought to the Speakership, so as Chief Magistrate he has turned enemies into friends by his display of the best qualities that such a high and honorable position demands.

The Very Rev. W. J. Lockington, S.J. (Rector of St. Patrick's College, Melbourne), severely criticised the evil production, 'Damaged Goods,' when speaking at the twelfth annual meeting of the Australian Truth Society the other day (says the *Sydney Freeman*). He said the play was staged in California a few years ago, and, owing to the strong opposition shown to it by the Catholic men and women there, the producer had the very life frightened out of him. He wished that there was a similar opposition to the play here. He commended the attitude of the morning papers in regard to it, and condemned strongly the approval of it as publicly expressed by four clergymen. These clergymen, he said, had in their guidance to God thousands of Australians. What manner of guides were they who voiced such opinions of the play? Such opinions had to be combated, and would be combated only by Catholics, who judged everything by the Ten Commandments in their original form, and not by their suggested revised edition.