

IRELAND: A REPLY TO "CIVIS"

The following letter from Father D. V. Silk, Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, appeared in the *Otago Daily Times* of Friday, September 6:—

Sir,—Allow me to make a few remarks to references made by your correspondent "Civis" in last Saturday's *Times* concerning a lecture of mine delivered in Oamaru some few weeks ago.

1. I delivered a lecture on Sinn Fein, and because I did I am, needless to say, a Sinn Feiner. What a logical conclusion! I also delivered one some weeks ago on Socialism; therefore I am a Socialist! And I intend to deliver one on the Chinese Government in a few weeks' time; so I wonder what will "Civis" think I am then—probably an Ambassador to Peking!

2. The figures furnished to us in the English Budget regarding the taxation of Ireland seem outrageous, even to the incredulous mind of "Civis." However, the fact remains, and one that "Civis's" unbelief cannot disprove. Strange they have not appeared outrageous to the English Cabinet, or even to Mr. Lloyd George, who has openly declared that Ireland has got to pay her share of the national debt—or one-twenty-fifth of the whole expenditure. The last war of this kind was waged over 100 years ago, and then, as now, Ireland was charged what was calculated her share in respect of it. When, in 1894, the English Parliament appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the financial relations between England and Ireland, Mr. Thomas Sexton had some questions to put to Sir Edward Hamilton, K.C.B., Assistant Secretary to the English Treasury, about these charges. They are to be found in Vol. 2. *Minutes of Evidence*, page 39. There we have the admission of the financial expert of the English Government that what was termed Ireland's share in that war was, instead, England's dominant interest. Furthermore, the income tax alone credited to Ireland for the year ended March 31, 1917, was, according to the last Treasury White Paper issued for that year, £6,096,000. To England, £199,582,000 was credited. The total tax revenue raised to the above date was £520,781,500. Of that Great Britain paid £497,015,000; Ireland paid £23,766,500. The gross amount of property assessed for income tax in the two countries is, according to the report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for 1917, as follows:—Great Britain, £1,201,220,295; Ireland, £49,696,436. The wealth, therefore, of Great Britain in the gross is 24.17 times that of Ireland. Per head of population it is: Great Britain, £29; Ireland, £11 6s 10d. The average Irishman pays of this in general taxes £5 8s 6d, or 47.83 per cent. of his income. The average Briton pays in taxes £11 18s 3d, or 40.98 per cent. of his income. That is, the Irishman is taxed 47.83 per cent. of his income, while the average Briton is only taxed 40.98 per cent. of his.

3. "Civis" next refers evidently to the Wyndham Act, and says: "To make the rich peasant his own proprietor, extinguishing the landlord, the British taxpayer contributed £100,000,000. The English Government gave a loan of £100,000,000 to be paid back with interest within a certain time; or, in other words, the English Government formed a substitute for landlordism. If that is what "Civis" means by contributing he is right; but if he means that the money was given as a donation, then he is wrong.

4. "Civis's" quotation from the *Spectator* is rather unfortunate. It affords a splendid example of the English press misrepresentation regarding Irish affairs. According to the Home Rule Bill now on the Statute Book the collection of Irish taxes was reserved to the officials of the British Government and the cash paid by them into the British Exchequer. The revenue collected in Ireland having been paid into the English Exchequer, a board of five persons would then decide how much should be paid out of the British Exchequer

into the Irish Treasury. With the sum thus paid the Irish Government would have to defray the expenses of all the departments and services under its control. Should, however, the Irish Government have for three successive years a surplus income over expenditure it would then be arranged that Ireland would pay a contribution to the British Exchequer. Does the editor of the *Spectator* or "Civis" or any sane man imagine that had the Home Rule Bill come into force in 1914 it would emancipate the Irish people from their share in the National Debt, which, of course, embraces the army and navy upkeep?

5. I fail to see how a Sinn Feiner can logically affirm that Ireland is a separate nation and at the same time be a rebel.

6. According to "Civis," aliens who believe that Ireland is a nation should be interned. A few months ago the Prime Minister of England asserted that Ireland was not a nation because she had no language of her own. And when Lord Ashbourne replied to this silly assertion by making a speech in Gaelic, strange to say, he was not interned.

7. The English Government denies the rights of humanity to the Irish people, but your contributor "Civis" goes still further and denies humanity itself to them. To call Irishmen skunks is not only an insult to them but to the human race. I have heard of vulgarities emanating from corner-boys and fishwomen in the suburbs of London and Paris, but I doubt if any of them could surpass those frequently revealed in the columns of your contributor "Civis." However, his infirmities call for pity rather than for blame or laughter. He admits that he knows little about statistics. A short time ago he confessed ignorance of history. Apparently he specialises on scurrility.

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From our own correspondent.)

September 7.

Father Ainsworth, S.M., made a stirring appeal for the *Tablet* last Sunday at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. He emphasised the fact that it was New Zealand's Catholic paper, and should be found in every Catholic home.

Corporal George Patrick McNamara, 2nd Reinforcements, recently awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in the field, is the only son of the late Mr. George McNamara, Government Printing Office, and Mrs. McNamara, 8-Arlington Street. He was educated at the Marist Brothers' School, Boulcott Street.

The Bazaar Committee in connection with the rebuilding fund of St. Mary of the Angels' Church met last Monday evening under the presidency of Father Hoare, S.M. There was a large attendance of members, and much enthusiasm was exhibited. Good reports were received from the stall-holders and sub-committees. Important business relating to the bazaar, which is to open this month at the Town Hall, was dealt with, and many matters of detail were arranged. The stall-holders are actively engaged in the work of providing funds for their stalls, and with this object in view every available date is being utilised for attractive entertainments.

Mr. Paul Coffey, of Oriental Bay, has received advice from the High Commissioner that his son, Private Paul Coffey, who was wounded while on the Western Front, is in the 1st New Zealand General Hospital at Brocklehurst suffering from inflammation of the connective tissue of the left leg, and is improving slowly. Private Coffey, who was in the employ of Messrs.

HOAR & PERMAIN

MASTERTON and CARTERTON

Business 'Phone No. 11 Private House 'Phone 518
(Established 1889.)

CABINETMAKERS, COMPLETE HOUSE
FURNISHERS & UNDERTAKERS.

A large amount of Bedding and Furniture of every
description always on stock.
PICTURE FRAMING A SPECIALTY.