

Witness his impressions of the political tricksters who are responsible for it all: "In one of Wilkie Collins's novels, the heroine addresses to a philanthropist a remark which may be exactly addressed to a politician; she says that his trade had taught him two bad habits: 'You have learnt to talk nonsense seriously; and you have learnt to tell fibs for the sake of telling them.'" And the same writer thus comments on Lord Curzon's attempt to shift the charge from the bishops to certain priests: "We do not know if anybody has asked Lord Curzon for the precise source of the quotations he professed to give from the sermons of Irish priests, devoting conscriptionists to hell, but to us they have a very odd look, as if they had at least been transcribed by somebody ill-acquainted with the terminology involved. Some of them may have been as Lord Curzon says, though they hardly support what Lord Curzon implied, they merely say that killing a man to conscript him would be a damnable act; and, as some would add, rather an Irish one. But some of them sound very strange, especially an extraordinary passage which ends 'And God will cry to Heaven for vengeance.' This would seem a somewhat unnecessary version of deep calling unto deep. It might well be the mistake of a hearer unacquainted with a theological formula about certain sins; but in that case it invalidates his account. Another passage makes a priest say 'the Roman Catholic Church' in a context in which he generally says 'the Catholic Church.'"

The absurdities are too glaring to escape the notice of the stupidest school-boy who knows anything at all about Catholics. But clearly Mr. Chesterton thinks that it would be unjust to a school-boy to compare him with Lord Curzon. His opinion of the noble lord's character and talents may be gathered from another passage: "We think it extremely unlikely that even one individual Irish priest ever said anything so unorthodox. Lord Curzon, however, probably did not so much as understand the meaning of the charge he brought; or even of the words he used. He is a man ignorant beyond even the ignorance of his class; and it probably seemed natural to him that a Popish priest should damn anybody who disagreed with him about anything; just as it would seem natural to Mr. Kensit or Mr. Joseph Hocking to describe a priest celebrating High Mass on Good Friday wearing his flowing tenebrae and intoning an alb. On the whole we are glad it was Lord Curzon who came out with this precious piece of theology and ecclesiastical history. With a certain amount of pomposity and humbug necessary to our politics, it is a concession to charity and cheerfulness that as many as possible of such silly things should be said by the same man. Lord Curzon is the man who in the debate about the sale of dignities showed that it is possible to exhibit all the aristocratic superciliousness about status unembarrassed by any aristocratic fastidiousness about dignity. . . . Obviously he ought to be the man to imply that Catholicism condemns all conscriptionists to hell. He would not, of course, be personally at all concerned with a suggestion that pride and hypocrisy are much more likely to lead there." All this sarcastic comment was written before the Irish priests on whose shoulders the noble lord tried to fasten the blame had an opportunity of being heard. When they did speak they still further added to the shame of the peerage and the Government that shelter such a contemptible shuffler and trickster. From most of the priests named came a categorical denial, giving the lie direct to his noble lordship. Some of the priests were not even in the place where they were alleged to have made the statements attributed to them on the date given by Lord Curzon. For all let the following suffice here. In his letter to the press Lord Curzon said: "On April 21, 1918, the Rev. Father Lynch, addressing a congregation in Ryehill R.C. church, said 'Do ye resist conscription by every means in your power; any minion of the English Government who shoots one of you, especially if he is a Roman Catholic, is guilty of mortal sin, and God will cry to heaven for vengeance.'"

Father Lynch wrote to the *Irish Independent* as follows:

"Sir,—I deny absolutely that I ever used the absurd statement given in Lord Curzon's letter purporting to be an extract from my address on Sunday, April 21, in the 'Roman' Catholic church, Ryehill. No educated Catholic, cleric or lay, would say: 'God will call to heaven for vengeance.' The other phrases are equally the product of the pen of the noble lord's local scribe.—F. C. LYNCH, C.C., Ryehill."

Lord Curzon also named Fathers Brennan, of Castletownbere, and Father O'Callaghan, of Killyclogher. Father Brennan replied:—

To the Editor, *Irish Independent*.

Sir,—I see by to-day's papers that Lord Curzon has made the astonishing discovery that the bishops form no part of the clergy of Ireland. . . . In support of his "falsehood" he gives a number of "quotations," all of which show

the deft impressionistic touch of the mental note-taking policeman.

One of the "quotations" purports to be an extract from a speech delivered by me on April 21. Now, I certainly never made the statement that "if they (the police) enforced conscription the people should kill them," nor can I accept responsibility for the crude English in which the policeman has conveyed his mental note.

Lord Curzon says such quotations as he gives might very easily be multiplied. No doubt they might. The number of policemen is infinite.—CHARLES J. BRENNAN, C.C.

"Simply a Lie."

From Father P. J. O'Callaghan, C.C., Killyclogher, Omagh, comes the most conclusive refutation of all:—"I did not say Mass at Killyclogher on 28th April, and, of course, I did not address the people on that occasion. The statement is simply a lie."

The Government has twisted and shuffled and avoided giving a straight answer to the question put by Mr. King with a view to exposing Curzon, who retreats to the suitable and congenial atmosphere of the House of Lords, where with the aid of newspaper men and ex-brewers he may excogitate new lies about Ireland. He will have the support of the sections of the press which hire liars to blacken Ireland and of editors who suppress letters in which such lies are challenged. "Ireland has no grievances!"

NOTES

Grand Relations

It is said in the English so-called "comic" papers that the Irish peasants boast of their long line of descent from kings. Personally we know more about the Irish peasant than any English editor could know and we never heard one of them bothering himself or anybody else about his pedigree. The sort of people who do bother about such things are the West Britons, alias the Snobs, who think it "genteel" to be able to number a Protestant among their friends, and who almost carry a banner proclaiming the fact if they have "the Protestant drop" in them. If anybody has any reason to be proud the Irish peasant has—not of his blood-relations, but of his long descent from a line of forefathers who kept their Faith intact in spite of the Gates of Hell and the armies of England. Heredity has an influence on a man even in the supernatural order, as a general rule in the economy of grace. Therefore the simple Irish peasant man or woman has good grounds for proper pride in the very highest and noblest sort of dynasty that can be imagined. As for the other sort, the peasant is too intelligent. He leaves that to *les autres*—the weak-minded and the vain who are proud of being hybrids instead of thoroughbreds, and who were ridiculed by Lever when he put into Mickey Free's mouth the song which begins—