

be a great source of satisfaction to us if we could, as representatives of the Irish nation, take our place side by side with the representatives of the other great component parts of the Empire at the Coronation of King George, but with deep regret we are compelled to say that the time has not yet come when we feel free to join with the other representatives of the King's subjects on this great occasion.'

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'We are,' continues the statement, 'the representatives of a country still deprived of its constitutional rights and liberties, and in a condition of protest against the system of government under which it is compelled to live; and as such we feel we have no proper place at the Coronation of King George, and would lay ourselves open to the gravest misunderstanding by departing on this occasion from the settled policy of our Party. Entertaining, as we do, the heartiest good wishes for the King, and joining with the rest of his subjects in the hope that he may have a long and a glorious reign, and ardently desiring to dwell in amity and unity with the people of Great Britain and the Empire, who, living under happier conditions than exist in our country, will stand round him at the ceremony of his Coronation, we feel bound, as the representatives of a people who are still denied the blessings of Self-Government and freedom, to stand apart and await with confident hope the happier day of Irish Self-Government, now close at hand. We are sure our people will receive the King on his coming visit to Ireland with the generosity and hospitality which are traditional with the Irish race; and when the day comes that the King will enter the Irish capital to reopen the Irish Parliament of Ireland, we believe he will obtain from the Irish people a reception as enthusiastic as ever welcomed a British monarch in any part of his Dominions.' The Press Association adds that the decision of the Nationalists to abstain from taking any part in the Coronation was only arrived at after most prolonged deliberations. The Party met at noon, and, after sitting for two and a-half hours, an adjournment was made until after the delivery of the principal speeches in the Parliament Bill debate. A further meeting was held in the evening, lasting an hour and a half.

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The cable message gave no particulars as to the reasons advanced by the Dublin Corporation for not taking official action in connection with the Coronation; but it is safe to assume that they acted on the same principles as, and followed the lead given by, the Irish Parliamentary Party. It is not our purpose to discuss the rightness or wrongness, the wisdom or unwisdom, of these decisions. Our object is merely to point out to our Dunedin evening contemporary that—in the light of the explanation furnished by the Irish Party—their action, and that of the Dublin Corporation to which the same explanation applies, affords not the least occasion for 'misgivings.' They are merely following—consistently, indeed, but regretfully and reluctantly—the precedent established many years ago by the great Irish Protestant leader, Parnell. 'Entertaining, as we do, the heartiest good wishes for the King, and joining with the rest of his subjects in the hope that he may have a long and glorious reign, and ardently desiring to dwell in amity and unity with the people of Great Britain and the Empire—that is not the language of separatists, or of those who are 'virtually disowning Throne and Empire alike.' And in the light of the same explanation, and of the same expression of Irish sentiment, we desire to suggest to 'Civis' that his statement of the position is a piece of misrepresentation of which he has reason to be heartily ashamed. With the words above quoted before us, it is evident that to speak of the Nationalists as going out of their way to 'select' this occasion 'for offering an affront to the King,' and to describe them as animated by 'a perverse obstinacy, ugly, sullen, irrational,' etc., is sheer dodder. From now on, till the actual accomplishment of Home Rule, the Irish Party will doubtless receive plenty of criticism from the know-alls of the press; but at least the critics might—if only for appearances' sake—make some reasonable attempt to be fair.

Notes

A Genuine Conversion

A contributor to the *New York Sun*, in a communication from Utica, N.Y., dated February 12, gives the following life-history of a present-day penitent. It illustrates admirably the thoroughly practical nature of true conversion: 'Robert Caple died in his cabin at Clayville, ten miles south of here, to-day at the age of seventy years. In his young manhood he engaged in various businesses and acquired a fortune. He was a noted dealer in horses,

always willing to swap, buy, or bargain, and invariably sure to come out ahead in the transaction.'

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'A score of years ago Mr. Caple joined the Roman Catholic Church. One of the first things he did after joining the Church was to set about to reimburse everybody he thought he had defrauded in a business way. He gave away thousands of dollars in doing this. He went from village to village, from town to town, and city to city seeking out the men with whom he had dealt. In Watertown he found one man he had worsted to the extent of 175 dollars in a single horse trade. In many other places he found other men, some of whom had gone about for years with the consciousness that they had worsted Caple in swapping horses, and who were amazed when he called upon them and reimbursed them. This done as best he could, Mr. Caple set about giving the balance of his fortune to the poor. Families in Utica and all through the Sauquoit Valley were remembered in the distribution of goods and money until Mr. Caple was reduced to poverty. Friends in Clayville built a modest cabin for him and here for the last fifteen years he lived, prayed and fasted, leaving his home each day to visit the sick, to carry food to the poor, and to beg his own meals and clothing.'

Mr. Healy as Advocate

Commenting on the Edmondson-Avery case, the *Westminster Gazette* says: 'Let us add a word of congratulation to Mr. Healy on his first appearance in a big case at the English Bar; he is clearly destined to play as prominent a part in this country as in his own.'

Stevenson's Open Letter to Dr. Hyde

Robert Louis Stevenson's scorching letter to Rev. Dr. Hyde, of Honolulu—in answer to aspersions cast upon the character of Father Damien by Dr. Hyde in a letter written to a brother minister, the Rev. H. B. Gage—has just been published in a shilling volume by Chatto and Windus. It is one of the finest philippics of any age or language—a scathing flagellation of the cowardly calumniator, and a magnificent vindication of the slandered saint.

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It begins thus: 'It may probably occur to you that we have met, and visited, and conversed; on my side, with interest. You may remember that you have done me several courtesies, for which I was prepared to be grateful. But there are duties which come before gratitude, and offences which justly divide friends, far more acquaintances. Your letter to the Reverend H. B. Gage is a document which in my sight, if you had filled me with bread when I was starving, if you had sat up to nurse my father when he lay a-dying, would yet absolve me from the bonds of gratitude. You know enough, doubtless, of the process of canonization to be aware that a hundred years after the death of Damien there will appear a man charged with the powerful office of the *Devil's advocate*. After that noble brother of mine, and of all frail clay, shall have laid a century at rest, one shall accuse, one defend him. The circumstance is unusual that the devil's advocate should be a volunteer, should be a member of a sect immediately rival, and should make haste to take upon himself his ugly office ere the bones are cold; unusual, and of a taste which I shall leave my readers free to qualify; unusual, and to me inspiring. If I have at all learned the trade of using words to convey truth and to arouse emotion, you have at last furnished me with a subject. For it is in the interest of all mankind and the cause of public decency in every quarter of the world, not only that Damien should be righted, but that you and your letter should be displayed at length, in their true colors, to the public eye.' Displayed in their true colors both letter and writer undoubtedly are; and those of our readers who invest will find that the volume, though small, is excellent value for the money.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The following clerical changes have been made in the diocese of Dunedin:—Rev. J. J. O'Reilly, of St. Joseph's Cathedral, has been appointed to the charge of Port Chalmers; Rev. P. J. O'Neill (Gore) has been transferred to St. Joseph's Cathedral.

The Rev. J. Cahill, of Ngaruawahia, Auckland, who had been the guest of his Lordship the Bishop at the Palace for a few days, left on Wednesday for Queenstown.

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