

Current Topics

Sinn Fein Outrages Again

Recently a deputation of English Laborites went over to Ireland in order to see for themselves how the beneficent and kindly rule of Muck the moralist was exercised. One day they went to Thurles, and there, says the *Manchester Guardian*, they had a good view of English rule. British fair play in all its glory, Saxon chivalry, John Bull's love for small nations were revealed to them, naked and unabashed. They saw a gang of soldiers and policemen running riot through the town, smashing windows, breaking heads, and sparing neither age nor sex in their laudable efforts to uphold the glorious traditions of the British army. Doubtless if they had not seen, and had not told what they saw, the whole story would have been cabled out here as another Sinn Fein outrage: just like the rest of them! A few days ago we had a letter from a well-known Irish priest. He told us that the outrages were the work of a gang of returned soldiers, many of whom had an English accent. In his opinion they were even encouraged by the moralist Muck. Now, if that statement of an Irish priest came alone, it would be discounted by many people who will never believe anything wrong of John Bull until he smashes their own heads. But it does not, fortunately, stand alone. It is corroborated by the testimony of a judge. In the *New Leader*, January 24, we read that when Judge Wakely was discharging the grand jury at Sligo he said:—

"I want it to be known all over Sligo County that where a man has served and has been discharged it does not follow that he can do what he likes on his return, on the assumption that if he is taken to court for a crime committed he will be leniently dealt with. As you will see by the press, a great deal of crime is being committed all over the country, and I am sorry to say that a big number of the men committing those crimes are ex-soldiers."

Thus are upheld the glorious traditions of the British army. Thus too are Sinn Fein crimes manufactured for the fools that read Granny D.T.'s and similar hirelings.

The Spirit in Ireland

Life and property are not safe from the soldiers and police in Ireland at present. Boys of tender years have been kidnapped, others sent to gaol for singing a song, policemen charge innocent men playing skittles, if a motor tire bursts every soldier who hears it will probably fire off his rifle and kill a comrade—an event that will be duly cabled to us later as a Sinn Fein outrage. Every prominent man who encouraged the Kaiser to come and kick the King's crown into the Boyne has been promoted to a Government billet, while every prominent leader of the people who are asking for the fulfilment of British war pledges is sent to gaol. British justice is a mockery. British chivalry a thing to make the devils laugh. To be Irish and Catholic is almost criminal, to be Orange and Hunnish is almost as sure to lead to promotion from Muckpherson or Welsh George. Bishops' letters are opened and their contents stolen by British officials. Bishops may not publish letters in the press. It is still permitted to go to Mass and to bury the dead, but a gathering for almost any other cause is sure to lead to a baton charge and to brutal murders by the police and soldiers. Thus it goes on in the one white nation under the heel of a tyrant to-day. And the wonderful thing is that the people keep smiling all the time. The boys and the girls are not one whit afraid of anything that can happen them. They are ready for gaol, or ready for death, satisfied so long as it is all for Ireland. French and Muck issue orders suppressing everything, but nothing is suppressed. Sinn Fein holds meetings, conducts courts

of justice, organises and directs and controls the people, and beats the Huns at every step; and all the rank and file seem to enjoy it. Does anybody think that nation can be beaten now?

The Huns

There was panic and confusion in the home. The poor, heart-broken mother was too stricken with grief to move from the bedside. The little children had cried themselves sick. The dead man, murdered brutally, lay on his bed. They had killed him as cowards always do, so suddenly that he had not even time to send for his priest. Up and down stairs, through the rooms, tearing blinds and hangings, ripping pictures from their frames, smashing windows and furniture, the Hun soldiers went to and fro, cursing and blaspheming as is their way. They had no respect for the dead; no compassion for the tears of the widow, or for the grief of the fatherless little children. They were Huns; and what to them were widows and children. Imagine, if you can, the sordid brutality of the proceeding! Picture to yourself the baseness of a government of which the troops descend to such practices. Can you recall anything to outdo it, even from the annals of the reign of Henry VIII. or even from the annals of Nero's reign?

In the Reichstag, Herr von Schweinhund, who was the Minister supposed to be responsible for the conduct of the troops in question, was asked for an explanation.

"They went to the house," he said, "in order to investigate the murder. For if they had not gone, the people would blame them for the murder."

Herr von Schweinhund clearly expected that common sense would fasten on his men as the murderers. Why, we wonder.

Now a deputy arose and said to Herr von Schweinhund:

"What you say to excuse your men is not true; for it appears now that before they went into that house, which they sacked and rifled, they did not know of the murder. Therefore, you have told an untruth, and you have given as a statement of fact what was only an invention of your own."

To this Herr von Schweinhund replied:

"I tried to defend my men. I gave an 'inferential explanation.' What would you have? I was in a corner and I had to say something."

And behold, there was great indignation, among the few honest men who are to be found in that assembly, for they knew that von Schweinhund was a prevaricator and that the truth was not in him. And to many it did appear that his lying defence only made it appear more probable that the murder was done by some of his people. That view was supported later by the fact that portions of the uniform of his men—or of a man of his—were found in the house where the murder was done. But those who knew von Schweinhund marvelled not at all.

This incident naturally aroused great and intense feeling among those just men and women who plucked geese to find white feathers to send to men who were slow about going forth to fight the Huns. "What? Are these things still happening, after all we have done? Did we not win a war that freed small nations from their tyrants? Did we not restore the reign of righteousness and justice on earth? Yet here is Hunnishness broken out once more—and as bad as ever. Perhaps the brutes did not kill a defenceless man; but at any rate they terrified his widow and her little orphans, and they acted in a way that no barbarians would have acted. It is sad to think that these things happen even now that we have won the war." In this way, would some of our Imperial patriots and patriotesses speak if they heard that such things were done in Belgium, by the Prussians. What have they to say when they know that these things were done in Cork, and that von Schweinhund was Jock Muckpherson?

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