

I wish I could quote in full Miss Hickey's account of the scene; of the revolver covering her when the raiders entered, of the exhaustive search for four hours—floors torn up, garden dug up—of her cross-examination, grotesque if it were not scandalously insulting, of the reading of private letters, and of the tale of plunder when the party at last decamped, leaving her faint with fatigue and cold; £3 6s in cash, a ring, a bangle, and a chain, all of gold; a dinner-knife, six collars, and tobacco and cigarettes; a bottle of whisky and some cheese and apples "consumed on the premises." (After all, a four hours' search requires refreshment.) Note also, not under the heading of loot, that the police took away a tiny revolver—a souvenir gift—and some topical pamphlets bought as curiosities, because these articles under the name of "arms and seditious documents." may be pleaded by the Castle as justification for the raid.

Four Times in Two Months.

Mrs. Salkeld, who is the widow of an Indian civil servant, and is wholly unconnected with politics, living in a flat at Cullenswood House, Rathmines, has been raided four times in two months—on January 31, March 26 and 27, and April 3—apparently because some suspected person resided in the same block of flats. On the second occasion she lost fish knives and forks and small valuables worth £5, and at the fourth raid, which lasted eight hours, her boy, aged 15, was arrested, incredible as it may seem; though such cases of capricious and promiscuous arrest are now becoming common.

The Experience of an Italian Professor

Lastly, the case of Signor Simonetti, Italian professor of music at the Irish Academy, renting a furnished house at 5, Leeson Park Avenue, from Mr. Anthony Mackay, who owns to the crime of believing in Irish independence. Innocently enough, the professor takes time to put on some clothes before answering the rain of knocks at 2.30 a.m. on March 6. Crash goes his door with crowbars. He protests in his imperfect English, and is rated for his dilatory conduct. He remarks that if his door can be forced at dead of night without warrant or credentials, it may as well be left open for the entry of any house-breaker, and the remark is not without point, for after the raid, which terrifies his children into screams that awake the neighbors, he misses a wrist-watch, the contents of a purse, some silver-mounted hair-brushes and some articles of clothing.

He has claimed compensation and, as an Italian subject, he will no doubt get it. Meanwhile it is not surprising to learn that he has left Dublin in disgust.

April 12, 1920.

IV.—PILLAGE, SABOTAGE AND TERROR.

The looting described in my last article is the natural outcome of the licence accorded by the authorities to organised sabotage and "frightfulness" by soldiers and Constabulary—a licence fatal to discipline and productive of excesses which may yet reach appalling dimensions. Again I disclaim personal charges, and insist on the manifest sequence of cause and effect. If you endeavor to stamp out, in Ireland or anywhere else, every manifestation of the strongest sentiment that can influence the human mind; if to accomplish this you force your police to act as armed spies upon their fellow-citizens and your army to act as a political police; if you give them these abhorrent tasks, and train them to regard any man, woman or child as a person they can search or kidnap on suspicion only, and every dwelling as enemy territory they can ransack at pleasure; if you do these things you declare war and create war, and not only war but horrible vendettas; reprisals against your agents and counter reprisals by your agents; a war in which, as the statistics prove the people suffer most.

The First Sack of Fermoy.

On the night of September 8 last, the small garrison town of Fermoy was methodically sacked by a large body of soldiers armed with crowbars and trench-tools, the principal shops and business premises being more or less wrecked, and the contents in some cases strewed about the streets or looted. The work met with no interference from 8.30 to 10 p.m., though the barracks were close at hand. There is no dispute about the facts or the cause. The outbreak was a reprisal for the death of a soldier on the day before in a surprise attack by some civilians, armed with revolvers and sticks, upon a party of 15 soldiers on their way to church, with the object, which was effected, of seizing their rifles. A further grievance was the omission of the word "murder" from the verdict at the inquest. The Colonel at a public inquiry regretted, but virtually justified, the reprisal, the Tory press did the same, and Mr. Churchill, on March 23 last, in the House of Commons,

did the same. It is the case, on a small scale, of Louvain, destroyed because Belgian civilians fired on German troops.*

Note that this was the first casualty experienced by the army of occupation in Ireland since the rising of April, 1916, a period of three years and five months of intensely exasperating military repression.

Terror in Cork and Thurles.

The regiment which wrecked Fermoy should have been transferred from Ireland. It was moved to Cork, where political feeling was intense, and on November 10, with no provocation, again rioted, smashing shop-windows over a wide area and wrecking and looting the Shandon Company's premises. At Kinsale and Athlone similar events occurred.

The contagion spread to the Constabulary. In the town of Thurles, at 10.30 p.m. on January 20 last, a constable was fired at and wounded by some unknown person. At 11.15 p.m., as though under a pre-arranged scheme, the sack of Thurles began, some soldiers assisting the police. The houses of prominent Republicans and the office of the local paper were specially selected for attack. Bombs were freely used, houses burst into and furniture knocked about, and—a new feature—volleys were fired promiscuously into bedroom and other windows. There was a curious pause at 12.5 a.m., and another outburst from 1.15 to 1.40. Though Thurles has a large garrison, no effort was made to check the riot, which would have led to great loss of life if the terrified inhabitants had not hidden in cellars and outhouses. Here, again, there is no dispute about the facts.

In awarding compensation for losses, which under the Irish law relating to malicious injuries (a law whose absurd and demoralising results would fill a chapter) must be paid by the inhabitants of the district itself, Judge Moore declared on March 8 last that the damage had been admittedly done by the police, and should be paid for by the Crown. So far as the public know, no disciplinary action has been taken. At any rate, the terror continued in Thurles. Windows were sporadically smashed at hours of the night when police and soldiers only were abroad, and threatening notices were chalked on the doors of prominent Republicans. The predicted riot occurred on the night of February 27-28, when soldiers wrecked some of these very houses and the Sinn Fein Hall. Similar incidents occurred on March 4 and 5, and on March 27 Mr. James McCarthy, a well-known Sinn Feiner, was murdered, according to the verdict at the inquest, by men dressed in the uniform of police.

Terror in Cork and Dublin.

Cork duly responded. In the small hours of March 11 last, soldiers rioted through the streets, shooting and window-breaking. The contents of the Sinn Fein headquarters and the Thomas Ashe Club were thoroughly demolished, and private houses suffered wanton injury. Simister omens these for more terrible events a week later.* Dublin was already callous, and the last incidents I have space for comprise the sacking, on the night of February 27 last, of Nos. 76, 6, and 3, Harecourt Street, formerly occupied by the Dail Eireann staff, the Sinn Fein organisation, and the Sinn Fein Bank respectively. Nos. 76 and 6 had been closed down and boarded up by the police some time before. No. 76 was now broken into purely for

*The complacent attitude of the Government and the Unionist press toward this reprisal bore fruit in the second and still more thorough sack of Fermoy on June 28, 1920. At midnight on the 27th, 400 soldiers broke out of barracks and in two-and-a-half hours did £40,000 worth of damage in wrecking and looting about 70 shops and other houses. Part of the plunder consisted of the contents of a jeweller's shop and of wine and other liquors from some licensed premises. A precisely similar outbreak occurred on the same night and at the same hour at Lismore, a town 15 miles from Fermoy. Bombs were freely used, houses fired, shops looted, and enormous damage done. The simultaneous sacks of these two towns was a direct reprisal for the capture, by Republicans, of the District Commander, General Lucas, and two colonels at their fishing-lodge at Castletownroche on June 25. The two colonels were released, after one of them, Colonel Danford, in an attempt to escape, had been shot at and wounded. General Lucas is still a prisoner at the time of writing. "Sympathetic" reprisals, in the shape of less serious outbreaks, occurred, on the same night, at New-castle West, where the offices of the *Weekly Observer* were wrecked; at Limerick, where the police bombed the Railway Hotel; at Swords, which was "shot up" by soldiers and police; and on the following day at Killeconnon, Limerick, and Ballynott, which were all "shot up."

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