

IRISH NEWS

DE VALERA WRITES TO TORY M.P.'S.

The London *Daily Herald*, in its issue for February 17, gives the following from its Dublin correspondent:—
Mr. de Valera has sent the following letter to each Coalition Member of Parliament:—

"Lest on a plea of ignorance you should disclaim responsibility for what is being done here in your name, I, speaking for the elected representatives of the people of Ireland, now bring directly to your notice the following facts:—

"The troops in Ireland employed by your Government are not only waging an unjust war upon our people, but are carrying on that war in a manner contrary to all rules of civilised warfare.

In defiance of these rules your forces are guilty of—

1. The torturing of prisoners.
2. The assassination of men and boys in their homes, on the streets, and in prison.
3. The murdering of women, of children, and of clergy-men.

4. The outraging of Irish women and girls.

5. The flogging and maltreatment of groups of civilians taken in the villages and countrysides.

6. The issuing and enforcing of crawling and such-like humiliating and degrading orders.

7. The taking of men from their work and forcing them to do military duty or work at military labor as slave gangs.

8. The burning and looting of factories, creameries, shops, and dwelling-houses; the destruction of farmsteads and farm produce; and the killing and maiming of live stock.

In order to help you to realise the situation, it is necessary to restate this fact: The Irish people are a free people. They acknowledge no right to dominion over them on the part of the British Executive, the British Legislature, or the British people.

"They are engaged in a lawful effort to defend a sacred right which you are invading. Abandoning justice and reason, the only ground on which it is possible for civilised peoples to come to an understanding, you are seeking to crush that lawful effort by a blind, barbaric violence.

"These things are done because it is your will they should be done. If you willed otherwise they would cease.

"It is you, and not your troops, who are primarily responsible."

"(Signed) EAMON DE VALERA."

ATROCITIES BY CROWN FORCES.

Abominable, if true, is the description extorted from the Chief Secretary of the murder of Patrick Kennedy and James Murphy in Clonturk Park. Since our reference last week to the facts and to the usual initial conflict of testimony between the Castle authorities and civilian spectators (says the London *Nation* for February 26). Mr. Devlin has read to the House of Commons an affidavit of Joseph Murphy, brother of one of the murdered men, and two members and one ex-member of the Crown Forces have been arrested on a charge of murder. The affidavit of Joseph Murphy is the account given him by his murdered brother. It describes the arrest of the murdered men, their satisfactory examination at the Castle, and their discharge after curfew. According to the affidavit the officer in charge handed them over to some soldiers who were to take them home in a lorry:—

"Instead of bringing my brother to his lodgings the military drove the motor lorry to Clonturk Park. They halted the motor lorry near a field where there was unused and derelict ground. They took my brother and Patrick Kennedy out of the motor lorry, brought them into the field, put old tin cans over their heads, put them against the wall, and fired a number of shots at them. I believe Patrick Kennedy was killed almost instantaneously. My brother was hit through the tin can in his mouth, on the left cheek, on the right cheek, and through the breast. Having done this, they left them and went away."

If James Murphy had not lived long enough to give this account of himself, there would have been no explanation of these deaths, save, maybe, an official suggestion that the men were shot by a Sinn Fein murder gang, or, if the facts permitted it, on failing to answer a challenge, or in trying to escape. Cases like this are naturally rare where witnesses survive. There was another instance in the matter of the murder of Canon Magner. We may be excused for believing that this form of activity on the part of members of Crown Forces is not wholly confined to cases in which the murderers have incompletely carried through their work.

WHY GENERAL CROZIER RESIGNED.

The *Times* has exploded a mine under the Irish administration (says the London *Nation* editorially). It has revealed the fact that 26 Auxiliary Cadets, attached to the N Company of the R.I.C., were tried by Brigadier-General Crozier, the Commandant of the Division, and dismissed by him for wholesale, organised looting (they are alleged to have stolen wine, fowls, pictures, and money), and their leaders remanded for court-martial. It further stated that General Tudor, the Chief of the Police, approved this verdict. The dismissed men then went to London, saw General Tudor, and protested against their dismissal without trial. Whereupon General Tudor sent them back to their company and softened their dismissal to suspension. Thus affronted, General Crozier (an Ulsterman, by the way) resigned, on the specific ground that General Tudor's attitude had made his position "impossible," that he considered theft on the part of policemen (i.e., on the part of thief-takers) to be "unpardonable," and that he could not "honestly" associate himself with "a force in which such acts are condoned."

These charges proved to be true. But Sir Hamar Greenwood, in admitting them, offered a version of them which we hope will be probed to the bottom. In his letter to General Crozier, General Tudor asked for the "suspension" rather than the dismissal of these men, because he wanted to discuss the matter with the Chief Secretary. He wrote this on February 14. On February 23, Sir Hamar Greenwood declared that he had never seen these letters, and that the whole affair was unknown to him. Strange: for the *Times* asserts that General Tudor had, meantime, been in consultation with the Cabinet. Stranger still: Sir Hamar announced that these Cadets had been sent back to Ireland because General Tudor did not think dismissal punishment enough for looting, which makes nonsense of General Crozier's resignation and protest. The *Times* states that no disciplinary code has ever been drawn up for these Auxiliaries, though the force has been in existence for months. Which is exactly what we should expect to hear.

The Government got a bad division and a worse debate out of Captain Wedgwood Benn's amendment to the Address; but what was most remarkable was the changed attitude of the House towards Sir Hamar Greenwood, and the silence of the Ministerialists. Only one member of the party, Mr. Inskip, offered a defence of the Government's Irish policy, and he declared that if Sinn Fein would stop its campaign of murder, he was ready to abandon his Unionism and "go any length in giving Ireland the government which she may demand from this House or this nation." We think that Sinn Fein should consider such a tender: proceeding, as it does, from a spirit that dies down with every act of Irish violence, and revives with the tale of the following reprisal. Unfortunately, the Government impede every such process of reconciliation, the Lord Chancellor replying to the Primate's plea for a resumption of law and order with the remark that the Irish mischiefs could not be cured by the "sublime admonitions of the Sermon on the Mount," but rather by "force in its extreme and rigorous assertion." To do him justice, the Primate did not plead for applying the Sermon on the Mount to Ireland, but only that the Government should regularise their breaches of it.

BLOODHOUND HUNT FOR TEELING.

Bloodhounds and "Black-and-Tans" have failed in the search for Frank Teeling and the men who assisted him to escape from Kilmainham.

The three soldiers of the prison guard who were kidnapped returned to their barracks a couple of nights later, having been well treated during their two days' imprisonment.

Their uniforms and permits, it is said, played an important part in the scheme of rescue.

A small group of Volunteers penetrated the inmost recesses of the gaol, selected and brought out the three prisoners they wanted, and left without detection, despite the numerous sentries.

G.H.Q. breaks its silence on the affair. But it is only to affirm that all stories to the effect that the rescue was carried out by means of a hoax on the authorities are entirely fallacious.

This seems a poor attempt to save the dignity of G.H.Q. They won't say how Teeling was rescued, and it is believed they don't yet really know.

FARMER READERS.—Where do you get your Butter Wrappers printed? Why not patronise the printing department of the *N.Z. Tablet*, Dunedin? Every order, no matter how small, is welcome. Prices on application to the Manager for 1lb or ½lb wrappers.

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