

Dillon, were killed, and one-third of the men. The capture of Ghent, Bruges, Ostend, and Oudenard, followed the victory of Fontenoy."

Thrice at the hubs of Fontenoy, the English column failed,
And thrice the lines of St. Antoine the Dutch in vain assailed;

For town and slope were filled with fort and flanking battery,
And well they swept the English ranks and Dutch auxiliary.

As vainly through De Barri's Wood the British soldiers burst,

The French artillery drove them back, diminished and dispersed.

The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with anxious eye,
And ordered up his last reserve, his latest chance to try.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his generals ride!
And mustering come his chosen troops, like clouds at eventide.

Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread;
Their cannon blazo in front and frank; Lord Hay is at their head;

Steady they step adown the slope—steady they climb the hill,

Steady they load—steady they fire, moving right onward still.

Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through a furnace blast,
Through rampart, trench, and pallisade, and bullets showering fast;

And on the open plain above they rose and kept their course,

With ready fire and grim resolve, that mocked at hostile force.

Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks—

They break as broke the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean banks.

More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush round;

As stubble to the lava tide, French squadrons strew the ground;

Bombshell and grape, and round shot tore, still on they marched and fired—

Fast from each volley grenadier and voltigeur retired.

"Push on my household cavalry!" King Louis madly cried.

To death they rush, but rude their shock—not unavenged they died.

On through the camp the column trod—King Louis turns his rein:

"Not yet, my liege," Saxe interposed, "*the Irish troops remain*";

And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo,
Were not these exiles ready then, fresh, vehement, and true.

"Lord Clare," he says, "you have your wish: there are your Saxon foes!"

The Marshal almost smiles to see, so furiously he goes!

How fierce the smile these exiles wear, who're wont to look so gay;

The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in their hearts to-day.

The treaty broken ere the ink wherewith 'twas writ could dry,

Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines, their women's parting cry,

Their priesthood hunted down like wolves, their country overthrown!

Each looks as if revenge for all were staked on him alone.

On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet elsewhere,
Pushed on to fight a nobler band than those proud exiles were.

O'Brien's voice is hoarse with joy, as halting he commands,
"Fix bay'nets—charge!"—Like mountain storm rush on these fiery bands!

Thin is the English column now, and faint their volleys grow,

Yet must'ring all the strength they have, they made a gallant show.

They dress their ranks upon the hill to face that battle wind;

Their bayonets the breakers' foam; like rocks the men behind!

One volley crashes from their line, when through the surging smoke,

With empty guns clutched in their hands, the headlong Irish broke.

On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that fierce huzza!

"Revenge! remember Limerick! dash down the Sassen-agh!"

Like lions leaping at a fold when mad with hunger's pang,
Right up against the English line the Irish exiles sprang.
Bright was their steel, 'tis bloody now, their guns are filled with gore;

Through shattered ranks, and severed piles, and trampled flags they tore;

The English strove with desperate strength, paused, rallied, staggered, fled—

The green hill-side is matted close with dying and with dead.

Across the plain and far away passed on that hideous wrack,

While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon their track.

On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,
With bloody plumes the Irish stand—the field is fought and won!

(To be continued.)

THE TASK OF PARLIAMENT

(By G. K. CHESTERTON, in the *New Witness* for February 4.)

When Parliament meets next Monday week there will be many questions before the House, but only two urgent problems, and the more important problem will get but scant attention. It is more important to do justice to Ireland than to feed the unemployed, as it was more important during the war to beat the Germans than to hang the profiteer. It is better that men should starve in English streets than that the hirelings of the English Government should murder men and women in Irish lanes. We cannot solve the problem of the unemployed until we have changed our system of industry, our conception of property, and our national and individual ideals. And we cannot do all that with a gesture. But we can do justice to Ireland with a gesture. Strange to say, it is the gesture of a drowning man crying for help.

For the Irish problem is killing us—not our bodies, which die daily, but our souls, the soul of England, the souls of Englishmen. Continually are infamies perpetrated in Ireland to-day which, when the like were done by Germans in Belgium, excited our horror. Now we rub our hands and cry, "That's the stuff to give them!" or "Shooting men for carrying arms! Good! Now you just hear them squeal!" Oh, yes, they squeal; and the squeal is a cry to heaven for God's vengeance on murder.

Men who spoke once and fought once for freedom, who understood once the meaning of patriotism are blinded as the Germans were with the terrible spiritual blindness that comes before the death of the soul. They watch calmly the murder of a nation which goes on so slowly because "the cowards won't come out in the open and fight" (with their naked bodies and a few machine guns against Juggernaut!), and detailed massacre, though briskly proceeded with, takes a long time.

The "Black-and-Tans," mad with drink and the lust of killing, go round shooting indiscriminately, yet the bag is not magnificent. Even the latest edict, which means no quarter to the Irish, works in a piecemeal way. Yet the murder of the Irish nation goes on. And England watches it callously, as the Germans watched the murder of Belgium until we drove them back to the Rhine. We drove them back? Nay, the public opinion of the world drove them back, and surely then the voice of the people was the voice of God.

It is right to say that foreign nations shall not interfere with our internal affairs; but that public voice cannot be ignored. And that voice has already uttered the doom of England. We are what they always said we were, often with injustice, but now how truly! We are mere hypocrites talking fervently of the blessings of freedom and the rights of small nations, and practising the blackest tyranny over a small nation at our very door.

We promise Ireland Home Rule; nay, we grant it her on paper; and now we give her a Home Rule measure which is a lie. We scream with indignation at the assassinations practised by rebels, and authority itself has turned assassin in Ireland, and runs amok through the length and breadth of it. Authority itself has turned into an anarchist, which is the final horror, and a promise of the coming of the night. These things the nations see and know, and the name of England is abhorred.

We who love England, who are English to the marrow, for whom her hills and fields have the power of invocation, have cause to be ashamed.

That is the problem Parliament should face when it meets. It should demand, for one thing, the publication of the Strickland report, though the withholding it speaks as significantly as its publication could have spoken. It should demand a thorough, impartial public enquiry into

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