

were striving to free their land from the domination of the English tyrants. He quoted Archbishop Clune, who had stated that every horror and outrage which the Germans were alleged to have perpetrated on the Belgians had been worsted by the criminal soldiery that had been let loose on the innocent and defenceless Irish people. The speaker stated that only that morning his Grace Archbishop Redwood had told him that though he, as an Englishman, was proud of his nationality, he felt thoroughly ashamed of the present English Government, for the barbarous way they were treating the Irish nation. He urged them to continue kind and forbearing to their fellow-citizens, however great might be the calumnies alleged against them, and all they held most dear and sacred. Their loyal support in all that made for the advancement of Catholic education had heartened him in that work, and he knew they were even more determined than he that their schools should be maintained at the highest stage of educational efficiency. Whether they were granted their just rights, the work of Catholic education would go on, and just as these young soldiers had never flinched before the enemy so they, and all those associated with them, would maintain their rights; while at the same time heartily joining with their fellow countrymen in all that conduced to the moral and spiritual advancement of their native land.

The Mayor, who was warmly received, thanked the organisers for inviting him to take part in the gathering, and said he yielded to no one in his admiration of the young men who had served and fallen regardless of the school from which they had come. He recalled the great work done by the various patriotic societies in the Dominion for the benefit of the soldiers, and it was pleasing to know that this sympathetic encouragement had greatly stimulated the men to carry on in their awful struggle. Like the previous speakers he deeply sympathised with the friends of the departed, hoping that they, with all the fallen, would ever be held in honored memory.

Other toasts honored were "The Clergy," "The Marist Brothers," "The Fallen," and "The Visitors."

In responding to the toast of "The Clergy," Rev. Father McGrath spoke of the great work accomplished by the chaplains to the forces, making special mention of the late Rev. Fathers Dore and McMenamin. He pleaded for the incorporation in our civil life of the splendid spirit of toleration and mutual help which prevailed among all the chaplains and men on active service.

A special vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. George Smithies, who designed the board, collected the names and the funds, and organised the whole function.

The various toasts were interspersed with musical and elocutionary items contributed by Messrs. McCarthy, Crotty, Morris, Sloane, Cardston, and Ahern.

The Roll of Honor is now being exhibited in the show window of Spillane and Co.'s premises.

A GRAND DUCHESS AND HER THRONE

THE STORY OF MARIE OF LUXEMBOURG.

The following from the pen of Rev. Father B. J. Gondringer, S.M., of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, appeared in the *Dominion* of the 5th inst:—

Sir,—In your edition of March 29 you printed an interesting story under the heading: "Crown of Luxembourg": "How Grand Duchess Marie Lost It." Perhaps you will allow a native of Luxembourg to point out that there is another version to that story.

When, in 1912, Marie Adelaide, then a frail girl of 18, took the oath in the time-honored formula: "Je maintiendrai" ("I will maintain"), she included her religion in her promise, and to her last day in Luxembourg she proved as faithful to the latter as she did to the Constitution under which she ruled. Luxembourg, with a Catholic population totalling up to 99½ per cent., claims to be the most Catholic country in the world. Such a fact is surely deserving of the attention of a ruler who seeks to do his duty by all the people. French anti-clericalism had, however, raised its head in Luxembourg as well as in Belgium,

and the first manifestation of it was a school law aimed at the Catholic Church. To this law the brave young girl showed a determined opposition, and this it was that laid the foundation for the hostility evinced towards her by the Socialist-cum-Liberal clique that happened to be in power.

Close on this inauspicious opening came the Great War. The floodgates were flung open, and in a day and a night Luxembourg found itself an invaded country.

To rule over a country, occupied by a foreign Power, and yet not governed by the latter, was the task set this frail girl ruler, and, if I err not, there was no precedent in history for such a political situation. Her first duty clearly was to consult the interests of her people, to safeguard their national existence, and to minimise the evils arising out of such an abnormal situation. That, in the execution of this difficult task, she drew upon herself the criticism, not only of the enemies of the Crown—for we have such people in Luxembourg, as you have them in New Zealand—but even of loyal adherents, is surely not unusual. How many regal crowns fell between the North and the Black Sea during those years! How many successive Governments rose and fell even in Allied countries! War is the fertile mother of distrust, suspicion, and hatred. To these the brave girl ruler fell a victim. She was accused of leaning unduly towards Germany, when, in the interests of her people, she was but striving to maintain a correct neutrality. Similar charges, equally groundless, were made against people of eminence in Allied countries. Mrs. Asquith's autobiography is there to prove to us, had we not known it already, that even high-minded, loyal, and patriotic English statesmen, and their wives, were not proof against such attacks.

Beset by difficulties, hedged in by distrust, her every action misrepresented by the foreign press, her motives suspected by a section of her own people, the brave girl nevertheless stuck to her task, until that task was accomplished, and the end of the war saw Luxembourg an independent country still—a dream which, during those tragic years, we had almost given up in despair. She then resigned and withdrew to Switzerland. A plebiscite, ordered by the Allied Powers, disclosed the real strength of the opposition to her House. By an overwhelming majority (71,000 to 16,000) the people declared in favor of the ruling House against a republic.

Her sister, Princess Charlotte, ascended the throne, and soon this child of the House of Orange wedded a scion of the House of Bourbon, thus uniting in Luxembourg two ancient and illustrious Houses that once guided the destinies of England, France, and Spain.

Then came the announcement that the ex-Grand Duchess had entered a convent in Italy. It did not startle Luxembourg, for it had been rumored for years that she contemplated taking such a step. That one of the wealthiest women of our time, and one of the most beautiful, should bury her youth and beauty within the four walls of a Carmelite convent may seem a tragic denouement to her short, but chequered, career as a ruler. I for one, however, feel certain that within the peaceful walls of the cloister she has found, at last, the happiness which we all prophesied for her in 1912, and of which Fate did so tragically rob her. In her voluntary exile she retains the devoted affection of the great majority of her former subjects. As your cavaliers long ago drank to "the King across the water," so in Luxembourg to-day many a glass, filled with good Moselle wine, is raised to "our Queen across the Alps." In her musings in her convent cell the thought that she left Luxembourg, as she found it, a free and independent country, will be her sweetest memory, as it will also prove to be her justification when the passions of our time have cooled down and history is written impartially.

O ye souls that desire to walk in the midst of consolation and security, if only ye knew how acceptable to God is suffering for His love, and how great a means it is to arrive at every other spiritual good, ye would never seek for consolation in anything, but you would rather rejoice when ye bear the cross after your Lord.—St. John of the Cross.

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