

pleted his decision. When he had finished the reading he rose, took Dargan's letter and cheque between his fingers, as if the touch of them burnt into his blood, and put them in the fire, where he watched them blacken and crumple like damned souls in the heart of it. Then he gave one indecisive glance at the pretty three-cornered missive, and flung that into the blaze, too. The flimsy little note fluttered like a frightened dainty thing towards the flame, but evaded it and effected a trembling escape into the fender. Lord Drumshaughlin dragged it pitilessly forth, and cast it back into the jaws of the fire, and this time with his boot pressed it to its fate until the poor little pink wings were ashes. Then he strode to his dressing-room. He re-appeared after an incredibly brief interval neatly dressed, but for the first time his grey hairs were left to proclaim themselves in all their greyness; there was not even any suggestion of mysterious pomades about the yellow furrowed cheeks; and from loose appearances about the chest it was plain that the arrangements, whatever they were, that made Ralph Westropp's juvenile figure the wonder of old clubmen had been discarded.

(To be continued.)

THE AMERICAN COMMISSION ON CONDITIONS IN IRELAND

INTERIM REPORT

(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER IV

The British Campaign in Ireland

Killings.—According to lists compiled by the Irish Republican Government and submitted to us, over 200 unarmed Irish civilians were killed by the military and "police" during 1920 alone. This number does not include persons killed in skirmishes or battles between English and Irish armed forces, or in indiscriminate firing. According to the Irish Republican figures the list includes six women, twelve children, ten old men, and two priests. The increase in the killings over those of the past few years is startling. For 1919 eight similar killings were recorded, for 1918, six, and for 1917, seven.

We cannot vouch for the exactness of these figures, but we have direct testimony describing the killing of MacCurtain, Walsh, Buckley, Quirk, and the boy at the Galway railway station; of ten men, one woman, and three children at Croke Park; and of others. In addition, statements made before us indicate that when local disturbances (not military battles) and general shooting-up of towns are added to the category, the tally of civilians violently brought to an end in 1920 runs into many hundreds. Miss Signo Toksvig testified that figures published in Belfast for the month of August alone showed fifty-six persons killed in that one city as the result of local disturbances. We shall cite from the testimony as few instances as are necessary to elucidate it, selecting them not for their ghastliness but for their instructiveness.

John A. Lynch in Dublin.—The Rev. Dr. Cotter was in Dublin when John A. Lynch, a Republican Councilman and Registrar of Courts, was shot in the Exchange Hotel (September 21, 1920). He investigated the tragedy:

"Six soldiers came to the door of the hotel at two o'clock in the morning, asked to see the register, looked for a name, and went to room number six. They left. Nobody heard any sound. And some half-hour or so afterwards two policemen came and knocked at the hotel and said to the night clerk: 'We are going to guard room number six, where a man lies dying. The military told us to come here.' All the next day they stood guard at that room, and did not even admit the proprietor of the hotel into that room. They supposed the man was dying. He was shot in the throat. The military held the inquest."

Thomas Dwyer of Ragg.—In the village of Ragg, Thomas Dwyer, known as a Republican, was shot at his own door, January 21, 1920. Councillor Morgan testified:

"A knock came at the door and his sister, a married lady, opened the door, and they demanded her brother. She said he was upstairs. He came down with a candle

in his hand. Two shots were fired and he fell. A man at the door said: 'I think I will finish him.' And he fired another shot into him. The verdict in that case was 'Wilful murder against the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary.'"

In each of these cases the assassination of a particular person seems to have been sought. If any trial preceded the assassination, the accused was absent from it.

The identity of the victim was established in the first case by occupancy of a room. The uncertainty of such methods of identification is emphasised by the deaths of James McCarthy and Patrick Lynch.

James McCarthy of Thurles.—Dennis Morgan, Chairman of the Urban Council of the agricultural town of Thurles* in Tipperary, told of several killings in the neighborhood during the past year. Here is one incident:

"A member of the Urban Council named McCarthy was very prominent in demanding an inquiry into the shooting up of the town. At the Urban Council he put forward a resolution that some inquiry be held as to the importance of the damage done and everything else in the shooting up of the town. This chap got a letter informing him that if he came up Pryor Street in the direction of the barracks they would give him all the information he wanted. Naturally, he did not move. A few nights afterward, after the family was in bed—they live off the Liberty Square—the family was in bed about two o'clock in the morning. A knocking came at the door and they asked who was there, and they said they were looking for one McCarthy. The member of the Urban Council is Michael McCarthy. The brother, a lad named James, who never takes part in public life in any way, simply a chap who is fond of going around with dogs and sporting, he said he would go down and answer the door. As he answered the door the men asked him what was his name. Immediately two shots were fired, and he fell back dead in the hall. The men wore police uniforms."

Patrick Lynch of Hospital.—Rev. Michael M. English of Whitehall, Montana, testified to a killing he investigated in the town of Hospital, County Limerick:

"On the morning of Sunday, August 15, I went to the town of Hospital. Upon the previous night a number of soldiers had entered the house of Patrick Lynch, a harness maker, a single man forty years of age, living with his two sisters and a blind father. These soldiers had entered his house at eleven-thirty, Sunday night, while they were on their knees saying the rosary. The first asked Lynch to come along. He said: 'Just a minute until I get my cap.' They said: 'You will not need your cap in the place you are going.' They took him about 100 yards to a place called the Fair Green, the village square. And then they shot him. There were about four wounds in his head. His body was badly battered."

Lynch was not connected with the Republican movement, and it was reported in the village that he had been mistaken for some other man of the same name. A statement was made public by the police to the effect that he had been shot by forces of the Crown while attempting to escape. Father English attended the inquest and testified to us that no evidence to this effect was presented.

Other instances of analogous mistakes leading to vicarious sacrifice were presented to the Commission.

These killings would seem to take place indifferently, sometimes in the presence of the family, sometimes more remotely. We would be glad to think that the latter are governed more by the dictates of humanity than other considerations.

There was no allegation of crime made against any of these deceased, so far as the testimony reveals. John A. Lynch was a member of the legal department of the Government of the Irish Republic. Thomas Dwyer was a recognised Republican; Patrick Lynch was mistaken for a Republican namesake. None of them was alleged to have done any injury to the Imperial British forces, or to have held a position of authority in the Irish Republic such as to make him in any sense personally responsible for the direction of activities against the Imperial British forces.

The deceased James McCarthy was the brother of a

*Thurles was partly destroyed January 20, 1920, following the killing of a policeman in the town.

E. S. Robson

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