

ened than Katie herself, took her in her arms, and, though she did not in the least comprehend, assured her never, never, never!—"I thought you knew," she murmured, when at last a reassured smile began to dawn through her blinding tears.—"Knew, dear?" exclaimed Mabel, in bewilderment.—"I mean that I am going to be a nun," she said, in a joyous whisper, such as might ripple from the lips of a West-End beauty confiding to her sister the first news that the young Duke had proposed and been accepted. Then, as if eager to atone for her passing association of Mabel with the spirits of darkness, she murmured: "You won't tell if I show you something, will you?" to which the answer was of the sort which enables young ladies to dispense with speeches in schoolgirl conferences. They were in Katie's own little snowy room with the tender blue forget-me-not papering. She unlocked her work-box, and, after taking out a movable crimson nest of compartments for thimbles, needles, and what not, produced a packet of letters tied with white satin ribbon from the cavity underneath, and proceeded to unfold the love-letters which had been passing between Mother Rosalie and her little pupil ever since Katie had quitted the convent at Clonard. Such a seraphic smile as Katie kissed them with! and how those fading puce pages from poor old Mother Rosalie's cramped knuckles glowed and shone with a light of affection such as never yet beamed on a court of justice out of the correspondence in a breach of promise case! and how Mabel Westropp longed to take off her shoes while treading in that pure virginal shrine where the old nun trembling on the threshold of heaven, and the child who seemed to have but lately left it, whispered to one another the beautiful secrets of their souls. One thing was clear to Mabel. It was all over with unlucky Harry. This child was engaged in a love-match in which the mere thought of poor Harry was grotesque and blasphemous—a love-match as inexorable and as enduring as eternity.

"You understand now!" said Katie, watching with flushing cheek the effect of Mother Rosalie's artless heaven-thoughts.

"Yes, dear," said Miss Westropp, almost in a whisper, with a deep sigh, re-tying the packet with the white satin string; and by an impulse she could not control, she took Katie's hand in her own, and bent down and kissed it, in token that the subject of poor Harry's ill-starred love was over between them for ever.

(To be continued.)

Silence

In silence was the Universe conceived,
In silence doth the heart of man seek out
That other Heart to rest on; Nature's soul
Yearns ceaselessly to give its speechless calm
Unto her restless children as they roam
Far from that central peace which is their home.

Wouldst know thy mother Nature face to face?
Wouldst hear her silent heart-beats? close thine ears
And still thy senses; wouldst thou feel her arms
Enfold thy being? thou must give thyself
In uttermost abandon to her will
That she may teach thee the one truth—be still!

Be still—and from the Silence shall arise
A mem'ry of forgotten mysteries.
A healing peace descending on thy soul
Shall bear it up to regions beyond words
Where thou shalt learn the secrets of the earth,
Of wind and flame, and how the stars have birth.

Then shalt thou know thy heritage of joy;
Borne on the pinions of the Bird of Life,
Tuned to the rhythm of revolving spheres,
Feeling with all that breathes, with all that strives
For union with its prototype above,
The silent comforter whose name is—Love.

—M. FRANCES POLLE, in the *Forum*.

"UNIQUE" HOT WATER BOTTLES are the most reliable in the world is a statement borne out by the enormous trade carried on throughout the British Empire. Manufactured by the famous NORTH BRITISH RUBBER CO., LTD., EDINBURGH, whose brand is on the neck of each bottle, gives each purchaser the satisfaction of knowing that they are at least trying a Hot Water Bottle that will answer all purposes required for sickness or a severe winter's night, besides giving many years' service.

THE AMERICAN COMMISSION ON CONDITIONS IN IRELAND

INTERIM REPORT

(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER IV—(Continued.)

Destruction of Property

In examining the evidence relating to crimes committed against life by the Imperial British forces, we have been continually confronted with the question of provocation; but in the destruction of property the question of provocation cannot enter and the prohibitions of law, both domestic and international, are precise. If Great Britain is not at war with Ireland, there is no conceivable condition that would justify the Imperial British forces in destroying the public property of Irish cities and towns or private property of Irish citizens—except after due process of law, or with the consent of the owners and proper provision for damages.

If a state of war does exist in Ireland, the situation as regards wanton destruction of property is unchanged. The Laws of War, as set forth in the Hague Convention of 1907, to which the Government of Great Britain is a signatory, positively forbid the destruction of property, except as necessary and unavoidable consequence of military operations. The prohibitions are particularly explicit as regards private property. Article 23 of the Hague Convention declares:—

In addition to the prohibitions provided by special conventions, it is especially forbidden—

(g) To destroy or seize the enemy's property, unless such destruction or seizure be imperatively demanded by the necessities of war.

Burning of Towns

We have heard testimony of eye-witnesses to the burning of considerable areas of the following Irish cities, towns, and villages: Cork, Balbriggan, Mallow, Galway, Tuam, Feakle, Limerick, Templemore, Ennistymon, Lahinch, and Milltown-Malbay—all except Cork incontestably burned by Imperial British forces. There has also been placed in evidence a document listing all Irish cities, towns, and villages alleged to have been destroyed in part by the Imperial British forces. This list includes towns and cities named above, but, except as to these, there is no testimony of eye-witnesses before us.

Save for the doctrine of "reprisal" which has no sanction either in the laws of civilised nations defining police power or in the code of war of civilised nations, no military necessity has been urged, so far as we have been able to discover, in justification of the burning of any of the Irish towns regarding which we have had evidence. It is difficult to characterise the doctrine of "reprisal" in any other manner except as a relic of barbarism. Yet we have had presented to us evidence that this policy was condoned at Balbriggan, commended at Galway, and planned at Mallow by officers of the Imperial High Command.

Official Sanctions for Destruction of Property

A memorandum submitted to us by counsel for the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic states:

The official sanction for these reprisals is complete, consisting of:

"(1) Typewritten notices signed by Brigadier-General Higginson served on the occupants of the "marked houses." The text of these notices is not available, but their substance is sufficiently indicated by the official statement of the reprisals."

"(2) The official statement published by order of the Brigade-Major at Cork in the Cork papers. This statement is published in the *Cork Weekly Examiner*, January 8, 1921, as follows:

OFFICIAL STATEMENT.

We have received the following official statement for

E. S. Robson

OPPOSITE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, HASTINGS. BICYCLE DEALER AND IMPORTER.
Good Workmanship Guaranteed. — All Accessories Stocked — Cycle Repairs a speciality
Cheapest House in Town. — Prams Repaired and Tyred.