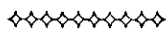


IRISH NEWS

INTENSIFIED DESTRUCTION.

Since I wrote last week (reports the special correspondent of the *London Catholic Times* from Dublin, to his paper for February 10) there has been a great outburst of incendiarism in this country, and a number of its finest mansions have been burned to the ground, but I do not think that this need cause any undue depression. When the opponents of the Free State were able to ambush soldiers, at their pleasure, and arrest the arm of law throughout the South and West, they did not interfere to any great extent with the property of private individuals. Now that they have failed in their efforts to subdue the nation as a whole it is only natural, perhaps, that they should endeavor to wreak vengeance on those whom they hold partially responsible for the failure of their campaign. In saying this, however, I do not wish to minimise the real loss which these latest burnings inflict upon the nation, but only to point out that they are the desperate deeds of a defeated faction.



THE RUINED MANSIONS.

Among the houses destroyed during the ten days prior to the above date, were Palmerstown, Lord Mayo's country mansion; Kilteragh, Sir Horace Plunkett's Co. Dublin home; Temple Hill House, the property of Mr. Stephen Gwynn, the well-known Irish journalist and writer; Bellvue, the Co. Wexford residence of Lady Talbot Power; and Moore Hall, the historic Mayo seat of Colonel Maurice Moore. At Palmerstown the raiders gave the staff about half an hour in which to remove Lord Mayo's most valuable possessions, and so a number of priceless paintings have been saved; but at Kilteragh less consideration was displayed, the incendiaries reducing to ashes Sir Horace Plunkett's splendid art collection, which included many modern Irish paintings by such distinguished artists as Jack Yeats, George Russell ("A.E."), and Nathaniel Hone. Of all the mansions that have recently been gutted Moore Hall possessed the greatest historic interest for Irishmen, since a proclamation declaring this country a Republic was drawn up within its walls in 1798, and it was in later days the residence of George Henry Moore, one of the most outstanding Irish patriots of the mid-Victorian age. Practically all the houses that have been destroyed belonged to members of the Senate, though Temple Hill House constituted a notable exception. Why Mr. Gwynn's residence was wrecked remains a mystery, but it is possible that he incurred the wrath of the lawless element owing to the independent attitude he has adopted during the present crisis. A resolute opposition to disorder is not condoned in the eyes of the extremists by a criticism of this or that action of the Government. The ruins of Moore Hall and Temple Hill bear eloquent testimony to that.



"PEACE."

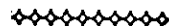
The secretary of the "National Appeal for Peace," in a recent letter to the Irish press, stated that an appeal was about to be presented to the Government and its opponents suggesting that peace could be obtained on the following basis—(1) That both parties agree to accept the principle of majority rule; (2) that they agree to maintain the Republic until the complete independence of Ireland is obtained. A settlement on this basis would not conflict, the letter added, with the Anglo-Irish Treaty! The above proposals epitomise the confused mentality of many of our pacifists, excellent people who, unfortunately for themselves and for their country, cannot see that the "maintenance" of the Republic would be out of harmony with the spirit of loyalty to the Treaty (the provisions of which they have probably forgotten). Until our pacifist leaders learn a little constitutional law and a lot of common sense I am afraid that they may save themselves the trouble of trying to secure a negotiated peace. Whatever we may think of the policy of the extreme Republicans, it is possible at least to grasp its drift, and, futile though it may

be, it is sanity itself when compared with the policy of those who propose to patch up a "peace" which would herald the approach of complete confusion—in other words, a peace based at the same time on the Republic which exists in Mr. de Valera's mind and the Treaty which has been signed between this country and Great Britain.



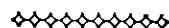
THE NEUTRAL VOLUNTEERS.

Although (writes the above-quoted correspondent) as I have said, the peace proposals which have been made in the columns of the press suggest that little is to be hoped for from the activities of the majority of our pacifists, it is just possible that the efforts which a number of pre-truce volunteers—who have remained neutral during the recent civil war—are making to end the present strife may be rewarded by success. Already these men—who possess a certain prestige throughout the country—have held a general convention in the capital, and elected a national executive. Public opinion, it must be admitted, is not over-sanguine, but still the pressure of events may aid the neutral volunteers. All their efforts, however, will be brought to nought unless—more wise than their fellow-pacifists—they realise that peace can only be built up on the basis of democracy and the Anglo-Irish Articles of Agreement.



ITEMS OF THE STRUGGLE.

Apart from the terrible campaign against the property of senators and other prominent supporters of the Free State, the first ten days of February were comparatively speaking quiet—though a passenger train was wrecked in Co. Mayo, and the courthouse at Tallagh, Co. Dublin, was given to the flames. The National soldiers, on the other hand, continue to make important captures of men and ammunition almost every day. In Dublin they have discovered another extensive ammunition dump, at Cashel they have seized a number of rifles and large quantities of ammunition, and in Southern Tipperary they have rounded up many of their opponents. These military successes are having a very good effect in many districts in the South, and to them may, perhaps, be attributed the persistence with which some citizens, who are obviously hostile to the Free State settlement, now call for peace.



A SENATOR'S ADVENTURE

Senator Bagwell, manager of the Great Northern Railway, who was kidnapped from his home near Dublin by five armed men on January 30, has regained his liberty. Immediately after Senator Bagwell's seizure, Major-General Hogan, acting on behalf of the military authorities, issued a proclamation warning the Republicans that unless the Senator was returned to his home unharmed within 48 hours, punitive action would be taken against several militant opponents of ordered government now in the custody of the State. This proclamation placed the Republicans upon the horns of a dilemma. Had they formally released the Senator as a result of it they would have admitted their defeat; while had they insisted on detaining him, despite the warning it conveyed, they would have placed a number of their political associates in a position of much jeopardy. By imposing no effective restraint upon the Senator's movements, however, during his captivity, they left both themselves and him a loophole of escape, of which he took advantage, very naturally, at the first available opportunity. While his "guards" were breakfasting in another section of the farmhouse to which he had been carried he walked quietly away, and reached Dublin many hours before the time limit set by General Hogan had expired. The result of the whole affair is briefly this—that the Government has gained its point, and that the Irregulars have been enabled to retreat from a untenable position without formally surrendering their captive. Nobody believes that the Republicans, had they wished to do so, would have been unable to keep Senator Bagwell until the time limit mentioned in the proclamation had expired. The fact that they had sufficient wisdom to permit him to escape is certainly to their credit, and suggests that there are limits beyond which some of Mr. de Valera's followers are not prepared to go. The whole incident, I may add, created exceptional excitement in the capital, and its satisfactory ending has occasioned general relief.

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