

IRELAND'S INDEPENDENCE DAY.

By Arthur Griffith.

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Think of the patriots whose names are enshrined in the history of Ireland! What would **they** do to-day? Would they repudiate or endorse England's claim to rule the land for which they lived and died? Would they make use of the best opportunity that has ever occurred in the history of Ireland for obtaining the Independence of their country—or would they crawl on their hands and knees to England, supplicate forgiveness for the 'crimes' committed against her in the past, and promise to be good if she would only be so kind as to give them a few crumbs off the Imperial loaf? What would **they** do to-day?

In every generation men have given up their lives to secure the freedom of their native land. Women have suffered torture and death. What did **they** die for? Was it to ensure that Ireland would take her place within the tentacles of that monster of which Mr. Dillon is so proud? For more than seven hundred years the people of Ireland have defied the might of Empire. They have suffered tortures which might have been imported from hell, but they have never quailed under those tortures. They have never lost faith in themselves or in their country. Would they have been afraid of Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Edward Carson, and Lord French? They faced the gallows; they faced Cromwell, the ancestor of the gentleman from Ypres; but they did not deny the faith that was within them. What would **they** do to-day?

The blazing thatch, the scalding pitch, the wholesale butchery of our people, the Penal Laws, the hundred and one Coercion Acts, death from starvation and death from forcible feeding, imprisonment, exportation to the Barbadoes, stranglings and hangings, rack and fire and sword and bullet have been requisitioned in the past to teach our people to love England. And to-day the would-be leaders of the Irish people threaten you with fire and brimstone if you dare to turn away from Westminster! Our people have suffered the torments of the

damned for seven hundred years—our country has been laid waste. But the flaming spirit of Irish Nationality has never been extinguished. The Provincialists ask the men and women of this generation to willingly do what seven hundred years of tyranny has not succeeded in doing. The Provincialists ask you to-day to repudiate the past, and pawn the future of the Irish Nation by returning them to the British House of Commons. Think of your martyred dead! What would **they** do to-day?

To-day Ireland is painted red on the map. That red is the outward symbol of Ireland's slavery. The Provincialists wish to convince England and the world that Ireland glories in her chains, and accepts the place which England has been pleased to grant her within the British Empire! For seven hundred years the blood of Ireland's noblest and best has been shed... for what? Was it that Ireland might turn red on the map and become a portion of Mr. Dillon's Empire?

The Provincialists threaten you with the overthrow of the Catholic Church in Ireland if you dare to seek the Independence of your country! So the mighty British Empire is going to destroy the Word of God? With due respect to Mr. John Dillon and his friends, clerical and lay, we wish to say that when Mr. John Dillon's Empire and all other Empires shall have passed away the Catholic Church will still remain. The Penal Laws would surely have succeeded if anything could succeed in destroying the Catholic Church in Ireland. Pitch-caps and boiling pitch, the rack and the gibbet, fire, sword and bullet were all used as arguments against the Word of God in Ireland, as they were used against Irish Nationality, and they failed to persuade the priests or people of Ireland to bow down before England. Nationality and Religion are beyond the control of Empires. Thousands upon thousands of our people have died for Faith and Fatherland. What would **they** do to-day?

The land will be taken from you if you do not deny your country and admire, with Mr. Dillon, the good old British Empire! The land was robbed from the people of Ireland in the old days—the people of Ireland fought for it, and got it back! They did not sell their country for the sake of an acre or two of land, but they gave their lives for their land, because they looked upon the Land War as a war between the

Irish Nation and Imperialism. The National spirit was the driving force in this as in all other fights that have been fought in Ireland. What would **they** do to-day?

Ireland will not get 'her share' of the 'reconstruction' money which the British Government intend to fling around, according to Mr. John Dillon and his friends, during the next few months, but she will get more than 'her share' of extra taxation—if the Irish people do not send a strong Irish Expeditionary Force back to Westminster to safeguard Irish interests! Well, Ireland needs a lot of money to 'reconstruct' the damage done during the seven hundred years' war, but we doubt if Mr. John Dillon and his friends will be able to secure any for our country; and, as far as extra taxation is concerned, we fear that, as they were never able in the past to prevent (if they had wished) the passage of the Empire's Budget, they cannot prevent it in the future. Ireland's industries (?) will be ruined; the tenacious people of the bulldog breed, of whom Mr. John Dillon is so proud, will refuse to eat any more Irish beef, etc.—if the people of Ireland do not send a troupe of comedians over to Westminster to amuse them! The industries of our country have been wiped out by British Acts of Parliament because these industries interfered with the British merchants—our cattle and sheep, butter, cheese, eggs, potatoes and vegetables, etc., are too dear (and too nice and cheap!) to John Bull's fancy to be allowed to go elsewhere! The ruination of our industries in the past, the robbery of our people—under the name of taxation—has not been able to make them forget that they are Irish. Would the men whose industries were wiped out have become less Irish because of a threat to wipe themselves out as well? What would **they** do to-day? Would they realise that in a free Ireland they could build up a commercial prosperity equal to any small nation in the world—and that they need not go to any of the coal mines attached to Mr. Dillon's Empire for fuel? Messrs. Dillon, Devlin, Clancy and Brady have already told us that Ireland could not get on without the motherly assistance of Britannia, while the real fact is that an independent Ireland could, and would, become one of the most flourishing nations in the world. The whole truth of the matter is that 'these men' stand

for the British Empire—they have lost faith in their own country; they have lost their Nationality.

Again we ask you to think of the patriots whose names adorn the glorious pages of our history. What would **they** do to-day? All the world is ringing to-day with the triumphant shouts of small nations freed from the grasp of oppression. Nations long since considered by their tyrants as dead and buried away under a headstone labelled 'Imperial' have had a joyful resurrection. The Irish is the only white race held in bondage to-day! On Wednesday last the Irish Nation flung off twenty-five of her chains, and to-day the people of Ireland can, if they will, fling off the other chains which bind them to Mr. Dillon's Empire.

To-day the people of Ireland can repudiate England's claim to rule their country, can tell the people of the world that the people of the historic Irish Nation claim the right to separate nationhood, and proclaim to the world that that right must no longer be denied by the defenders of small nations.