

# THE HONOUR OF IRELAND.

By Arthur Griffith.

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For the duration of the war, the English Garrison in Ireland have undertaken in their Press the upholding of the Honour of Ireland. In brief, it appears that the Honour of Ireland demands that the Irish Nation should, if necessary, expire in the mud of Flanders for the Better Preservation of Ireland to England and its Garrison—which is now augmented by the Four-Hundred Pounders, with their numerous relatives provided for or unprovided for under the Insurance Act.

In upholding the Honour of Ireland, the 'Irish Times' is foremost. Time was, and that but three years ago, when the 'Irish Times' declared of the Irish Nation, like the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, that there was 'no such a thing.' The Irish had never been a nation—never could be a nation—they were a tribe, bye-blow, mob, what you like—anything except a nation. This indeed has been the orthodox professed faith of the English Garrisioneer, as distinct from the vanishing Irish Unionist for many generations. It was the simple reply got by rote to every plaint and charge—'Ah, the Irish are not a nation.' Ergo they had no *locus standi*. A variation, indeed, was essayed by describing the Irish as two nations. One an enlightened, progressive, benevolent, humane, pious and industrious nation of English and Scots origin situated in North-East Ulster, Rathmines and Greystones. The other an ignorant, retrogressive, malevolent, inhumane, superstitious and lazy nation of cannibal origin—how well we remember that correspondence in the *Irish Times* which proved so conclusively that the ancient Irish delighted in eating one another. This Two-Nation theory was, however, open to obvious objections, and was dropped after a brief experiment in favour of the No-Nation creed. Mr. Healy of the 'Irish Times,' who, as his name indicates, is of pure Saxon ancestry, preached this inspiring creed, and earned a 6 per

cent dividend for the shareholders, until the present war made necessary a readjustment of teaching to the Irish Heathen.

We have spent some edifying Sabbath hours in re-reading the leading articles of the 'Irish Times'—organ of all the English Garrison outside North-East Ulster and the ambit of the 'Freeman's Journal.' The evolution that we, the mere Irish, have undergone in the crucible of the Garrison brain has been rapid and remarkable. In August, 1914, Ireland as a separate entity disappeared from the Garrison Map. There was no Ireland. 'Britain' was our country—victorious 'Britain,' which in the following November was to sit beneath the lindens and view its Indians riding through Berlin while Germania knelt with bowed head and weeping confessed she had sinned against the light—which is John—that is, John Bull. Unhappily, owing to the native ferocity and savagery of the Huns, who objected with murderous steel and villainous saltpetre to their country being made another Ireland, this fair vision did not materialise, and the necessity of getting supplies of Irish flesh-and-blood became pressing.

The 'Irish Times' braced itself to the occasion. It discovered that 'England' was our country—that Cork, Limerick, Dublin, Galway, and Belfast were all in England; that the Army which boasts the so-called Scots Borderers and the Curragh Mutineers was Our army—that in blood, history, tradition, and interest Turlough O'Neill and Dermot O'Brien were twin brothers of Giles Eatall, from which it followed, as the night the day, that it was the duty of Turlough and Dermot to die that Giles might live.

But Irish ignorance was too profound to realise the truth. Ireland did not respond. Then the 'Irish Times' sought and found a new truth—England was not, it appeared, the Irishman's country—it was his Motherland. Thence in ages past, the O'Briens and the O'Kellys and the Murphys and O'Connors and O'Neills had come hither and propagated us, and to us in our hours of distress, England had yearned in her maternal heart.

There may be shame in the admission, but the truth must be told—at least in this journal. The callous Irish remained untouched

by this picture of Britannia as their fond parent who ran to raise them when they fell and kissed the part to make it well. Undaunted and adaptable, the Editor of the 'Irish Times' girded his loins and made a third essay.

This time he obliterated not only Ireland but England, forcing them down the maw of Empire. Irishmen were not Irishmen—they were citizens of the Empire. This Empire represented whatever of God's grace there was on earth. It was Humanity, Civilisation, Liberty, Progress, and Christianity—four-fifths of it being Moslem and heathen—and Religion and Patriotism called aloud for the Irishman to perform his duty by giving up his ghost for it. Patriotism, it was explained, was not, as unenlightened ancients and mistaken moderns had taught, the love of a man for his own country—for the clime and race with which he is linked by blood and thought and natural sympathy. That was parochialism—the miserable parochialism that made old Hellas Greece instead of a province of Persia, and gave the world a Socrates and a Plato, an Aristides and a Lycurgus, a Thermopylae and Acropolis, instead of a fine selection of Greek slaves fattened in Persia to hymn the praises of their masters, fight their battles, and serve their temples. The Imperial Patriotism directed the Irishman to love deeply countries which he might find by searching the geography, and despise his own as parochial to the end that he might consent to die. This Imperial doctrine was much applauded. It was echoed in Prince's Street and heard on a hundred platforms, from the lips of Sambo downwards to John Redmond. Alas! it left the Irish cold. Heaven limited their affection to the confines of the island upon which it placed them, and which it devised to them to possess for ever.

Now the shining genius of the organ of the English Garrison manifested itself. It had discovered in August, 1914, that 'Britain' was the Irishman's country; later it had discovered that 'England' was his nation. A month more and, lo! England was our 'Motherland.' And 'ere the summer died, 'England' had vanished and we were 'The Empire.' The 'Irish Times' discovered Ireland.

Ireland, it announced, was the Irishman's country. A number of Irishmen who were serving England in this war were getting killed. It was the duty of Ireland to see that so fast as one Irishman got killed, she should supply another. If she failed to do this her Honour was lost—the blush of shame would mantle in the brow of the Editor of the 'Irish Times' and of his 160,000 political colleagues of military age in Ireland who have declined to 'hear the call.'

The 'Irish Times' as the Champion of the Honour of Ireland may be unfamiliar to the Irish Nation, yet it can be said for it that not until it tried in vain to bully and bewilder the Irish into believing that they were not Irish, did it appear in the role of the clown. And we can congratulate it on the fact that its business instinct remains sound and unaffected. For in the tail of its glowing article on the Honour of Ireland we find an eloquent appeal to the English Government to appoint an Irish Journalist—or two—to act as 'Eye-Witness' to the Irish troops of England, and inflame the simple Irish with the description of their deeds of valour. This original suggestion follows on the application of a Scotch Unionist Journalist in Dublin for that lucrative job—an application supported by the jobbers of the Irish Parliamentary Party, and opposed by the English Minister Tennent. Whether, with the aid of the 'Irish Times,' the Scotchman will overcome Tennent's opposition and get the envied job of 'Irish Eye-Witness' we cannot say. The moral for the mere Irish is that when a Garrison Journal opens a leading article with appeals to 'Irish Honour' there is always a demand for an English Government Job for Self or Friend concealed in the tail. The Sons of Ananias must be paid their Wage.