

# Remember PEARL HARBOR

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REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR—BUY DEFENSE BONDS

## Rev. Dr. Owen B. McGuire Lord Ashbourne

The papers of Sunday before last carried a dispatch from Berne, Switzerland, announcing the death of Lord Ashbourne (William Frederick Gibson) at his home in Compiègne, in occupied France. None of the papers that I have seen recorded the most important event in his life—that he became a Catholic at the age of 24 while he was a post-graduate student at Oxford. During the 50 years that followed his conversion, he has been not only a pious but very fervent and active Catholic.

His Catholic life has been an illustration of that singular phenomenon, a scion of the Anglo-Irish Protestant Aristocracy ("the Ascendancy" as they were very rightly called in Ireland) becoming "more Irish than the Irish themselves." His father, the first Lord Ashbourne, was a politician of the English "Liberal" party and became Lord Chancellor of Ireland, which is sufficient proof that he had no sympathy with Irish Nationalism, nor even with the Home Rule Movement as seen by the Liberals at that time. He was, however, a better man than most of his class. He was the author of "The Ashbourne Act," the first of the so-called Land Acts which recognized any rights of the tenantry further than that they could occupy the "holding" (farm) so long as they paid the rent and submitted to a raise in the rent because of their own improvements.

### The Real Cause

That view of land ownership the Irish peasant could never accept, nor even understand. And this shows the persistency of a tradition. It shows also that neither the English landlords with estates in Ireland, nor the English legislators, nor the English people themselves, ever understood the real cause that was at the root of Irish land agitation for 700 years.

In the Gaelic system which prevailed in Ireland for centuries before the "Conquest," the tenants were part-owners with the Chieftain whose rights and limitations were prescribed by code and custom. The tenant had, of course, to contribute to the up-keep of the Chieftain in various ways, even to military service. But the land on which he lived and which he tilled was his. Of that he was fully convinced, and no English law could drive that out of his head.

### BREAK WITH TRADITIONS

When in the "Conquest" the Anglo-Normans ousted the Chieftains and took their lands, they began to treat the tenantry in accordance with the Anglo-Norman feudal system then prevalent in England, foreign and alien to the Gaelic mentality and tradition. Other abuses followed, of course; but this clash of two diametrically opposite systems, of two irreconcilable mentalities, ingrained

by a tradition of centuries on both sides, was the fons et origo of them all.

I hope the reader will excuse me for this apparent digression, because it shows how completely Lord Ashbourne broke with the traditions of his class. When he became a Catholic, he became also an extreme Irish Nationalist, an enthusiast for the revival of the Irish language, President of the Gaelic League of London, in a short time a fluent Gaelic and an untiring advocate of the policy of D. P. Moran. Moran had published a book under the title "The Philosophy of Irish Ireland" that took Dublin and Ireland by storm. Its thesis was "Politics are not Nationality." We may obtain Home Rule, he reasoned, we may in a long time win Irish independence; and yet, wital, the historic Irish nation will cease to exist if we lose the language. The language enshrines our traditions, our ideas and our ideals, the thoughts we thought and the way we expressed them. If we allow all these to die, the nation will die with them. It is already dying before our eyes while we are devoting all our time and energies to politics in the English language and in an English parliament. We are becoming an English shire. That is our destiny if we don't wake up and change our ways.

### WENT WHOLE WAY

Such was the "philosophy of Irish Ireland", at least such it remains in memory thirty years after pursuing it. To advocate these ideas and spread them among the people, Moran founded a weekly journal which he called "The Leader," and Lord Ashbourne became a contributor.

Yet this young enthusiast, a Gibson, had been educated in England at Harrow, a "Public School," which in England is defined as "a school for the sons of Gentlemen"; then at Trinity College Dublin, the most Protestant and bigoted University in the United Kingdom and finished off at Oxford. Nor was a change in religion and ideas enough for him. He went the whole way to Gaelicism, in the outer man as well as in the inner. He donned the picturesque Gaelic costume; and for the past thirty years, whether in Paris, London or Dublin, he was seen walking down the street wearing a tam o'shanter hat, Irish kilts, a fraise cape tossed over his shoulders and an Irish blackthorn in his hand. Every Sunday while in Paris he joined the church procession in that costume.

He was author of several books, some written in French and others in English. He became a Catholic in 1892. In 1896 he married a French lady, member of an eminent French family, named Mabrison. Strange to say, he had chosen a Protestant for wife; but a few years after their marriage she too became a Catholic; and, like himself, a very enthusiastic and active one. For her Catholic activities, the Holy See conferred on her the Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice. They had no children.

His successor in the peerage is a nephew, son of a younger brother. He is not a Catholic.

### Mt. Morris School Honor Roll

MT. MORRIS — January Honor Roll at St. Patrick's School is as follows:

Second Grade: Paul George, Diane Barnard, Ruth Teitsworth and Mary Kathryn Winters.

Third Grade: Samuel Gulla, Daniel Meyers, Maureen Smith and Rosemary Masten.

Fourth Grade: James Reynolds, Ann Lowery, Catherine Conlon and Ruth Donovan.

Fifth Grade: Jerry Hall, and Rose Bozette.

Sixth Grade: Thomas Kane, Nancy Donovan and Ann Teitsworth.

Seventh Grade: Joan Teitsworth. Eighth Grade: Conrad Donovan and Robert Horr.

### Air-Raid Duties Taught School Boys

On their own request, boys of the 7th and 8th grades of Holy Redeemer School, went to Truck No. 6 in their neighborhood, Wednesday afternoon, to learn what they should do in the matter of putting out fires caused by incendiary bombs. The firemen were most willing to help the youngsters out in their desire to participate in the civilian defense program.

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