

AS WE SEE IT

By DAN PATRICK

On this St. Patrick's Day, Ireland's tortuous trail of rigid neutrality has led her to the brink of a crisis which, perhaps, was inevitable.

America and Britain, mobilizing for war's supreme effort—a second front—charge that their right flank is exposed to the machinations of Nazi and Jap diplomats accredited to the Irish Free State.

After Ireland spurned American "advice" to close enemy consulates, Britain countered by forbidding travel between Ireland and England. Immediately the smouldering embers of ancient enmity flamed up in a demand from Ulster that the border between the Free State and Northern Ireland be closed. Reports are now current that the Free State will soon feel the lash of economic sanctions and some quarters even predict that Allied soldiers will march in "a la Hitler."

Even those who sincerely feel that Ireland is wrong in her stand must sympathize with the dilemma of the De Valera government.

There are, of course, well-intentioned Irishmen at home and abroad who hate anything that smacks of Britain. Their memories are long and they cannot forget the persecutions of yesteryear.

Yet, the fact remains that, in this war, the Free State and British governments have worked rather harmoniously and the trade channels between a neutral country and one at war have hummed with activity. But the overwhelming evidence of Irish sympathies in this struggle lies in the fact that upwards of 300,000 Irishmen from the Free State are fighting and dying under the Union Jack. Enslaved as heroes of Britain's mighty struggle are such free Staters as Faddy Flinnane whose memory will live as long as men fly the skies he helped clear of Nazi fighters in Britain's mortal hour.

Yes, the Free State may be neutral but there is no doubt of the sympathies of her people. The price the Irish have paid for eventual freedom makes it too precious to squander away on doubtful relations with a Germany and Japan, whose governments epitomize everything a real Irishman must detest.

And all the fighting Irish aren't in the British army. The American forces have more than their share. Wasn't there a kid named Kelly who won the Congressional Medal of Honor the other day for sending forty Nazis out of the war?

Putting the matter of personal sympathies aside for a moment, what would happen were the Free State to comply with American "suggestions"? She would cease to be a neutral and the dying Luftwaffe would strike some telling blows on Eire's ill-defended cities. We can't forget that the Luftwaffe makes a specialty of hitting unprotected targets.

The Free State, then, cannot run the risk. At the same time the Allies must seal off all possible leaks in plans for the European invasion. Once the invasion gets underway, it must succeed. Churchill cannot afford to hard the British people another Gallipoli and Roosevelt couldn't risk a catastrophe that would make Pearl Harbor look like an American victory.

Despite DeValera's protestations that German and Jap agents are not sending information on Allied troop movements out of Ireland, there is every reason to believe that such is the case. Of course, these enemy agents are not being aided or even condoned by the Free State government. Nevertheless, they are in a position to send home information without the consent of the De Valera regime.

To save lives of Americans, British and the Irish Free Staters in Britain's Army and Navy, Prime Minister Churchill told Commons the other day that the purpose of the United Nations is "to isolate Great Britain from Southern Ireland and also to isolate Southern Ireland from the outer world during the critical period which is now approaching."

It seems to us that, in lieu of the continued residence of Axis agents in Ireland, this is a logical solution to a complex problem—a solution which the Irish can accept in good grace. After all it is a natural sequence to DeValera's expressed desire "to prevent the leakage through Ireland of any information which might in any way endanger British lives or the safety of Great Britain."

We hope the matter rests there and we must rely on the political sagacity of Churchill to see that it goes no further. The suggestions of our archaic liberals who will fight to the last Irishman in the American army that we invade the Free State is sheer nonsense. If such a move ever were attempted it would rank as a political defeat of the first magnitude for the United Nations.

Perhaps this wartime quarantine of the Irish Free State, despite its obvious inconveniences and hardships for the Irish people, will help drive the Axis snakes out of Ireland.

More Prayers

Major Crown of Chicago reports that his little son presented a version of the act of contrition which ran, "Oh, my God, I am partly sorry for having offended Thee." But at that, the major says, it is an improvement on the youngster who terminated his act of contrition with, "I firmly resolve to confess my sins, do penance, and to end my life. Amen."

Typical of the Times

The young lady very much of the social set volunteered for a difficult job as nurse's aid. When she returned after her first experiences, she really seemed to have enjoyed the laborious initiation given to young aides. We thought it typical that the only thing she found hard to take was the fact that they were obliged to wear white cotton stockings. This generation takes the tough things in stride and stumbles over all the easy, unimportant ones.

Only a politician thinks more of a vote than a valentine.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Little-Known Facts for Catholics

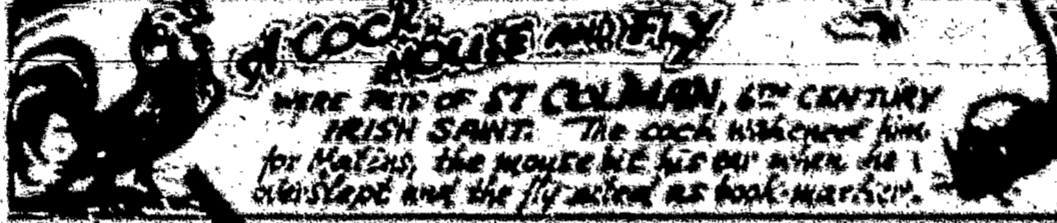
By M. J. MURRAY



EARLY LAST CENTURY CINCINNATI CITY LAW BANNED CATHOLIC CHURCHES - THE FIRST CATHEDRAL WAS BUILT OUTSIDE AND WHEN THE LAW WAS REPEALED PLACED ON ROLLERS & Hauled WITHIN



The body of ST. CLARE of the CROSS (1193-1253) IS STILL INCORRUPT. For centuries the wrappings round her body were removed annually, and pieces distributed to pilgrims; they are the only relics obtainable.



WHERE BORN OF ST. CELMANN, 6th CENTURY IRISH SAINT. The cock whiskered him for Nazis, the mouse bit his ear when he stole sleep and the fly acted as book-wormer.

Irvin Cobb's Religious Views

By HOWARD M. WOODS

Irvin Cobb, "a writer who commanded a wide following," died the other day. Because he was a prominent scribe I suppose his views on religion will be widely read. The discriminating reader will remember that Cobb was primarily a humorist and yet there is tragedy in his last thoughts of death.

He attempts to wise-crack his way past the portals of St. Peter. "When a man died with his sins let his sins die with the man," he said, expressed his philosophy of life and death. But he couldn't quite let it go at that. The inextinguishable longing of the human soul for eternal rest and happiness cannot be satisfied by a platitude. Although he denied religion with his lips it was on his mind as he approached death.

The rituals of the Christian burial service were too "pagan" and "paganish" for him. (Just why paganish rites should be objectionable to a pagan I do not know.) Those in English were apparently too brutally frank for his Americanish conscience. So he takes a back-handed slap at the Catholics by praising their Latin service which he says the parishioners do not understand anyway. Perhaps he never knew that a Catholic worthy of the name has his prayer book or missal which contains either the English translation or both the Latin and English.

Those "rolling, soporiferous periods" in the "Preface or the Dead" which he must have heard chanted sometime during his life might have given him some consolation on his death bed had he known their meaning.

"In Whom the hope of a blessed resurrection hath shone forth unto us; so that those who are saddened by the certain lot of dying may be consoled by the promise of eternal life to come. For to Thy faithful, O Lord, life is changed not taken away."

Five and Ten Years Ago

From Mar. 15, 1934, Edition. Sisters of Charity throughout the world united in thanksgiving on Mar. 12, 1934, when His Holiness Pope Pius XI canonized their Co-Foundress, Blessed Louise de Marillac.

From Mar. 15, 1935, Edition. With forty nations of the world represented and before a massive throng, His Holiness, Pope Pius was crowned with the triple tiara on St. Peter's Basilica balcony, Mar. 12, 1935, formally inaugurating his Pontificate as the 261st successor of St. Peter.

'Quiz' Corner

If the Blessed Virgin Mary never communicated, how was it possible for her to receive the sacrament of Penance?

The fact that Mary was free of all sin from the moment of her conception means that she was never a subject for Penance, which is defined as the sacrament by which sins committed after Baptism are forgiven through the Absolution of a duly authorized priest. The sacrament is necessary not only those who have fallen into serious sin after their Baptism, and since Mary was free of all sin, original or actual, there could be no sin to be removed in case.

Would it be a lie to say what is untrue to a person who has no right to know the information sought?

Yes. A lie is wrong in itself, not merely in reference to the rights of others. Others have a right to the truth. A lie is by that fact a still graver sin. But even if they have no right to say what one knows to be untrue, it is still a lie, and sinful before God.

Why is it that the priest says the words "Ete Missa est" (Depart, the Mass is finished), when he must yet recite the Last Gospel?

Formerly the Mass ended with these words, and the priest would recite the Gospel of St. John as a part of his private prayer. In 1570, however, Pope Pius V. decreed that the first chapter of St. John's Gospel be read in the Mass after the "Ete Missa est" except on certain days when another Gospel is substituted.

Does infallibility reside in the Pope alone?

No. It is also vested in an Ecumenical Council, approved by the Pope, that is, a council to which all the Bishops of the world are summoned. As in the case of the Pope alone, this infallible authority affects only matters of faith and morals, not the arguments and discussions and historical references that may be adduced to prove any given point.

Feast Days

Sunday, Mar. 19.—IV LAETARE SUNDAY.

Monday, Mar. 20.—ST. JOSEPH (Tr. from Mar. 19).

Tuesday, Mar. 21.—ST. BENEDICT ABBOT.

Wednesday, Mar. 22.—ST. CATHARINE OF SWEDEN.

Thursday, Mar. 23.—ST. VICTORIAN AND OTHER MARTYRS.

Friday, Mar. 24.—ST. GABRIEL ARCHANGEL.

Saturday, Mar. 25.—ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

A SONG OF IRELAND

Library Signature: By Rev. Benedict Egan

This Man Was Ireland, a poem by Robert Farren. (Ireland and War). After a first flurry of attention, not such notice is being taken of this book. But it is safe to say that it has the greatest which will keep it alive beyond our generation. It has the same deathless qualities that helped the Iliad and The City and to surmount the wreck of empire and epochs.

This Man Was Ireland is an epic of the life of St. Columba, who is also called St. Columcille (the "church-lover"). The period it covers is the beginning of the Golden Age of Gaelic Christianity, right after St. Patrick's death. Its subject is one of the chief glories of Ireland and Scotland, the abbot Columcille and his community of monks. Its source is chiefly the account by the famous chronicler Adamnan to whom the author acknowledges his debt in a lovely dedication at the beginning of the book. If the reader does not already know of the deeds and judgments and miracles of Columcille, he will find the poem hard. He should first crack the shell of the story, and then the poem will be much more enjoyable.

BRIDGE THE GAP

The story of St. Columba is simply told by Patrick Cahill in his book, The Legend of St. Columba, which is a most attractive book to help bridge the gap between the old chronicles and modern readers. There is also a fine four-page summary of Columba's life in the June volume of the Butler-Thurston Lives of the Saints (June 9), in which the main facts are these:

He was born about the year 521, in County Donegal, of the royal family of that Niall of the Yellow Hound whose raiders had carried the young Briton Patrick into captivity. Baptized, but under a tutor's care, he became a great scholar and student of holy lore, finally determining to become a priest. After ordination he spent fifteen years going about Ireland preaching and founding many monasteries of which the chief were those of Derry, Durrow, and the famous Kells. Having serious grievances against King Druimold, he is reputed to have instigated a war between his clan and the king's, in which 3000 of the king's clan were slain. At a synod in County Meath a vote of censure was passed upon him and only the intervention of St. Brendan saved him from excommunication. He determined to expiate his offense by exiling himself from his country, and attempting to win as many souls for Christ as had been lost in the battle.

Columba embarked with twelve companions in 563, and on Pentecost eve landed on the little island of Iona off the western Scottish shore. There he erected a monastery which was to have a tremendous influence in the British Isles and even on the Continent. The rest of his life was spent in the evangelization of Scotland. What Patrick had been to Ireland, Columba became to Scotland. He died in 597, the very year that Asaiah and his monks came to convert the English.

A NORME LITERATURE

Robert Farren is a Dublin man who has already made a considerable reputation for himself as a poet. Up to now he had produced two volumes of verse, Throwing Feet, and Stone's Wall Aunty, both of which gave evidence of most unusual poetic talents. These books may well be regarded as his novitiate for the full-fledged job he set himself in This Man Was Ireland. Here he set himself the task of recasting the accounts and legends of St. Columba into poetic forms which are themselves Irish of the Irish. For you must know that the Irish have a literature which is fully as noble and beautiful as anything in European literature. In this poem Robert Farren uses its forms and metres and metaphors to tell the people of our time about Ireland's most famous man who was a light for the world in a time as dark and despairing as ours.

The man Columba stands out towering and favorable in this grand poem. By the magic of word and phrase, Farren evokes in the flesh and blood the portrait of Columba left by his chronicler Adamnan: "He had the face of an angel; he was of an excellent nature, polished in speech, holy in deed, great in counsel. He never let a single hour pass without engaging in prayer or reading or writing or some other occupation. . . . And, in the midst of his toils, he appeared loving unto all, serene and holy, rejoicing in the joy of the Holy Spirit in his inmost heart."

The poetry itself is fascinating. It is not in one continuous sequence or in one metre. All together there are 77 poems, most of them in different metres and stanza formations, admirably chosen to correspond with the matter being told. Since rhythm is a modern device, the author does not use them, but conveys the primitive color of his subject by alliteration and assonance, by vigorous rhythms that demand chanting out loud, and by a vocabulary of words that sing and dance and sparkle with light. A few years back, a coterie of critics hailed James Joyce's Ulysses and Finnegans Wake as revolutionary developments in literary technique. Most people were inclined to think it was revolution into decay. I ask these critics for the records that I may give it to Robert Farren, whose new poems is surely an revolutionary and challenging as the Joyce novels, but in the direction of life and energy and the faith that lights all our living.

If poetry which is not mere jangling and soft song has a meaning for you, then This Man Was Ireland will give you continuous delight and a new kind of reading experience.

If Mrs. Singer Had Prevailed

I have often wondered if Margaret Singer and her tribe realize that they are being despised by millions of allies, soldiers and sailors, the greater part of whom would never have been born if her teaching had been followed. . . . From soldier's letter in Labor London.