

Church & State

A Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World



Israeli Army T-Shirts

Corruption And Catholicism?

Evolution and Darwin

Dabney on Slavery

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Corruption And Catholicism

It was the destiny of the English to civilise the Irish by subjecting the loose Christianity of the Gaels to Roman discipline. That was why Henry II set out to conquer Ireland under a mandate from the Pope. But, 400 years later, the Irish still had not been disciplined into Roman order, and the English who had undertaken the task had fallen into Irish ways.

So there was a fresh start. It then became the destiny of English Protestantism to civilise the un-Romanised Irish by de-Roman Catholicising them. The great difficulty about that lay in the fact that England had failed to Roman Catholicise them. The Irish could not be de-programmed because they had not been programmed.

English Reformationist activity in Ireland did what English Romanist activity in Ireland had failed to do. It brought the Irish within the Roman sphere. The Irish certainly changed under the English Reformationist regime, also known as the Penal Laws.

England as the secular arm of the Papacy failed to Romanise the Irish. But, when England rejected the Papacy, it treated the Irish as if they were what England had been. It set out to suppress the Irish as intransigent Romanists, and eventually made them so.

When we had to change or be exterminated, the mild discipline of Rome was the farthest we could go.

And that is why we are corrupt.

So says the *Irish Times* corruption expert Elaine Byrne:

"A positive correlation exists between Catholicism and corruption. Political science literature and academic research suggests that the more Protestant the population, the less corrupt the country... Catholicism is a hierarchical religion. The Catholic Church places emphasis on the inherent weakness and shortcomings of human beings, their inability to escape sin and the consequent need for the church to be forgiving and protecting... The clergy, as mediators between mankind and God, facilitate, via confession, the possibility to be absolved of guilt. As laid down by the Council of Trent, priests have this authority "because that our Lord Jesus Christ, when about to ascend from earth to heaven, left priests his own vicars, as presidents and judges... in order that, in accordance with the power of the keys, they may pronounce the sentence of forgiveness or retention of sins"... On the other hand, the egalitarian organisation typical of Protestantism believes that individuals are personally responsible for avoiding sin rather than relying upon the institutional forgiveness of the church. Protestant culture is less understanding when lapses from grace occur.

"The institutionalisation of virtue and the compulsion to cast out the wicked is underpinned more explicitly.

"The implication therefore is that Protestants are less inclined to commit a sin because they do not have the same faculty of achieving pardon as Catholics do.

"Diverging attitudes towards loyalty to the state were born when Martin Luther posted his *Ninety-Five Theses* to the Wittemberg Castle Church door in Germany. The Reformation was initiated in response to the growing concerns of corruption regarding the sale of indulgences and church positions by the church hierarchy.

"The separation between church and state tends to be further pronounced in Protestant societies which instead promote an

autonomous civil society...

"Academic papers and datasets... [etc.]

"When I presented these facts at a Belfast university conference a few years ago, I was intercepted by an indignant student immediately afterwards.

"I had let down my faith, the men of 1916 and all those going back to 1798 and an act of contrition at once demanded..." (*Will 10% More Protestants Lead To Less Corruption*, Irish Times, March 3; supporting letters appeared on April 7 and 8).

When this magazine was founded for the purpose of eroding the social power of the Catholic Church in the early 1970s, the support it got from either middle class Catholics who were private sceptics or from the privileged Protestant community in the Republic, was negligible. The excessive influence of the Church fell away a generation ago. Professor Foster in his last, contemptuous, book, *The Luck Of The Irish*, says that Ireland has become Protestant. It hasn't. It is only lapsed Catholic. It knows little of Protestantism, beyond a few external facts. It knows nothing of the spirit of Protestantism, which set out to destroy the Roman Church and tear up its roots, because it did not itself engage in any conflict with the Roman Church in its prime. It is told fairy stories and thinks itself clever when it swallows them.

The doctrine of separation of Church and State is not Protestant, but Catholic. The fact of separation of Church and State, which was something new in the world, pre-dated the Reformation by many centuries. Christianity became a world force when it became the ideology of the Roman Empire. As the secular power of the Empire declined, the influence of its ideological authority increased, until at the end the Church of Rome was, as Thomas Hobbes put it, the ghost of the Roman Empire dancing on its grave. But, before that, there was a long epoch in which Pope and Emperor were rival authorities, and political parties formed on each were active in the centre of European civilisation (South Germany and North Italy) under the titles *Guelph* and *Ghibbiline*. The subsequent history of Europe, and of the world as influenced by Europe, was marked by that division.

TOP OF THE WORLD, MA!

The most powerful man in the world is black but those in the know say God is still white. A coterie recites that might is right so why shouldn't a black man take the flak? Millions of dollars gets you the White House and each black heart flutters a little more, that skin colour will bring them rights galore.

But rights have already been sold, ask Faust. Why reject a black man with ambition? Ask Iran who develops nuclear fission or Afghanistan who spits derision. Will Gaza be free from demolition? Would singer Paul Robeson be delighted or say that worker's lives are still blighted?

Wilson John Haire. 22nd January, 2009

The Reformation, in the place that counted, ended the division of Church and State. Henry VIII was Pope and Emperor in one. He was a Pope who laid down the law and an Emperor who decided what should be believed.

In parts of Europe there was a kind of rebellion of belief that became Protestantism. In England there was no rebellion of belief. When there was a hint of it with Wycliffe the state curbed it. When England broke with Rome it had nothing to do with Luther. Henry would have been happy to make war on Lutherism, and he actually prepared to do so. He broke with Rome purely for reasons of state, making the church in England into a department of state when doing so.

If he had had any disagreement with Rome about religion, apart from who should run the show, he could have proclaimed his own body of beliefs and the populace would have believed them to order—other than those who refused to repudiate the Pope and had to be destroyed. But he had no new religion to set up in place of the old. He tried to keep on the old, with himself as Pope, but it didn't work. Then he tampered with it piecemeal but never got close to shaping a new system.

The people would believe whatever they were authoritative-ly told to believe. The problem was that the state did not tell them something definite and stick to it. And it was through that messing about that fierce theological feuding was generated in the body of English society which led a century later to a Civil War to determine which theology should be the theocracy.

Until the 1688 *coup d'etat* different varieties of positive Protestantism were in dispute over which beliefs and forms of organisation should be compulsory in the combined State/Church. After 1688 a kind of settlement was made by disembowelling Protestantism and establishing mere anti-Catholicism in its place. A sceptical gentry—some of them Bishops—had emerged from the Protestant theological feuding and they they had taken control of the state. They set up the lowest common factor of Protestantism (hatred of the Pope) as the qualification for availing of rights established by a Toleration Act. The Toleration was essentially an Act for allowing Anti-Catholics to unite.

The Protestant Archbishop of Dublin—who like Elaine Byrne had read about the Council of Trent—published a diatribe a couple of years after 1688, which was a Manifesto for the system of Penal Laws.

The Protestantism of coherent belief—Calvinism, Zwingli-ism, Knoxism—was subverted by the Protestant settlement on which the British state was based. Loyalty to a corrupt state became the operative public virtue.

If members of the ruling stratum—Anglicans—sinned less, it was because the idea of sin was whittled away, and it would not be very much of an exaggeration to say that its place was taken by a moral obligation to do what you wanted to do.

The earnest beliefs of the sects of Protestantism were necessary to government by the sceptical gentry—the populace emerging from the 17th century could not live in scepticism—but it was also necessary to curb them. Naive, innocent conscience, so much admired by Elaine Byrne—what we now call fundamentalism—was excluded from the corridors of power but was allowed to exercise itself freely in the private sphere—in business of one sort or another. And there was little business in 18th century England that was unconnected with slavery and plunder. And, under the sedative influence of

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Church & State

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the sceptical gentry who monopolised the power of state, naive Puritan conscience soon became casuistical.

Pockets of simple belief, within which life was lived in accordance with belief, survived into the 20th century, and more in North East Ireland than in Britain. But it was not in the medium of simple belief that the British state was made functional after a century and a half of earnest Protestantism.

The British state which made Protestantism a dominant force in world affairs operated from the start in a political medium of duplicity, manipulation of the beliefs of others where possible and destruction of them where not, and corruption. And the greatest of these was corruption.

Liberalism and Democracy have different sources and fundamentalist Protestantism was not the source of either. Britain was constructed as a liberal state after 1688 and two centuries later it was felt safe to entrust the liberal state to a democratic franchise.

Liberalism is not a principle. It overrides principle. It came about in England through the activity of a ruling stratum of gentry dedicated to statecraft for the purpose of increasing the power of the British state in the world. Its only principle is expediency.

The expedient by which the small British ruling stratum recruited talent to itself from the swathes of Protestant belief over which it ruled was corruption. Walpole's England, the England of the First Prime Minister who governed continuously for more than twenty years, was a great mechanism of corruption. It operated on the principle that principle could be bought off. If that had proved not to be the case, Liberal England would not have happened.

It was not until a century and a half after 1688 that any serious pretence was made of governing without corruption—without the oiling of the mechanism of state by extensive Government patronage in civil society. It was then pretended that there was an objective system of meritocracy that operated independently of Government influence.

The Protestantism of Elaine Byrne's vision was thoroughly mashed up in the course of that development.

The areas where an authentic Protestantism of belief was not taken in hand by a state and manipulated for purposes of state, what did they count for in

shaping the world? Scotland believed, but it always failed in its conflict with English opportunism, and in the end it voluntarily put itself under England to become a secondary partner in a kind of power which it failed to establish for itself. In Geneva Calvinism burnt itself out. The less hectic Protestantism of Luther settled down as a form of Quietism after Luther helped to suppress the Peasants' Revolt which had expected him to support it. It was suitable as the culture of quiet backwaters. But quiet backwaters had little survival value in a Europe dominated by the militarism of the great states—the British, French and Russian Empires. It was Prussia, made into a Great Power by a King dedicated to statecraft, who did not even pretend to believe even in order to manipulate the beliefs of others, that stopped the petty German backwaters from being a battlefield for others, and from being taken over by those others.

It is said that many of the stars that we see ceased to exist long before we saw them. And such is the case with Elaine Byrne's vision of Protestantism.

It was not that Protestantism of her belated vision that produced the world in which we have to live, either its capitalism or its liberalism or its demo-

cracy. It was the essentially disbelieving Protestantism of the English ruling stratum, which became comprehensively casuistical three centuries ago, manipulated the beliefs of believers, and wore them threadbare.

Perhaps Elaine Byrne wishes that the kind of Protestantism that she sees in vision had survived, and had prevented the British Empire, and that Europe was a series of Amish communities? As an *Irish Times* columnist!!

As to Confession: it was done away with because under the system of the English Reformation the state became the keeper of the conscience of all who serve it. Its agents committed atrocities for it all over the world and then came home to live lives of quiet refinement in beautiful villages in the Shires (and no doubt in Ireland). How much better this is than confessing the things that you have done and then being absolved of guilt. There is blanket absolution in advance. But what has it to do with personal responsibility?

Query: Casuistry? What is that? It is the way in which the British Foreign Secretary—a humanitarian Socialist, what else?—deals with torture.

Catherine Dunlop

Review: *Englishness and Empire 1939-1965*, by Wendy Webster, Oxford University Press, 2005

Severed Heads And Academia

Church and State (No. 94) had on its cover a photo first published in the *Daily Worker* in 1952 of a British marine holding the heads of insurgents in Malaya. This photograph is mentioned by Wendy Webster, who contrasts it to the message of many colonial war films and news stories in Britain at the time, which are the subject of the book.

This is an academic study of the way the English and the Empire were presented to the public and to the world between 1939 and 1965, mainly in films, with an epilogue on Thatcher recreating the best days of Churchill and Empire in the Falklands. The author describes the messages intended by the films, and presents the reality omitted by the film representation.

War Propaganda

War films made during the Second World War put forward the image of a

"people's war", "emphasising the common people and unity across differences of class and gender", to bring together into the war effort men and women of all classes; in the same way, to encourage inhabitants of the Empire, Indians in particular, to join the war effort, the Empire was presented as a "people's empire" (the author's own term) the members of which "pulled together across differences of race and ethnicity". Notions of welfare, development and egalitarianism were put forward, Indians were shown as brave and loyal sons of Empire; at the same time the RAF was called in to machine gun from the air demonstrators protesting at the arrest of the leaders of the Quit India movement, and an emergency Whipping Act was introduced in Parliament to punish rioters.

These facts were known and the

British were seen by some Americans in particular as oppressive imperialists; the American journalist who did the commentary for Churchill's funeral told the public assembled in London: "*Before Winston Churchill, America saw Britain as a selfish imperial taskmaster..., the British as rapacious, insolent and domineering*".

A German film of the time, *Ohm Kruger*, depicts British atrocities during the Boer War. The 1943 British film, *The Life And Death Of Colonel Blimp* was made to counter this negative perception. It does it by mentioning only German atrocities, ignoring the events of the Boer War and other events that would have been present in American and German minds. The gallant British are represented by the hero, Colonel Blimp, a bumbling old fool with a heroic military past, who sees he must abandon traditional British high moral values in today's war.

J.B. Priestley in his war time radio broadcasts extolled "*the kindness of England, of Britain, of the wide Empire forever reaching out to new expressions of freedom*".

The only full-length feature film financed by the Ministry of Information during the war, *49th Parallel* (1941), has Nazi survivors of their torpedoed U-boat off the coast of Canada trying to get to neutral America, across the 49th parallel; they encounter the whole spectrum of ethnically diverse Canada and are equally beastly to all, including Lesley Howard, the English Canadian, who is soft-natured but strong when roused. An Inuit character appears, to represent the "*people's empire*" where the diverse races are equally valued, only to be maltreated by the Nazi group, demonstrating their racism.

Post-War Propaganda

Both the War and the People's Empire were short-lived constructions. After 1945, films went back to showing the War as the business of Public School-educated gentlemen, with officers as heroes and other ranks as comic figures; the war also became an exclusively British affair, the only imperial figures being white Australians, Canadians or New Zealanders, with very occasionally in the background a Black Caribbean, an Indian or an African; white women disappear from view. The Empire was again peopled by childlike savages as in the films made in the thirties, films which, when, shown in India, provoked outrage and riots so that they were eventually no longer exported to the sub-continent.

Films set in Africa again showed the white man's civilising mission; in *Where No Vultures Fly* (1951) the hero establishes a nature reserve, against great

difficulties; Webster quotes another academic on this subject: "*In establishing the game parks of Africa, European law turned indigenous human inhabitants of the "nature reserves" into poachers, invaders in their own terrain, or into part of the wildlife.*" She then says: "*These are three recurrent images of Africans in Where no vultures fly*".

The colonial wars of the fifties made the civilising mission harder to present in film, but not impossible, if only as nostalgia. *North West Frontier* (1959) is set in India in 1905; the British hero is a model of amiable toughness and unprecedented urbanity; his lusty rendering of the Eton boating song is one of the *leitmotiv* of the film; the other hero of the film is the *Empress of India*, the steam locomotive fondly known to her Indian driver as "*Victoria*". The characters come across a Muslim massacre of Hindus; the baddy, Van Leyden, a man of mixed parentage who will eventually be killed by the hero, remains a stern critic of the British, attributing the massacre to their policy of setting Muslim against Hindu—dividing in order to rule. The hero has the last word: "*Have a good look and see what happens when the British aren't around to keep order*".

The last chapter, *Elegies for Empire: the Romance of Manliness*, points out that the most famous play of the Angry Young Man movement *Look Back In Anger* attacks the present for failing to live up to the Imperial past. The hero sympathises with his father-in-law, who is a retired Colonel, repatriated from India and returned to a diminished world. The film made of the play added an Indian character, so that the hero could establish his anti-racist credentials.

Romancing The Past

The book *Englishness And Empire* received a prize from the International Association for Media and History in 2007, the first year the prize was awarded. In 2009 it was jointly awarded to a German scholar for a book on the role of radio in rebuilding everyday domestic normality after total war: *Voices In Ruins—West German Radio Across The 1945 Divide*.

BBC2 had a programme on 27th December 2008 on British War Films, *War Stories*, which I saw. The BBC website says blandly of the films: They were a tool of government propaganda during WW2, but have become celebrated icons of British culture. The talking heads invited to comment on *War Stories* were not academic like Wendy Webster but personalities who were either ignorant or could be relied on not to make embarrassing remarks about the

distance between propaganda and reality. One example: the film *Frieda*, thankfully forgotten by all, although remembered in the *Observer Film Supplement* (22.3.09) by the film critic Philip French, shows a German woman with her English husband at the cinema after the showing of newsreel of Belsen. She says, about the camps: "*Yes, I knew, we all knew!*" (a propaganda, rather than a factual, statement). Television commentary by a journalist: "*Oh yes, I had German girlfriends, but I wouldn't have married one of them!*"

So a programme about war propaganda happily perpetuates the propaganda of the time. The BBC 4 version of this programme did at least ask the question *How accurate are films of wartime?*

The further away you go from mass culture the more of the truth you can reveal. The book under review is as far removed from mass culture as you could wish; it explains clearly the purposes of war propaganda and the presence of political agendas in popular films and plays. It does so in a dispassionate manner, with the occasional hint of irony. The author seems to take it for granted that the British have to present themselves in a positive light and other peoples in a negative light: she uses pleasant words such as "*narratives*" and "*myths*" to describe this, whereas words like 'preposterous fabrications' arise in the reader's mind when reading the book, and when watching the films analysed.

THE VIEW FROM ALBION HEIGHTS

Big thugs usually churn out little thugs.
You may murder abroad but not at home
because the world out there is yours to roam.
Kill, Kill, then walk the peace park feeling smug.
The papers write each day about our boys:
If you want to be a hero just die,
don't look back, history is a lie,
thinking Victorian Empire destroys.
It is peace now and peace is the future.
When we invade your country give us peace.
Elect yourselves a puppet, sign the lease.
But if hungry for meat try our butcher.
The Armed Forces have adopted the dove.
Those who reject us will die from our love.

Wilson John Haire.
3rd March, 2009

Pat Muldowney

Hidden History: War Criminals Of Britain And Ireland
No. 4: Britain's *Operation Progress* to put down the independence movement in Kenya

Obama And The Kenya Terror

The election of Barack Hussein Obama, who shares a middle name with Saddam, prompted some curiosity about his origins. Obama inherited his middle name from his Kenyan grandfather who, while serving in the British Army in the Far East in the 1940s, adopted this name when he converted from Catholicism to Islam.

Barack's father had abandoned the Islamic faith before he met, married and divorced Barack's American mother while he was a student in the USA in the early 1960's. The family history is described in President Obama's book, *Dreams From My Father*.

The President's father and grandfather came into conflict with the British colonial regime in Kenya. Grandfather Hussein Onyango Obama's description in his "*Native Registration*" ID card says "*Complexion: Dark; Nose: Flat; Mouth: Large; Hair: Curly; Teeth: Six missing ...*"

The Colonial Commissioner of Kenyan police at the time was Irishman Michael Sylvester O'Rorke. According to his Times obituary of 5th May 1981, Brigadier O'Rorke, CBE:

"was born in 1895 and educated at Blackrock College, Dublin. He served in the First World War with the RFC and from 1919 to 1922 was a District Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary. From 1922 to 1925 he served with the Palestine Gendarmerie and from 1925 to 1941 was a District Superintendent with the Palestine Police. During the Second World War he served as a brigadier in North Africa, the Middle East, and in North-West Europe and was appointed OBE (Mil) in 1944. After the war he was Inspector-General of the Special Police Corps in Germany from 1946 to 1950. From 1950 to 1954 he was Commissioner of Police in Kenya. He was appointed CBE (Civil) in 1952. From 1958 to 1963 he was Commissioner of the St John Ambulance Brigade in Kenya, and was appointed a CStJ."

The Obituary does not say where O'Rorke's 1919-22 RIC service took place. But compare grandfather Obama's police description with the famous description in Dan Breen's *Wanted For Murder* poster: "*Bronzed complexion, ...sulky bulldog appearance, looks rather like a blacksmith coming from work, wears cap pulled down over face*".

President Obama reports in his book that one white employer declared that his grandfather was "*found to be unsuitable and certainly not worth 60 shillings a month*". It was a white employer who denounced him to the British authorities in Kenya, leading to two years' imprisonment and torture (1949-51), ten years before President Obama was born. The torture of ex-serviceman Onyango Obama was described in various newspaper reports recently. A white policeman, Duncan McPherson, told Barbara Castle that conditions in some detention camps were "*worse, far worse, than anything I experienced in my 4? years as a prisoner of the Japanese*".

During the Mau Mau insurgency in Kenya of 1952-59, it is said that hundreds of thousands of Africans were imprisoned, 19,000 hanged, up to 50,000 killed—the latter figures come nowhere near the truth: it is possible that a third of a million blacks were killed. On the other hand 23 white settlers were killed by the insurgents. The British colonial rulers collaborated with ruthless white paramilitary terror-gangs.

In 2005, two books were published which expose the secret history of the British terror: David Anderson, *Histories Of The Hanged: Britain's Dirty War In Kenya And The End of Empire*, and Caroline Elkins, *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End Of Empire In Kenya*. The latter describes sexual violence and mutilation using "*castration pliers*", an instrument devised to crush men's testicles.

The main African peoples of the area are Masai, Kikuyu, and the Luo people to which the Obamas belonged. This part of Africa had been under the nominal control of the Arab Sultan of Zanzibar. It came under British control around 1890. There followed massive land seizures and re-location of the natives in reservations from which forced labour (slave labour, in effect) was drawn to operate white ranches and to build a railway crucial for dominance of the area. Under Winston Churchill bomber planes were used to put down resistance from the reservations or African concentration camps.

The Kikuyu-based Mau Mau rebellion was defeated with extreme brutality. Nominal independence was granted in 1963, but western control of

land, resources and capital persists. The most fertile lands are kept in white hands, and are used to produce delicacies for the British and Irish markets.

Indymedia Blog On Kenya

(author not known):

In Kenya's white minority Legislative Council on 7th May 1953, brutal treatment was urged to put down an uprising by the Kenya Land and Freedom Army, popularly known as the Mau Mau. By May 1953 over 100,000 Kikuyu tribes-people had been deported from their homes and transferred to tribal reserves "*a place many of them hardly knew*". In addition, transit camps were established without water, food or sanitation, in which thousands languished for months.

The demand was summed up by a Major Keyser:

"The Kikuyu tribe is going to suffer very greatly by the congestion that is going to take place in the reserves, by the lack of food that is going to take place in the reserves, by the amount of strife that is going to take place in the reserves, and all I can say... is that they brought it on themselves and unless they are going to suffer very considerably, they will not see the advantage of putting down this rebellion and of supporting the government."

The rebellion took place after 90% of the 1.5 million Kikuyu took an oath for land and freedom. While the military side of the rebellion was put down by 1954, it took another six years of brutality to put down the 1,000,000 Kikuyu who remained defiant. After that, Britain thought Kenya ready for independence.

Captain Buckley [retired, who campaigns for the service of British soldiers in Britain's wars to be memorialised and helped to establish the strangely-titled Mayo Peace Park] will be keen to include Mayo men who might have died for the British Empire in Kenya. If I find any in the excellent book *Imperial Reckoning - the Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya by Caroline Elkins*, I will be sure to bring them to his attention.

There are a few already who sound almost Irish, though I don't know how keen most Irish people would be to claim them. For instance there is the Kenyan Minister for Defense, Jack Cusack, who said approvingly of forced labour gangs: "*We are slave traders and the employment of our slaves are, in this instance, by the Public Works Department*".

The tribal reserves became saturated by the deportations, leading a District Commissioner, Desmond O'Hagan, to

plead for a halt, a "temporary" one. He estimated that 20-30,000 had been returned to each Kikuyu district: "It is certain that the native land cannot absorb all those who have returned".

Then there is the systematic torture in the prison camps, that held thousands. This involved castration as well as amputation, together with systematic beatings of one kind or another. It went on for years and is summarised well at:

<http://www.smokebox.net/archives/what/morgan605.html>

Here is a section partly on a definite Irishman **Terence Gavaghan**, still alive and in London apparently:

"Monkey Johnson brought in one Terence Gavaghan, a young district officer to work with Cowan. They implemented the Dilution Technique as part of a more calculated effort called "Operation Progress" at the camp in Mwea. Gavaghan, an Irish Kenyan settler, was nicknamed "Karuga Ndua" (Big Trouble) by the detainees. Here's Gavaghan's own description of Operation Progress at work: "A dozen or so men in their twenties and thirties were half running at the level bent-knee gait of rickshaw pullers following an elliptical path in single file around the hump in the grass. They carried galvanized iron buckets filled with mud and stones on woven grass circlets placed on their shaven heads, gripped at the rim by each hand in turn, or by both if the bucket started to slip. They were expressionless and made no attempt to cast down their buckets or run out of the ring in which they were enclosed. This was a long practised form of punishment know as 'bucket fatigue'. It was visually brutal and degrading but was held to be both necessary and effective." Another survivor recalls the Big Troublemaker as "yelling at us as we hung by our feet to confess". Mwea indeed lived up to its reputation as "hell on earth".

"Caroline Elkins tells of Monkey Johnson visiting Terence Gavaghan in 1957, when he was hospitalized after a squash-playing accident at a whites-only hotel, and giving him a copy of Phillip Mason's "The Men Who Ruled India" as a get-well gift. Operation Progress, by its relentless enforcement, either killed prisoners or exacted their retractions as rebels. The authorities, much like the ones we have today, debated the parameters of the sadism they had unleashed by differentiating between "compelling force" and "punitive force". After all, Evelyn Baring himself had issued the "Governor's Directive on Beating Up" back in 1953. If all of this has a familiar ring to it, it's because this process of doublespeak, legalistic mumbo-jumbo and downright lying was not invented a little over a year ago, when the Iraq

prison scandal made headlines worldwide. Operation Progress marked the beginning of the end of the Mau Mau resistance.

"The British sought not to restore the old order necessarily, but rather to develop a new one which supported their long-term interests, one that could be perceived as different, but in fact had many of the same base characteristics and features of its predecessor. The immediate goal of the British was to break the back of the Mau Mau insurgency, fostering the belief amongst Africans that the pursuit of revolution was a doomed enterprise. Thus the brutality of the incarceration and screening processes, which were designed to spread fear and doubt amongst would-be Mau Mau adherents and to coerce those captured and already on the Mau Mau side to renege on their allegiances."

Gavaghan is the kind of Irish chap

that Buckley might include in his memorial, if Gavaghan is from Mayo, and had he been deservedly shot as a war criminal.

Elkins makes the interesting point that Gavaghan's "ethnic background" might have made him "someone who, in an embarrassing situation, could be sacrificed". This made him the "perfect person" to spearhead the torture regime in Kenya. The British don't do torture, foreigners do it, on their behalf if necessary.

Read: **Imperial Reckoning, by Caroline Elkins, Henry Holt and Company, 2005**

How a society warped by racism can descend into casual inhumanity.

It will shock even those who think they have assumed the worst about Europe's era of control in Africa.

(See: *The Irish in Foreign Armies : REMEMBRANCE* at <http://www.indymedia.ie/article/89339>)

Israel War Crimes Report

Sky and the BBC have picked up on a *Haaretz* story about a current vogue amongst Israeli soldiers to have T-shirts printed up with their own captions, which relate to the Gaza War of Dember 2008.

Some of the motifs are 'jokey' such as that printed for a platoon of Israeli snipers which depicts an armed Palestinian pregnant women caught in the crosshairs of a rifle, with the caption in



English: "1 shot 2 kills". Another depicts a child carrying a gun also in the centre of a target. "The smaller, the harder", read the words on the t-shirt. According to a soldier interviewed by the newspaper, the message has a double meaning: "It's a kid, so you've got a little more of a problem, morally and also the target is smaller."

Another shows an Israeli soldier blowing up a mosque and reads "Only God forgives". Yet another T-shirt design shows a dead Palestinian baby and the words "Better use Durex" (condoms). Another caption was: "Won't chill until I confirm a kill". One design shows a Palestinian mother weeping next to her dead baby's grave, also in the crosshairs of a rifle.



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Daniel O'Connell

"HAD HE not belonged to a prescribed race, been born in a semi-barbarous state of society, been blinded by the fallacies of an educational system which was based upon Popish theology; had not his intellect been subsequently narrowed by the influence of legal practice, and the original coarseness of his feelings been aggravated by the habits of a criminal lawyer and a mob-rotator, he might have attained to enviable eminence, legitimate power, and enduring fame." (*The Times*, London obituary on the death of Daniel O'Connell, 24th May, 1847).

He might even have become an English gentleman!

Seán Garland

A support group set up to oppose the extradition of former Official IRA leader Seán Garland to the United States is chaired by **Chris Hudson**, a Minister with the Presbyterian Church in south Belfast.

Reverend Hudson, was a former Trade Union official with the Communications Workers' Union and founder member of the Peace Train organisation 20 years ago.

Former Workers' Party chief Tomás MacGiolla has joined the support group as Secretary. Mr MacGiolla, a former TD and Dublin Lord Mayor, was President of Sinn Féin in the 1960s and 1970s before becoming the first leader of the Workers' Party.

The US alleges Mr. Garland has been involved in a major counterfeiting operation involving North Korea and the Russian mafia since the early 1990s. Now in his 70s and living in Co Meath, Mr. Garland is on bail and due to appear again in court in May.

Civilisation?

"We are entering into a period in which the external trappings of the civilisation which we have known will disappear, perhaps in places in violence and disorder. We should not repine too much. External trappings are no more

than external trappings. What should be remembered is that, just as every civilisation dies, there is a new civilisation waiting to be born." (The late Bob Santamaria, Australia's greatest Catholic lay thinker).

Letter which appeared in the "Irish Examiner" (16.1.2009) to columnist, Fergus Finlay who is also Chief Executive of Barnardos. No reply has appeared.

"I have no wish to add to the current preoccupation of the media with the clerical abuse of children but I feel someone should tell Fergus Finlay he is totally out of touch with reality in his venomous attack on the bishop of Cloyne (January 6).

Mr Finlay states: "*Our Children, Our Church* is the name of the document that outlines the Catholic Church's procedures and structures when it comes to child protection."

Sadly, he is quite out of touch (as well as out of date) with everything he writes about this document. From the day it was launched in October 2006, it has been criticised, cut to pieces, rubbished and finally sent for recycling by the bishops who authorised it.

Yet in spite of this, Mr Finlay refers to it on five different occasions as if it were the revealed word of God. Would some kind soul bin all of Mr Finlay's column?

I note he is described as the "*chief executive of Barnardos*"—a title that reminds the old folk among us of the evil practice of proselytisers who placed vulnerable Catholic children in "Birds' Nests" to make good Protestants out of them.

Are we seeing a resurgence of this anti-Catholic hatred in Fergus Finlay's column?

Elsewhere you tell us "no one can oblige him (Bishop Magee) to resign..."

Did you or Fergus Finlay ever hear of the Pope? " **Fr. James Good, Cork**

Charles, the Prince of Wales, presented his new wife, Camilla Parker-Bowles to Benedict XVI for the first

time in April. In turn he received a gift from the Pope: a "luxury facsimile" of the 1530 appeal by English peers to Pope Clement VII asking for the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon.

It was intended as a gesture to help heal five centuries of schism between Rome and the Church of England. It was also a reminder of the causes of the rift and of the Vatican's stern views on divorce.

The Prince met John Paul II at the Vatican in 1985, together with his late wife, Diana. However, he has not had an audience at the Vatican since his divorce from Diana in 1996, her subsequent death and his remarriage to Ms Parker-Bowles.

Charles and Camilla are Anglicans. However, the Duchess's former husband, Andrew Parker Bowles, was a Catholic, and they brought up their children as Catholics.

The appeal on Henry VIII's behalf is a key document in the history of the Reformation.

It says that the King, who was determined to marry Anne Boleyn, was "*ready to take any decision in order to achieve his aim... and never ceased to put pressure on Rome*". The parchment is one of several priceless documents being reproduced by Scrinium, a Vatican-linked specialist publisher based in Venice.

"If all's going well, you obviously haven't a clue about what's going on"

"NOBEL PRIZE winning poet **Seamus Heaney** has spoken of how he believes in living with a Christian ethos but not in life after death. Speaking on the Marian Finucane show on Saturday, [11.4.2009] Heaney said he believed that extinction came after death." (*Irish Catholic*, 16.4.2009).

Asked by Marian Finucane if he didn't believe in redemption like so many others at Easter time he said:

"I believe in redemption, I believe in faith in this life. The Christian message is about faith in this life, it is about redeeming and being redeemed. The message is one thing, the doctrine at this stage is not as practised, not as binding on the general whole Church itself. Apart from the Curia I suppose, those entrusted with the Magisterium, the teaching of the Church, I think that clergymen, nuns, the official Church is much less dogma bound than it once was. And I think that the faithful, so to speak, are less orthodox, certainly than they were."

He added: "Who on earth with a few orthodox exceptions believes that their reward is in eternity? Who among the Irish middle classes sits up at night and thinks that? Maybe I overestimate that but it is a hazy area for those brought up with belief."

He told Marian that the Christian ethos was the best method of living that he had come across.

"It is quite possible to live with a religious sense of the world, to live with complete faith in the beatitudes, Christ's sermon on the mount, to know that this Christian ethic/ethos is the one that you belong to and that it is as far as I can find the best method yet of proceeding."

Heaney went on to say that Ireland had been in danger of losing its "religious unconscious and its Christian unconscious" during the boom years and that "what has happened may have happened in time".

Papal Ambassadors

"How many ambassadors to the Holy See have been appointed through open competition advertised in the *Financial Times* and the *Guardian*? How many have held summer jobs which, by turns, saw them work in Harrods, as a hospital porter, an aircraft cleaner and sandwich maker?" (*Irish Times*, 27.2.2009)

38-year-old Newry-born Francis Campbell is the first Catholic to hold the position of emissary of the Court of St James to the Holy See since the Reformation.

Born to a woman from Galway and a man from Rathfriland, Co Down, Ambassador Campbell grew up in a household where both parents were GAA enthusiasts and where much of his childhood summers were spent "across the Border", either in Galway or Dundalk.

"Educated by priests at St Colman's in Newry and at St Michael's in Omeath, Co. Louth, Campbell, according to a clichéd view, looked like a young man headed for a career anywhere other than the British foreign service. How come a bright, politically engaged young Catholic northerner, who cut his political teeth in the ranks of the SDLP, ends up here? Campbell has no difficulty with the question. He says simply that he is both "British and Irish" and that he is not "going to exaggerate one identity at the expense of the other". (ibid.).

Life on the small farm outside Newry was not always easy. The shortage of work and the sectarian violence of the times forced his father to leave home and find work in the mines in Canada's North-West territories. For 17 years, his father would return home for a few weeks just once every year or 18 months.

It comes as no surprise to hear Francis Campbell say that for a long time he considered becoming a priest. The Church's loss, however, was to be Whitehall's gain. Having studied at Queens in Belfast, Leuven in Belgium and at the University of Pennsylvania, he joined the Foreign Office in 1997 aged 27.

Did he not feel angry at a bigoted Northern Irish state that had forced his father out?

"I felt alienated growing up and for me faith was the way of dealing with that alienation.

"It can be very easy to be sucked into man-made divisions on the basis of one attribute. For me, the universality of Christianity and Catholicism challenges that, it asks you fundamental questions, by what standards do you want your life determined? For me, it was faith"

Signs Of Life

Young women are putting babies before marriage, according to the figures from the British Office for National Statistics released on 15.4.2009.

For the first time ever, there are more unmarried women under 30 with children than there are married women in this age group.

Nearly a third of women aged between 25 and 29 are unwed mothers while less than a quarter of their peers are married.

Since New Labour came to power in Britain, at least 4,000 fewer marriages have taken place every year, leading to a 111-year low.

Between 1996 and 2006 some 40,000 fewer marriages were recorded.

Constant political meddling and tax breaks for single mothers have given many women an incentive to shun a traditional married family life.

Norman Wells, of the Family Education Trust, said the Government must take its share of the blame for stripping away tax benefits and most legal privileges that used to go with marriage.

"The Government is stubbornly refusing to follow the evidence. Yet to formulate public policy on the assumption that all relationships are of equal value to society is to fly in the face of the facts."

He pointed to statistics that show children who are brought up by lone parents or cohabiting couples are more likely to suffer poor health, do badly at school, and fall into crime, or alcohol and drug abuse.

Lone parenthood is subsidised by a benefits system that means three out of four couples would be better off apart. Some single parents are £100 a week richer than couples in similar

circumstances.

The shift was revealed by the Office for National Statistics in its annual Social Trends study which asked women about events in their lives before they reached 25.

The younger they were, the less likely they were to have married or given birth. Almost a third of 25 to 29-year-olds were unwed mothers, but only 24 per cent of this age group were married.

In Britain, only 237,000 couples married in 2006—the lowest since 1895.

Irish Marriages

Yet in Ireland, Marriage is on the up and up! The Central Statistics Office figures revealed the number of couples getting married between January and March, 2007, had doubled in almost a decade—from 1,642 in 1998 to 3,399 in 2007, a rise of 107 per cent in nine years.

The Catholic marriage agency Accord welcomed the rise but admitted to being baffled and unable to explain why more Irish people were choosing to get married.

"Figures show marriage is on the decline in Europe yet rising numbers of people are getting married here," said Accord's director of marriage education services Stephen Cummins.

"It would be a fantastic piece of research if someone could find out why Ireland is bucking this trend."

In 2000, Accord gave marriage preparation courses to 6,030 couples intending to marry.

In 2006, the agency saw 9,320 couples, a rise of 3,290 or 55 per cent in six years.

The figures showed marriage was still strong in Ireland, although couples were leaving it later in life to get married.

"In the USA, where they have a divorce rate of something like 50 per cent, people cannot understand why Ireland has not had a deluge of divorces despite having divorce laws," he said.

Mr. Cummins said high house prices meant couples had to spend years building a career before they could afford a home together.

Irish Birth-rate

The birth-rate in the second quarter of last year was up by some 40 per cent on 1999, with 60 more babies born every day than in that year, new figures show.

Some 19,027 births were registered in quarter two of 2008, an annual birth rate of 17.2 per 1,000 population.

This is an increase of 5,442 births (40%) on the same period in 1999. The increase in the last year alone was 11%.

Stephen Richards

Final part of a review of *A Southern Presbyterian Life* by Sean Michael Lucas (P&R Publishing)

Defending The Indefensible

The great advantage of looking at nineteenth century American developments through the eyes of Robert Lewis Dabney is his almost total lack of nuance, subtlety, ambiguity, or whatever. Studied ambiguity is all very well for the poets, with their layers of meaning, but in theology, and in political argument, clarity is of the essence. Straightforward people are a rarity indeed. We can know other people, and we can know ourselves, in various intuitive ways, but that's a far cry from understanding. Calvin's opening remarks in his *Institutes Of The Christian Religion* are that there are only two sorts of knowledge that are of supreme importance, namely knowledge of God and knowledge of ourselves. Over a thousand years earlier Augustine complained that as he got older he was increasingly a puzzle to himself—on which see St. Paul in *Romans* Chapter 7—but whatever Dabney's inner struggles may have been, he's certainly not a puzzle to us: what we see is what we get. In this he's not untypical of the great line of 19th century American theologians that continued down to 1921 with the death of B.B. Warfield. Their combination of reformed orthodoxy with Scottish common sense philosophy produced a straightforward, if at times unimaginative, cast of mind.

What we get with Dabney is literally an unreconstructed Southerner, *antebellum* in his philosophy and attitudes long into the *postbellum* world, disdainful to get on the gravy train of ecclesiastical preferment. As previously mentioned, his *Defense Of Virginia* amounts to a defence of Slavery. One might have thought that a propagandist for the Confederacy would have concentrated on the question of states' rights, but somehow Dabney wasn't sophisticated enough to make out an attractive case. In this there are resemblances with twentieth century Ulster Unionism, which had such an unselfconscious sense of moral rectitude that it didn't see the need to present a winsome countenance to the world. The big question is: can we adapt to the dominant forces in the world in such a way that it won't be dishonest or contemptible? Edmund Burke, and others after him, argued that the essence of the conservative outlook is a readiness to change, which means that a wrong-headed conservatism produces societies that die on their feet. The Unionist world looks very *ante-*

bellum right now, and the Unionists are floundering about in search of a coherent ideological position.

The *Defense* is easy to read for its seething indignation, but much of its argument seems almost beside the point. In one lengthy section much is made of the hypocrisy of the Northern states with regard to their own benefit from the slave trade, which Virginia was the first state to ban. But if you're in the business of defending Slavery as a legitimate, even divinely-ordained, institution, it doesn't do to point out how your enemies are even more deeply embroiled in it than you are. Before the War, Dabney had been able to concede that there were major problems with a defence of Slavery "on Bible grounds" and on moral grounds, which for him amounted to the same thing, but the conflict and its aftermath removed all doubts. It had become a point of honour to defend the South in every particular, maybe to avoid any suggestion that he was currying favour with the new regime. No such suggestions were ever made.

It must have been particularly galling to Dabney that the Northern hypocrites, who twisted Scripture for their own purposes, had succeeded in reducing the honest and godly South to a state of economic and cultural dependency. For Calvinists like Dabney this calamity had to be reconciled with the sovereignty of an all-wise God. The prophet Jeremiah had wrestled with this same problem. The kings and people of Judah had provoked Yahweh to anger and he was exercising his just judgment. Nevertheless the prophet is appalled when he sees the outworking of this. If there is only one nation on the face of the earth which has been granted saving knowledge of the one true God, no matter that the nation largely fails to avail itself of its covenant privileges, it still comes as an indescribable shock when the ruling class is carried off into captivity, and its national status wiped out. The parallel with Jeremiah is instructive, because in all Dabney's jeremiads one looks in vain for the note of penitence.

Slavery

The charge of hypocrisy was of course well-founded, but Dabney could have argued it much more effectively than he did. While the Civil War was just ending, which is after he finished his *Defense*, he wasn't to know just how

the former slaves were going to be let loose without any thought for how they were going to get by in the embittered and comparatively leaderless society that was the South of the Reconstruction era. It took another century until the freed Negroes would organize themselves into a force that had to be listened to, with Martin Luther King as the African American Daniel O'Connell. It took that long for them to develop the belief that their collective will was as powerful as, if not more powerful than, that of their former masters. Up to that point their freedom had not been real freedom. They still had the collective mentality of slaves without the formal societal structure which legitimized that mentality. Socially they were suddenly in a jungle rather than a plantation. It was the responsibility of the winning side to create an acceptable social structure for the people they had come to save. The parallel here is with Britain and America in Iraq. The military bit is the easy bit.

Dabney to some extent grasped the point that Northern moral posturing over Slavery coincided with the mass industrialization in the North, where the lives of the factory workers would have been quite a bit less pleasant than the bucolic idyll apparently, if we are to believe him, enjoyed by Dabney's slaves.

But Dabney could not have seen in the 1860s what we can see now, that the Northern victory over the more antiquated and static South was the prelude, maybe a necessary prelude, to the totalitarian American conquest of the Indian nations west of the Mississippi. The moral majority didn't see any contradiction between their desire to emancipate the black man and their desire to exterminate the red man. Even the last Indian sanctuary, the territories that made up Oklahoma, couldn't be left in peace, and at the turn of the last century the bugles blew and the settler hordes moved in to stake their claims. Jonathan Edwards and his protégé David Brainerd had spent time among the Indians on the frontier at Stockbridge Massachusetts over a century and a half before, had tried to learn their languages and preached to them, but there was to be none of that nonsense in the later nineteenth century. Every so often writers on Edwards come up with the startling fact that among his papers is a receipt for payment for one or two slaves, as if to make out that slavery is the original sin of America—and in fact it has been called just that—while the genocidal westward expansion of the United States has been incorporated into the good part of the national narrative.

In making the point that the master-slave relationship is not necessarily an abusive relationship, Dabney has been howled down by moralists of all religious

hues and none, but it's still fair to argue that you don't judge an institution by its abuses, if the abuses are separable from it. The fact that women are often maltreated and sometimes murdered by their husbands doesn't in itself lead us to conclude that marriage is an immoral institution. However, Dabney failed to engage with the crying scandals of the system, whereby slaves were "sold down the river" to the huge slave camps in the Louisiana swampland; and of course, even if he convinces us that slavery isn't immoral *per se*, experience all over the world from ancient times until now has taught us that it tends to be accompanied by abuses of all kinds, human nature being of a bullying domineering tendency, and all the more so where those held in bondage are deemed to be of an inferior savage race. I realize I'm beginning to sound rather like Swift in *A Modest Proposal*. I don't mean to sound as if I'm praising slavery with faint damns; and I'm sure I don't in any case have to persuade readers of *Church & State* that slavery is at best a bit dodgy.

Anyway, it's about time we heard from Dabney himself. We should now sit back and enjoy:

"To the rational historian who, two hundred years hence, shall study the history of the nineteenth century, it will appear one of the most curious vagaries of human opinion, that the Christianity and philanthropy of our day should have given so disproportionate an attention to the evils of African slavery. Such a dispassionate observer will perceive that, while many other gigantic evils were rampant in this age, there prevailed a sort of epidemic fashion of selecting this one upon which to exhaust the virtuous indignation and sympathies of the professed friends of human amelioration. And he will probably see in this a proof that the Christianity and benevolence of the nineteenth century were not so superior, in wisdom and breadth, to those of the seventeenth and eighteenth, as the busy actors in them had persuaded themselves; but were, in fact, conceited, overweening, and fantastic.

"It will appear to him a still stranger fact, that this zeal against African slavery was so partial in its exhibition. Up to this day, not only the Southern States of the late American Union, but the Brazilian, Turkish, and Spanish empires, among civilized nations, and many barbarous people, have continued the explicit practice of slavery, in so stern a form, that the institution in the Confederate States was, by comparison, extremely mild. Yet, throughout the Northern States of America, and Europe, it is upon the devoted heads of Southern masters almost exclusively, that the vials of holy wrath are poured out.

"...{The Yankee people} reserved

their abuse and venom on this subject for their Southern fellow-citizens alone. They made it their business to direct the whole storm of odium, from abroad and at home, on our heads. They, having the manufacture of American books chiefly in their hands, took pains to fill Europe and their own country with industrious slanders against their own brethren: and so occupied the ear of the world with abuse of us, as to make men almost forget that there were any other slaveholders... The deliberative motive was, to reduce the South to a state of colonial dependency upon themselves... The South was their precious gold mine, from which they had quarried, and hoped yet again to quarry, hoards of wealth, by the instruments of legislative and commercial jugglery...

"Our mere politicians committed an error in this respect, while we were still members of the United States, by which we should now learn. They failed to meet the Abolitionists with sufficient persistence and force on the radical question—the righteousness of African slavery as existing among us... Well-informed men in Great Britain, we presume, are ignorant of the names and works of the able and dignified advocates to whom the South confidently and proudly committed her justification; and were willing to render their verdict upon the mere accusations of our interested slanderers. But while the United States yet existed unbroken, there was one forum, where we could have demanded a hearing upon the fundamental question: the Federal Legislature... There were two courses, either of which might have been followed by our politicians, in defending our Federal rights against Abolitionism. One plan would have been, to exclude the whole question of slavery persistently from the national councils, as extra-constitutional and dangerous, and to assert this exclusion always, and at every risk, as the essential condition of the continuance of the South in those councils. The other plan, was to meet that abstract question from the first, as underlying and determining the whole subject, and to debate it everywhere, until it was decided, and the verdict of the national mind was passed upon it. Unfortunately, the Southern men did neither persistently. After temporary resistance, they permitted the debate; and then failed to conduct it on fundamental principles."

Dabney goes on to explain in fascinating detail the constitutional, moral and logical blunders that the Southern representatives fell into, but in a way that makes one suspect that if he had been masterminding the strategy his approach would have had the logical coherence of the late Enoch Powell, and about the same level of effectiveness. That is to say, Dabney was not a

politician. He continues, with some foresight:

"We have cited these recent and striking illustrations of the fundamental importance of the ethical discussion, to justify the task we have undertaken. Some may suppose that, as the United States are no more as they were, and slaveholding is absolutely and finally ended, the question is obsolete. This is a great mistake. The status of the negro is just beginning to develop itself as an agitating and potent element in the politics of America. It will continue the great ground of contrast, and subject of moral strife, between the North and the South."

Lucas to his credit doesn't simply dismiss the *Defense* as a bizarre propagandist fantasy, and takes some time to demolish the case made out by Dabney, and I once again commend his sane appraisal of his subject. (Anyone interested in finding out more about Presbyterianism in its American shape could do no better than read Lucas's *On Being Presbyterian*, which is the most impressive book of its kind I've ever come across, and light years ahead of anything available for Irish Presbyterians or would-be Presbyterians, but that's all beside the point.) The biblical case put forward by Dabney is indeed quite easy to demolish, resting on it does on some hermeneutical sleight of hand, and I'd like to touch on this shortly without going into the detail. And, on the purely ethical question, Dabney can be strangely convincing. It might indeed be difficult to assert that slavery is wrong in the abstract. As with the late C.E.M. Joad it might all depend on what you mean by slavery.

But it's not the theology or the ethics that form the most compelling aspect of the *Defense*: it's the historical debating points:

"But how different is the summary abolition forced on Virginia and the South!" {He is referring to the Emancipation Proclamation at the start of 1863, which Lincoln made in contradiction of his pledge at his inauguration.} "Here, the general legislation of the state was steadily multiplying, elevating the blessing the black race, which in the North was so rapidly dying out under its pretended liberty. And private beneficence of Virginians, without any legal compulsion, had actually given the boon of freedom to at least one hundred thousand blacks; which is more than all the citizens of the New England states, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania together ever did, under the force of all their laws. In this wise and beneficent career Virginia has been violently interrupted, against her recognized and guaranteed

rights, by instant and violent abolition.

"... As a war measure, it was calculated to evoke all the savage horrors of servile war, neighbourhood massacre and butchery of non-combatants. Only the kindly relations which the benevolence and justice of the people of Virginia had established between themselves and their slaves, and the good character which we had given to these former savages, disappointed the desired result. As an economic measure, it was the most violent ever attempted in modern history, being a sudden confiscation of half... the existing property of the country; and a dislocation of its whole labour system, just when the people were bowed under the burden of a gigantic war, and a collapsed currency."

And the consequences for the liberated Negro population, according to Dabney, were poverty, depopulation, crime, moral degeneracy—*"illegitimate births had become far fewer than among the boasted white peasantry of Protestant Scotland, with all its Bibles and churches and parochial schools"*—and disease, so much so that he predicted *"the extinction of a whole race of people by their professed friends"*.

Dabney speculates as to what could have made the anti-slavery prejudice so intense among the educated classes in Britain and comments:

"Still another explanation is, that slavery in the British colonies, from which the people of that Empire have chiefly derived their conceptions, actually was far more harsh and barbarous than in this country. The reader is emphatically cautioned that he must not judge slavery in Virginia by slavery in Jamaica or Guiana. Whether the charge of the great Paley is correct, who accounts for this difference by the greater harshness of British character, politeness may forbid us to decide. But the comparative fates of the Africans in the British colonies and those in our States tell the contrast between the humanity of our system, and the barbarity of theirs, in terms of indisputable clearness" {Dabney had earlier asserted than in the eighteen years when he was a slave owner he had had to administer corporal punishment on only four occasions, and on his own admission he was not looked upon by his neighbours as a lax disciplinarian.} "If political science has ascertained any law, it is that that well or ill-being of a people powerfully affects their increase or decrease of numbers. The climate of the British Indies is salubrious for blacks. Yet, of the one million seven hundred thousand Africans imported into the British colonies, and their increase, only six hundred and sixty thousand remained

to be emancipated in 1832. The three hundred and seventy five thousand (the total) imported into the Southern States had multiplied to four millions. How grinding and ruthless must have been that oppression which in the one case reduced this prolific race, in the most fertile and genial spots of earth, in the ratio of five to two! And how generous and beneficent that government which, in the Southern States, nursed them to a more than tenfold increase, in a less hospitable and fruitful clime! Well may we demur to have the world take its conception of our slavery from the British."

Ouch!

Bible & Society

While I'm tempted to serve up even more generous helpings of this manly polemic I trust that we have by now got a sufficient flavour to appreciate just how compellingly Dabney could present a dubious case. Both sides were anxious to base their arguments on scripture, as one would expect if the Bible is taken to be the sole rule of faith and life, yet on both sides the scriptural arguments seem to be the most flimsy. It may be that the Bible is not intended to be ransacked for proof texts in favour of this or that ordering of society. There is still a theonomist party among the American evangelicals, but the Christian church set its face long ago against any attempt to replicate a commonwealth based on the societal structures revealed to ancient Israel, and this is true of the Genevan, Scottish, Cromwellian and New England attempts. A Christian commonwealth with the magistrate subject to God's law, yes: but an Old Testament-based social structure, no. And really the Old Testament is all we have to go on, because Jesus in the Gospels, Luke in Acts, and the writers of the New Testament letters all seem to share an airy disregard for social reform. It's taken for granted that the world is corrupt and subject to wrath, and the emphasis is on a new, Spirit-filled, Messianic community which will become an alternative society, a Christian counterculture, marching to a different drum. To be sure there are principles that stem from the Christian view of humankind as made in the image of God and accountable as moral agents to God, and the Ten Commandments are still in force; and in view of the astounding success of the Christian message it's not surprising that during much of the last two thousand years in the Christian West there has been a preoccupation with how and to what extent these principles can be implemented. It's a real problem but was for a long time an accidental problem. It may be that we're moving into an age, in the UK and Ireland, when it will be again a theoretical problem

only, as the remaining Christian pre-suppositions embedded in our legislation are rooted out.

Be that as it may, I think we have to be very cautious about the tendency to turn the message of the Bible into a manifesto for social change. This was the mistake made by the abolitionists, to which Dabney perhaps overreacted. The problem for the Christian is that the campaign takes on a life of its own and becomes a kind of displacement activity. I exempt Wilberforce from this charge as I think he saw his campaign as only part of the wider transformative spiritual challenge thrown down by the Bible to the powers that be.

But campaigners of the right and the left, Zionists, anti-Zionists, socialists, free market capitalists, feminists, anti-feminists and many more have abused the Bible by tying it to the cartwheels of their own agenda. Thirty years ago the establishment churches were captivated by liberation theology and the concept of Structural Sin, which basically meant the structures of society which were always somebody else's fault. Now we have the equally ludicrous doctrine of salvation by environmental concern, as promulgated by the Church of England. I share the outrage of the environmentalists at the greedy polluting wasteful culture of which I am a part, but I have become totally exasperated by the climate change fascists. Once again attention is diverted from what we can change to things that we can't really, unless about half the world's population is destroyed by a meteorite, and that half might be us. In Northern Ireland the SDLP is possibly the most hypocritical of the parties in this regard. Its credentials on climate change are impeccably orthodox, yet it campaigns doggedly against PPS 14, PPS 21 and any other planning measures that might seek to delay for a while the transformation of our townlands into a vast suburban wasteland.

Other things being equal we'd all much prefer to live on a cleaner more sustainable planet, but if whole populations are on the road to a lost eternity does it really matter all that much if the planet we leave behind us is more polluted than it should be? The Anglican bishops after all purport to follow a teacher who said: *"heaven and earth may pass away but my words will not pass away"*.

I was going to look slightly further back, at that pathetic but never fashionable slogan: *"For God and Ulster"*, where the very emphasis of the words as you say them is on the Ulster bit rather than the God bit. But at times

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A Response To *Coolacrease* Considered

The killing of the Pearson brothers, who were substantial landowners in the townland of Coolacrease in Co. Offaly, by the IRA in June 1921, was a forgotten incident of the War of Independence until it was brought to public notice by Alan Stanley, a descendant of a Pearson ally, in the *Sunday Independent* magazine (9.10.2005). Stanley, in the magazine article, and in a book called *I Met Murder On The Way*, said that the Pearson brothers, who were Protestants, were killed by landless Catholics for the purpose of grabbing their land. The matter was taken up in *Church & State* as being relevant to its particular remit, which includes religious sectarianism in Irish public life. It was also taken up by Senator Eoghan Harris in his column in the *Sunday Independent*. Harris told the thousands that read the *Sunday Independent* that Stanley had proved his case. *Church & State* told its handful of readers that Stanley had not only failed to prove his case but had himself provided material which refuted his case.

RTE decided to take up the matter in a *Hidden History* programme. Pat Muldowney, who had written a series of articles on the subject for this magazine, found that the RTE programme was prepared under the working title of *Atonement: Ethnic cleansing In The Midlands*. He contacted the programme-makers and put it to them that they would be making a very great mistake if they formed the programme around Harris's articles and Stanley's book and he provided them with evidence that they preferred to take no heed of. In the event the programme that was broadcast was in line with Harris's vision of things, and Harris himself was central to it.

The programme as broadcast was contradicted by a wide range of ascertainable facts based on documents of which the programme company (Reel Productions) and RTE itself had been informed before the broadcast. Pat Muldowney, in cooperation with local

historian Paddy Heaney, and members of the Offaly Historical Society, then collected the documents relevant to the incident, and commented on them and on the broadcast programme, and published a book with the help of the Aubane Historical Society under the title, *Coolacrease: The True Story Of The Pearson Executions—An Incident In The Irish War Of Independence*. It is a book of 470 pages, of which about 200 consist of documents, including a full transcript of the broadcast programme.

The book sets out to refute in detail the assertion that the Pearsons were killed by sectarian land-grabbers in their locality who then took the land. It demonstrates that the killing was ordered by Republican headquarters (Chief of Staff, Richard Mulcahy, who a year later fought a war to establish a Free State on British authority); that the execution squad was sent into Coolacrease from outside and included nobody from the locality; that no member of the execution squad got any of the Pearson land; that when the Pearsons sold up and the land went to the Land Commission for distribution, some of it went to people who had served in the British forces during the Great War and no members of the IRA got any of it in the first instance—though a couple of Republicans did when those who got it in the first instance failed to make a go of farming and had to sell—; and that the RTE claim to have seen Land Commission documents supporting its assertions was bogus.

Aubane publications are usually not reviewed at all. But the outrage felt in Offaly about the broadcast led to this book becoming a bit of a best seller in Offaly and in ever-widening circles beyond Offaly. So it has had three reviews, all of them hostile, but all of them failing to refute its detailed refutation of the burden of the RTE broadcast.

The first was in the *Sunday Business Post*. It was written by a member of the Ulster Unionist Party, and adviser to David Trimble when he was Northern First Minister. It consisted essentially of an exposé of me.

The second, in *History Ireland*, written by Joost Augusteijn, who seems to have been a protégé of Professor Fitzpatrick's History Workshop at Trinity who subsequently lost out in the academic rat-race and returned to Holland.

Augusteijn in effect conceded in his opening paragraph that the *Coolacrease* case against RTE was proved, and then spent a couple of pages criticising the book on marginal things.

The third was in the *Dublin Review Of Books*. It is written by Tom Wall, about whom I know nothing. The *Dublin Review* is a computer magazine, and as I am computer illiterate I never see it. I was sent a print-out of this article. It has ten pages of text in the print-out. (I don't know if it is paged in the computer.) Five of those pages are not about *Coolacrease* at all, but range widely over other things in other parts of the country at other times. And the five pages which have to do with *Coolacrease*, more or less, do not say what the gist of the RTE case is, or what the gist of the rebuttal is.

The *Dublin Review* criticised the book for failing to give documentary references for information transmitted in the oral culture of Coolacrease, of which in the nature of things there could be no documentary substantiation, while on other occasions blurting things out in the face of documentary refutation which it ignores.

One can either go by a stringent relating of what is in documents of the time and place, or by a reasonably well-informed commonsense supporting a sense of probability. If one steps from one to the other, one should specify which one is at issue in each paragraph. A third procedure was set out by a very interesting group of revolutionary intellectuals in Trinity thirty years ago: Theoretical Pluralism, in which you do not make it clear which you are at, and probably don't know. The procedure of the *Dublin Review* is like that—and what I can find out about its producers suggests that they were there around Trinity thirty years ago when that kind of thing was going on.

Forty years ago I could go some way towards reading Russian. Only a few poems remain with me now, and the two words Russian has for "truth"—*pravda*, and *istina*: truth in the sense of accurate factual detail. *Pravda*, which Lenin took for the title of his paper, is a higher kind of truth, which is not obstructed at every turn by factual detail. Senator Harris stands unequivocally for this higher truth and has dismissed the other as a kind of pettifogging which he called "*factualism*". The *Dublin Review* inclines towards *pravda*.

While not denying that it was Lenin's *Pravda* that caused things to happen in 1917, I could not go along with it very far when I was overcome by a need to know what actually happened in 1917. I read everything that was available of

Dabney, concluded

even such an acute theologian and self-conscious gentleman as Dabney could let his nationalist fervour unbalance his judgment, as we have seen. I hope that this excursion down some roads less travelled has proved diverting and maybe even edifying. I promise that's the last of Dabney that you'll hear from me for some time.

the Menshevik *istina* (and found that it was not always as scrupulous as it purported to be) as well as Trotsky, the SRs [Socialist Revolutionaries] and even the Cadets. And so I have difficulty with this sort of thing:

"Coolacrease sets out to expose the version of events portrayed by Alan Stanley... and RTE... The targets are, however, more numerous; they include the Broadcasting Complaints Commission and various academics and journalists, especially Senator Eoghan Harris—in terms of mentions he is the principal dragon to be slayed. All of these are well able to defend themselves if they feel inclined. Somewhat disturbing though, is the character assault on the long-deceased Pearson family—the innocent or otherwise victims—who are portrayed as aggressively anti-Catholic bigots, treacherous spies, liars and fraudsters. Whatever about the core issue—the justification or otherwise for the executions—the casting of such a cold and malicious eye on the victims would appear to be designed to deny them a modicum of human sympathy... [S]ome of what is written in this vein about the Pearsons is unsupported by hard evidence..." (p1).

I had no involvement in the production of the book, apart from writing an article for it about the 1918 Election with relation to the War of Independence. I had not read most of it until after I read this *Dublin Review* review criticism. Then I looked in it for the description of the Pearsons as anti-Catholic bigots etc. The *Dublin Review* doesn't give a reference for it, and I could not find it.

I found this statement:

"The Cooneyites were an extreme sect whose disdain for Catholic and mainstream Protestant faiths would leave that of the most militant members of the Free Presbyterians in the shade" (p145).

I suppose it is *pravda* to summarise a statement that they were Anti-Catholic/Anti-Protestant bigots as saying that they were Anti-Catholic bigots.

Another passage in the book has a bearing on it:

"William Stanley [father of Alan Stanley who wrote the book of the RTE programme] fled from Coolacrease, to take refuge with relatives in Ulster. His father Henry Stanley was a member of the Orange Order. It may be that the Ulster and Orange connections can explain the supremacist attitudes exhibited by the Pearsons in interfering with mass-goers and other similar sectarian, triumphalist conduct.

"A significant element in the 1912 Ulster armed revolt against the British Parliament was the sense that they could never share power in a Home rule government with an inferior race" (p34).

The *Dublin Review* version is: The Pearsons are described as aggressively sectarian and as holding supremacist attitudes. The only basis for this appears to be their attempt to stop people using the "Mass path" and practising their religion. However, J.J. Dillon, whose father was directly involved in the incident, mentions political rather than religious differences being at issue.

In criticism of Paddy Heaney saying what was told to him by his father's generation, the *Dublin Review* says: "*If there is any documentary evidence in the form of interview notes it is not recorded*". I assume therefore that the *Dublin Review* has seen "*interview notes*" of what J.J. Dillon was told by his father?

And what would such "*interview notes*" signify? That Heaney and Dillon had both written down what they had been told by their elders before repeating it to the television camera.

As to this matter of sectarianism, as against ongoing political loyalty to the Crown in the face of the comprehensive rejection of the Crown by the new democracy by which they were surrounded, I do not see how this could be sorted out on a documentary basis. And, even if we could be transported back in time to June 1921 and given privileged access to the Pearsons, I do not think it could be sorted out, since it must all come down to "*it depends on what you mean by*".

I have had privileged access to this kind of thing in two very different parts of the world—Ulster and Israel—the most privileged being in the latter. I would say that the only secure means of access—the only one against which no barrier of public relations considerations are raised—is through the family. Not long after the 1972 War, when one could go anywhere in Israel and Palestine in perfect safety, I visited Jewish and Arab relatives and saw how each regarded—not each other, because they did not know each other—but each other's communities. On the basis of the attitudes I encountered even on the part of irreligious Jews and apparently subservient Arabs, I have known ever since what must happen and what cannot happen. And I concluded that the distinction between "*sectarian*" and something else was a debating point on which nothing could be built.

There used to be a joke intended to ridicule the conflict in the North, about its atheists being divided on religious grounds. It always struck me as a symptom of ignorance at best. It was finally scotched a few weeks ago when Professor David Starkey, a public atheist, gave television interviews in protest

against a suggestion that the Protestant Ascendancy condition on the British monarchy should be scrapped. He said that, even though he was an atheist, he was an Anglican atheist. He was a produce of England, and England was made by Anglicanism—at least the upper stratum of it in which Starkey flourished was.

Because I put myself out of court with Southern nationalism—including, as far as I can discover, the segment of it that now publishes the *Dublin Review*—I had a degree of privileged access to Protestant attitudes (though not a family one) and I found that Churchgoing or not made no difference to anything that mattered. And I found it hard to get a usable meaning for "*Sectarian*".

There are varieties of human development shaped on religion which produce persistent modes of behaviour. There are Catholic varieties, and Presbyterian, and Anglican, and Gospel Hall. There is no atheist mode that I have ever come across.

I don't think it is meaningful to describe Catholics and Protestants as sects and those who say they are atheists as being something else. But a minuscule group like the Cooneyites, who set themselves against all the others, while showing no capacity for doing what the others did, might I suppose be described as a sect. And by the same token so might atheists who try to make anything much of it.

I suppose every religious body can be described as a sect. But that would make the world a sectarian morass. But certain religious bodies reject the categorisation of themselves as sectarian while declaring others to be so: the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Church. And the Anglican Church in Ireland calls itself the Irish Church, and somehow traces itself back to the era before Brian Boru. It is apparently the Irish national Church, even though it was never more than the Church of the colonial English stratum, and the Catholic Church is unnational because it is Roman.

Within Protestantism the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches exerted state power and the other Protestants were Nonconformists. Nonconformists on the other hand saw themselves as the Christian Churches and saw the state establishment of the Anglican and Presbyterians as marks against them. But when the Penal Laws to keep down the Catholics ended, the Nonconformists in Ireland were inclined to overlook some Scriptural scruples and look to the Anglican Establishment as a bulwark against the Catholics behind which they could shelter. That bulwark was removed under Catholic pressure in 1869 and the

Protestants of various kinds began to discover that what they all were essentially was Anti-Catholic.

But I would say that this realisation did not really sink in until 1919-20. I'm judging by the *Church Of Ireland Gazette*, which was a really vigorous political magazine for a few years. At first it was taken for granted that the Empire would find a way of putting the uppity Sinn Feiners back in their place, as it had done with United Irishmen, O'Connellites, Young Irelanders, Fenians, Parnellites and Redmondites. The 1918 Election as an expression of national democracy was not taken as being of any real consequence. But over the next few years it was realised that the thing was serious and would not crumble.

Relief came in the form of the Treaty and the Sinn Fein split. My impression is that Protestants who remained loyal to the Empire—which was not all of them—for the most part kept their heads down from 1919 to 1921. On the signing of the Treaty, the *Gazette* became an enthusiastically patriotic Treatyite publication, and Treatyite votes became sacred to it as Republican votes had not been

The Cooneyites were Anti-Protestant and Anti-Catholic, and apparently more of the former than the latter while the initial zeal was on them. Protestantism was what they knew because it was what they had broken from. Catholics, though all around them, were beyond their spiritual horizon while the framework of state was British. When that framework of state was endangered by the rise of a stubborn democracy, is the *Dublin Review* suggesting that they kept up a loyalty to the Empire while keeping up an impartial detestation of Protestantism as well as Catholicism?

William Stanley, Alan's father, fled to Ulster, and his grandfather, Henry, was a member of the Orange Order. Any Orange connection carries the implication of supremacism. Supremacism is what the Orange Order is all about. I wrote in praise of it as a moderating influence when a Tory Government abolished Stormont in 1972 and William Craig launched what in my opinion was a fascist movement whose object was the formation of a Northern Ireland state. Molyneux and the Rev. Martin Smyth held the Order to the Unionist position of Craigavon and Brookeborough, while rejecting Capt. O'Neill as a bungler and mischief-maker. That was the most responsible and effective exercise of ideological influence I had seen in the North. But that did not mean that Orangeism had ceased to express Protestant supremacism.

Around then I began writing an

account of Ulster Unionism in 1885-6. I began with the *Northern Whig*, a liberal paper founded in the 1820s by Finlay, who was a sort of protege of William Drennan. I expected to find its opposition to the first Home Rule Bill phrased in secular, more or less democratic, terms. What I found was a supremacist statement of the superior rights of the superior minority in Ireland. I gave up the project.

In some biographies of David Trimble, written when he was First Minister, it seems that he claimed to have been influenced by me. He was one of Craig's fascists in the early seventies and I had nothing whatever to do with him. Around 1990 a Young Unionist group in Queen's asked if they could serialise something of mine in their magazine. I asked to see some copies of it first. What I found in them was attacks on the black South African movement for democracy. And then I found that there was a connection with die-hard Zionism.

Protestant Ulster was an active participant in the doings of the British Empire around the world and in Ireland. British Imperialism was not dedicated to evil for the hell of it, any more than German Nazism was. It was the movement of a people that saw itself as superior to others, and that had therefore the right to do unto others as others certainly had not the right to do unto it. It was dedicated to improving inferior peoples or to improving the world by exterminating them. (See how this is brilliantly expressed in the immensely popular *Greater Britain* by Gladstone's lieutenant, Sir Charles Dilke.)

Protestant Ulster threw itself into Imperialism wholeheartedly with a piece of Ireland as its base, but in Ireland itself it failed either to exterminate or improve, and as the Empire was broken up it found itself isolated at home as a settler people, and it identified with other settler peoples with supremacist attitudes towards natives, particularly the Afrikaners with their Apartheid regime, and the Zionist Jews with their masterful contempt towards Palestinians.

Too much should not be made of supremacism—not in this region of the world anyhow. Arthur Griffith was no egalitarian. His aim was that Ireland should be accepted by Britain as a partner in its Imperialist supremacism. Sinn Fein was taken from him after 1916 and given over to democratic anti-Imperialist Republicanism, with which it is said he was never quite at ease. (The makers of the Wikipedia either don't know or don't care to know about the remaking of Sinn Fein, because they tell the world that in 1918 the All For Ireland League merged

into the "*Dual Monarchist Sinn Fein*".)

It seemed to me that the Catholic community in the North, which held Sinn Fein at bay for seventy years, would have been very willing to settle for an honourable place in the Empire. Judging by the *Irish News*, (a more representative paper than any in the South), it held to the values established by British Imperial power in world affairs and only remained intransigently Anti-Partitionist because it was excluded from the British political system and subjected to a routine of communal humiliation by the Protestant community.

Certain values that were proclaimed as universal human values by the victorious powers three generations ago were only applied by those who proclaimed them when it suited their particular interests to do so. They are therefore supremacist in application, if not intrinsically so. And while they were proclaimed as being self-evidently true and prior to any legislative enactment about them, and therefore applicable to times past, they are only very selectively applied to the writing of history.

About ten years ago I was at a small book launch in Dublin of a translation of Carl Peters's *How German East Africa Was Founded*, an account of early German colonisation in Africa. Hans Christian Oeser was present and he condemned the translation as immoral because of the subject matter. I said the pamphlet showed that German colonisation was in origin a private enterprise of Anglophile Germans inspired by Britain and discouraged by the German state, and that it helped to bring out the forgotten fact that the German Empire was different in kind from the British Empire, in that it was essentially an Empire of the various German states. But Oeser insisted that it was racist and some discussion of racism followed. It led to my saying that, if one took racism in earnest, one found it was general to British, European and American political culture, and that the United States was built on the greatest genocide known to history.

My view of the world was got in the recesses of Slieve Luacra, where the discounting of values by Dublin sophistication was unknown. The American genocide was a major subject of Hollywood when the German genocide became known, and provided my context for it. To the irritation of German friends, I have never been able to de-contextualise the German genocide, and treat the many other genocides as being different in kind. I said in that discussion that the only ground I knew of on which the German genocide might be held to be different in kind was itself racialist: it was that the others had exterminated

peoples that actually were inferior, while the people the Germans (or their Nazi elite) were intent on exterminating was not inferior.

There was strong dissent from this view on the part of a number of people, some of whom I knew and others who I did not know but I understand are connected with the *Dublin Review*. The ground of their disagreement was that the North American peoples were exterminated in the course of nature. But it didn't actually occur in pre-history. It began under the English Rule of the Saints. It continued under the regime of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It was intensified under the proclamations of liberty drafted by Jefferson, who actually spoke of extermination. And it was finally accomplished in the great democratic drive following the Civil War. And the commander of the American forces that came to save European civilisation from the Hun in 1918 had taken part in one of the last military actions of the American genocide only twenty years before.

Anybody who takes the universal human values as proclaimed in connection with both World Wars and applies them earnestly becomes an eccentric. They must be taken with pinches of salt, with different sizes of pinch for different situations. We live in a culture of religious or racial supremacism. I do not think that Republican Ireland was so in 1921, or in my part of Ireland in 1950. Loyalist Ireland was necessarily so in 1912, or at any other time. Supremacism was inherent in what it was loyal to, and persistence in being Loyal in defiance of the surrounding democracy would have been senseless otherwise.

The *Dublin Review* says we must be compassionate. Is it that we should be compassionate because the Pearson brothers acted in support of their supremacist Loyalty and suffered for it, or because they did not act but were passive victims? From a number of sub-clauses one would infer an acknowledgement that *Coolacrease* had established the substance of its case and that the RTE programme was indefensible in substance. From the article as a whole one is given the impression that, whatever about some details, RTE was right and the book is wrong. *Pravda!*

The *Dublin Review* can only get at the book through some marginal details. But its overall attitude is that the pettifogging details of what happened in that townland at that particular time (the subject of both the programme and the book) don't really matter. What matters is something general, which is said to be demonstrable elsewhere if not in Coolacrease. *Pravda!*

I don't know if the *Dublin Review* reviewed Alan Stanley's book, or if this is its only comment on the matter. For my part I think compassion would have let the sleeping dog lie. Paddy Heaney gave the local version of the incident, amongst other things, in *At The Foot Of Slieve Bloom*, and that would have been that if Alan Stanley had not been inspired by Professor Peter Hart to produce a very different version of it, and if Stanley's version had not been selected to be one of the things for media publicity.

Church & State took newspaper commentary on Stanley's book as drawing attention to something that was within its remit. It found Stanley's book and showed that it was inconsistent with itself, asserting conclusions which the detailed information it gave did not bear, and suggesting other conclusions.

Then the matter might have rested there and nobody been damaged, if Senator Harris, with the zeal of a convert, had not taken it up in his family paper, and if the *Sunday Independent* articles had not led to an RTE programme (obviously masterminded, as well as contributed to, by Harris), and if RTE had not sought out members of the Pearson family a couple of generations on in Australia and got them to tell the story as it was told to them. The Stanley version was also put to use in the *Irish Times*.

Coolacrease was to be branded with infamy. It was designated as the Irish Auschwitz—a poor thing, but our own!

It required very little investigation to establish that Alan Stanley's book was seriously flawed. But so what! He had a point to make. Paddy Heaney's book was there. And no war was being waged between the two.

Then Senator Harris made it his cause. It seems that he is still enough of a power in RTE to have his way with it, and that there is no authority in RTE able to see that Harris is utterly reckless in the pursuit of whatever cause his latest conversion gives rise to. It is not all that long since he laid it down that Lenin's writings were the Bible. Stalin was criticised for saying that Leninism was to be taken as axiomatic, meaning that Lenin had set things on a certain course on certain assumptions and that Lenin's party was going to work things through on the basis of those assumptions. For a period Leninism was axiomatic for Harris. But, before that, and after it, he had a series of other axiomatic truths. And throughout it all he had the conviction that factual truth—factism—doesn't matter, because anything you care to lay down can be made true by power and/or by spin. *Pravda.*

And so RTE pilloried the townland of Coolacrease. And it provided the

stimulus for the detail work of refuting the programme. And now the *Dublin Review* seems to acknowledge, *sotto voce*, that RTE has been refuted, while in full voice it talks about other things as a diversion. And about compassion.

If the *Dublin Review* had taken a hand in this some years ago, in connection with Stanley's book or Harris's articles, and used its influence in circles to which we have no access, perhaps the programme would never have been made. And *that* would have been compassion.

As it is, Alan Stanley, inspired by Professor Hart, encouraged by Harris, and lured on by RTE, has been humiliated. And it was not his fault.

Pravda was not realised. *Factism* won. It was a realistic assumption on the part of Harris or RTE that the detailed factual work for the effective refutation of the programme would not be done. It is not the kind of thing that is done in modern Ireland, in the era of the Celtic Tigger, where truth is a daily invention. In another country it would be routine work for the history departments of Universities, but in Ireland they were all committed to the higher truth a couple of decades ago and are still mostly so.

The *Dublin Review* takes issue with a comment of mine in that regard. It gives this quotation:

"Academic authority is usually subject to the political authority of the State and does not set itself the task of subverting it. There is usually a kind of sympathy—an organic relationship—between the political life of the state and its academic reflection. That is how it was for half a century after Republican government was established in 1919."

And it comments:

"There is a whiff of a past even earlier than 1969 in this statement. Academics subject to political authority—now where have we heard that before?"

The *Dublin Review* does not say where it heard it before. It was safer not to. And there was no need to. It was better to let it hang ominously and let the reader—a contemporary Dublin intellectual, I assume—understand that where it was heard before was either from Dr. Goebbels or from Zhdanov. The vision of the *Dublin Review* does not seem to reach across the Channel.

There are things which are the case, whether one likes it or not. For my part I came across the idea of the Republic of Letters long ago, I think in Dr. Drennan's letters, and it described where I lived, insofar as I was a writer. It didn't exist of course—except perhaps in some of the petty states of multi-state Germany. I never encouraged the belief

that it did exist. But I said that, even though it did not exist, it was the only place I would live. What exists in the public life of functional democratic states is academia subject to political authority through an organic relationship with it. That organic relation was broken in Germany by the chaos engendered by the Versailles arrangement, and was forcibly restored by Dr. Goebbels as *Gleichschaltung*. It had not existed in Tsarist Russia, and so it could not exist in either Menshevik/SR Russia or Bolshevik Russia. Where it exists *par excellence* is England. It has a nodal point of control which is no less definite than Dr. Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry, but is much more effective. It goes by the bland name of Chatham House.

I don't think it is possible to go into any sphere of British activity in the world since it launched the Great War without discovering the controlling influence of Chatham House, or its precursor. And there are also a number of apparently ordinary Universities where there is extensive interaction of Politics, Army, Church,

The two main regions where I discovered the extent of Chatham House control of English academic life were Yugoslavia and Mesopotamia. In both, comprehensive *Gleichschaltung* was smoothly accomplished. There was some disquiet here and there from the 1950s to the 1980s about the part played by Britain in betraying the Serbia which had resisted Germany in 1941, and in restoring Yugoslavia in 1944-5 as a Communist state, arming the Communist Partisans for the subjugation of Serbia. The disquiet was skilfully kept quiet at a number of Conferences by Chatham House operatives. Then, in 1990, Yugoslavia having served its purpose, the time came to destroy it. Serbia, subjugated to Communism by British boycott of the Royalists and by British arms, was presented as a bastion of die-hard Communism which insisted on living past its time and terrorising its neighbours. Chatham House ensured that the change was accomplished smoothly, and that the old line was somehow instantly forgotten. I did not hear a single mention in the mainstream media throughout the 1990s of how the Yugoslav abomination was constructed in 1944-5 as a multinational state, after having fallen apart into its national constituents in 1941. One book was published, by a soldier who had taken part in the business of 1944-5, and who could not participate in the diplomatic amnesia. He blurted out the truth. But the *Pravda* of Chatham House prevailed easily. So much is published in England that individual books that are out of line—even dozens

of them—just don't matter. The Universities toe the line, and the newspapers, and the broadcast media.

I assume that the same thing goes for France. It has the authoritative institutions too, and they operate in academic freedom, and toe the line on essentials. At least I have, for about thirty years, been looking for a French history that dealt realistically with the realities of 1940 and I have not found a single one. I was too young at the time to understand much about the way Petain handled the consequences of French defeat in the war that France declared on Germany, but I recall six years later how the 'peasants' of Slieve Luacra argued about the sentence of death on Petain. I don't think I have ever heard it discussed realistically since then. Post-war France lived in the De Gaulle myth and would not have it disturbed.

In England John Charmley questioned the Churchill myth in which England lived. The book was publicised in the *Times*. But it was decided that it would not do, and nothing has followed from it.

About thirty years ago, in Belfast, I noticed an article in the *Times* by Professor Crotty, which appealed to England to take intellectual life in Ireland in hand once again because Ireland was incapable of doing its own thinking. And England did not fail him. (Professor Crotty was a founder of the Europhobic, Anglophile Irish Sovereignty Movement.) Oxford University set about Re-Writing Irish History, and openly proclaimed the fact in a brochure.

In 1969-70, when I was denounced for giving succour to Ulster, I said that the nationalism that condemned me was near the end of its tether, having a final fling, and would be outlasted by the Ulster Unionism whose substance it refused to acknowledge. Those were the only years when I saw the Dublin middle class at close quarters. I was involved in the Housing Action agitation that frightened it, and then a few months later I tried to prevent it from going into denial about the North. I judged it by what I saw of it. I knew little of it otherwise. I did not know that the Professor of History in the major University had come straight to it from British Intelligence and stifled historical inquiry for a long generation. The Irish University system seems to have become secondary to Oxford and Cambridge under his influence. (He was a Cambridge man.) He could not, or would not—the latter I think—put Irish academic history on a sound footing, but directed bright students elsewhere.

About ten years ago, the Professor of History at Cork (Joseph Lee, a Cambridge man) hailed Nicholas Mansergh OBE as the greatest Irish historian of the century. Mansergh (a Cambridge man) directed a section of the British Propaganda Department (or Ministry of Information) during World War 2, and was subsequently a functionary of Chatham House, helping to retain Imperial influence in the bits of the Empire that walked away.

The *Dublin Review* may think it better that History Departments in Ireland should be subject to the political influence of another state rather than to their own. I will only say that this state of affairs bears out the judgment I made in 1970. But if the *Dublin Review* thinks it is the usual state of affairs in other countries, it is nuts.

The *Review* concludes the paragraph I have quoted with a comment on the fact that I was denounced by Harris in one of his earlier manifestations for saying that the Ulster Protestants had the substance of a nation: "*Well, long live the denounced, say I. Better infuriating iconoclasts in our halls of learning than tame retailers of the official line.*" Which is gibberish, whichever way you take it.

The reader is told, about Aubane: "*The raison d'etre of the society is to defend the received history of the national struggle against revisionism.*" The reason for its establishment was actually to write some local history. I took it up after I gave up on the democratising of the North as hopeless. In one of the early publications I discussed the great question of why the piece of Slieve Luacra in the County of Cork was in the Diocese of Kerry. In another somebody wrote about St. John's Well. Jack Lane wrote about The Butter Road. There was local interest in these local histories, and I saw myself as going out to grass after the turbulence of Belfast. To meet the local interest, we compiled an *Anthology* of North Cork writers over the centuries. It circulated locally and we did not know or care what anywhere else thought of it. The fame of the Slieve Luacra fiddler in a handful of townlands, which has no yearning to reach beyond the range of meaningful individuality into the regions of urban anonymity, is probably incomprehensible in Dublin proper.

An impetus to producing the *Anthology* was the holding of the Eurovision Song Contest in Millstreet: it was described as the *Manurovision Contest* on the media by superior people.

In the *Anthology* we included a selection from Elizabeth Bowen, because a poet in Cork City—which is, I think,

even more Know Nothing about "the peasant uplands" than Dublin—said she was the great North Cork writer. It was an absurd statement. She had nothing to do with its life, and was utterly unknown there—except perhaps for a tiny nest of gentlefolk somewhere. Anyway we threw her in for good measure, but did so under the Deriddian device of *sous rature*—scratched out, or as we put it, in deleted form, with a line through her name. As far as I know, this sampler did not lead to any demand for her books. (They were mostly in print as part of the literature of England.)

So the *Anthology* was there, circulating amongst the 'peasants' it was relevant to—until some years later it was denounced as racist by the *Irish Times*, which must have sought it out: we would not have dreamt of sending it a review copy. And it was denounced by the *Sunday Business Post*. All because of Derrida—of whom the Dublin intelligentsia seemed to be ignorant. And the *Sunday Business Post* carried an expose of Aubane. So were sought out in our rural obscurity and made to deal defensively with national issues. *Istina*. Once again the *Review* version is *pravda*—filled out with an *exposé*:

"It may surprise the uninitiated to know that the Aubane Historical Society is the creation of a group of individuals, centred round Brendan Clifford, who created the British and Irish Communist Organisation (B&ICO) and developed what is known as the two nations theory: the proposition being that the Ulster Protestants constituted a separate nation. During the 1970s and 1980s the group's vitriol was directed against nationalists and Provisional Sinn Fein/IRA in particular" (Endnote 4).

Regarding the 1918 Election:

"Most people willingly gave allegiance to the Dail... But there were arguable limits to the concept of sovereignty in the Irish historical context. To begin with, ...who constituted the nation... Clifford reminds us... of his past campaigning to have "the Ulster Unionist community recognised as a distinction national community".* The Clifford of that era would certainly have answered in the affirmative in respect of the recognition of Northern Ireland. The problem is that this creates a conflict of sovereignty because the second Dail... claimed jurisdiction over the whole island" (p9).

* "He goes on to suggest that this was "with a view to negotiating a compromise settlement". He may be indulging in a little revisionism here himself. Rather than being a harbinger of the Good Friday Agreement, the B&ICO campaign at the time was for recognition of two nations on the island, the defeat of the IRA, and for the

territorial claim on the North to be deleted" (Endnote 4).

Pravda has been left far behind here.

Pedantry apart, the GFA gave institutional recognition to the existence of two nations in the North, if not on the island, by establishing an apartheid system of representation, and sub-government under which the will of the majority was rendered incapable of determining policy. I did not support it because it established a framework for making communal antagonism permanent.

Also, the idea that the national division in the North is not part of the national division on the island seemed to me to be groundless. Certain authors whose books have been issued by reputable publishers tell us that Jack Lynch redefined the Irish nation as being co-extensive with the 26 Co. state. That is nonsense in my opinion—either that Lynch did that, or that it is in accordance with social reality—but it is an idea that is about in Dublin. Taken seriously it gives us three nations—the 26 Co. state and the two whose rights are given some effect in the apartheid system of the GFA.

The assertion that I gave up on the two-nations analysis of 1969 is sheer invention—and in the light of all I have published I do not see how it can be other than malicious invention—unless it be the case that the *Review* did not trouble to inform itself of what I have been writing since the 1970s and has been inventing negligently without any concern for facts.

As to the two nations: so what? I have met people in Belfast who conceded the case on the two-nations. They conceded that the Protestant community was not a brittle leftover from feudalism or the wars of religion—which was the usual argument I met with in the South in 1969 and the early seventies. The Protestant community had a will to endure, and would not collapse under pressure or betrayal. So what followed from that admission? In the conditions of political flux, war between the two nations followed as logically as anything. There was nothing magical about the incantation of 'Two Nations' that would make something else possible.

The Provos did their best to make war on the State, but the State sought to depict it as a war of the two communities in which the State tried to hold the ring, and therefore to a considerable extent it was a two-nations war.

The "*Constitutional nationalists*" deplored violence but participated wholeheartedly in the antagonism of communities.

The politics of communal antagonism was not to my taste. So I proposed that the North be governed within the politics of the British State.

My first view was that, since Britain was a multi-national state, it was more suitable to contain and supersede the communal antagonism in the North than the Irish State was. It was a very superficial view and was soon refuted—not by Dublin *literati*, but by myself.

If Britain was a multi-national state operating through a form of party-politics not based on nationality, why had the politics of communal antagonism in the North persisted in such a stark form? The answer was obvious: because the Six Counties, when being made into Northern Ireland, was excluded from the political life of the State. I therefore proposed that the North should be brought within the political life of the State which held it. A campaign for that purpose was launched. It met with considerable success in the mid-1980s. I wrote a series of pamphlets on the issue which circulated in thousands of copies. Of course the campaign was defeated in the end by the opposition of the SDLP—which felt itself seriously threatened by it, leading John Hume to resort to personal abuse, which was not characteristic of him—and also of the Irish Labour Party, the British Labour Party, the British Tory Party, the Ulster Unionist Party, the Official Republican Party, the UDA, the UVF, and God knows who else.

The Northern Ireland hothouse of communal conflict was going to remain. Whitehall had a purpose for the hothouse of communal conflict it established in 1921. And Whitehall had its way. And I put myself out to grass in Slieve Luacra local history—only to be pounced on by Dublin *literati* who apparently could not tolerate any survivor of rural backwardness in articulate form.

It is curious that none of the Internet *exposés* of me—of which there have been a few in recent years—even mentions what the bulk of my writing was about from the mid 1970s to the early 1990s—democratising Northern Ireland within the politics of the British State. I can only put that down to an underlying nationalism which guides the denunciatory intellectuals.

I criticised the GFA as a scheme for perpetuating two-nations antagonism in non-violent form. And that is how it is working out. The process of segregation continues under it, with the terms of the conflict substantially altered in favour of Sinn Fein. The criticism did not imply a rejection of the view that the division in the North was national. And I do not see how the *Dublin Review* comment

can be anything but wilful misrepresentation.

On the charge of being vitriolic against the Provos, I don't know how to plead. I don't think it was so, but it could be that we were not perfectly dispassionate on the matter of urban bombing at the start. I know that when Thomas Kinsella published a long poem on Bloody Sunday, to universal nationalist acclaim (is it called *Butcher's Dozen?*), we responded with a long poem, in the same mode, by Tommy Dwyer on the subject of the Oxford Street bombing (called *Kinsella's Oversight*). And I know that, when I saw the bombing of the narrow streets between Sandy Row and Great Victoria Street in Belfast I wondered how long that kind of thing could continue before a mass Protestant militia appeared. It wasn't very long.

I know that we decided early on that denunciation of the last atrocity was futile as politics. And insofar as we were effective in diverting people from either the Provos or the Loyalists, it was not by denunciatory invective, but by suggesting something else to do, i.e. democratisation through the politics of the state, which the *Dublin Review* omits from its *exposé*.

As to the B&ICO being my group, I believe the *Dublin Review* has grounds for knowing that was not the case. If I had to name an individual as founder, it would be the late Pat Murphy. In another dimension it was Gerry Golden. And in yet another dimension it was Len Callender. At various times and places it was known as the group of one of these, or of a number of others. It was in fact an association of frequently discordant groups that held together by frequent meetings at which there was all-out dispute. And it is certain that the Dublin group was never under my influence.

At some point most of it took off and formed some organisation which included, as far as I recall, the publishers of the *Dublin Review*. What it stood for made no sense to me, and I did not follow it, beyond writing something in response to it at the start. Its position, as I recall it, was connected with Professor Richard Kearney's idea of "*post-nationalism*", which I could not grasp theoretically or see any politically practicable application of.

I dealt with the Northern situation and judged Dublin politicians by their mischief-making in the North. The greatest mischief-makers were Drs. Fitz Gerald and O'Brien. Peter Barry was another. Charles Haughey seemed to be the only one who understood what Northern Ireland was and who never

sought to stir it up with chimerical initiatives. Haughey was seen differently in the Dublin publications, naturally enough.

One dispute between Belfast and Dublin had to do with Dr. O'Brien's Section 31, which took nationalist culture off the Free State airwaves, with the object of drying up the sources of Provo support. As we saw it, the Provos were the specific product of the undemocratic mode of government that Britain devised for the North. The ban would not damage them. It would have the contrary effect of giving the Provos exclusive possession of the traditional nationalist culture of Ireland. At a joint meeting of the Belfast and Dublin groups, I proposed that Dublin should campaign for the removal of the ban. There was a majority at the meeting for the proposal, possibly because it was held in Belfast. A Dublin member said that the meeting could pass what resolutions it liked, but Dublin would not oppose the ban. And that was that. (And I suppose the BICO in Dublin at that time was that member's group.)

None of this has to do with *Coolacrease*, but the *Dublin Review* brings it up in connection with *Coolacrease*, and one learns over time that anything one leaves undealt with in these polemics becomes important, while all that is dealt with fades away as if it had never been said.

"*The Clifford of that era would certainly have answered in the affirmative in respect of the recognition of Northern Ireland*". More than that. Unfortunately I *did* answer affirmatively. I did not see on the instant that Northern Ireland was an abomination. I went along with treating Partition and Northern Ireland as synonymous. I think it took me about two years—for which I can only plead that I was very busy with 'two nations' meetings around the country—to figure out that Northern Ireland and Partition were different things and that their combination was an atrocity. There was no actual Partition Act. Unionists in the Six Counties were allowed to remain connected with Britain, after a fashion, if they agreed to operate a devolved government in the Six Counties, under which the Protestant two-thirds would rule the Catholic third outside the democratic system of the state.

A Partition Act which simply retained the Six Counties—or better still 4 or 5—within the British state under British politics would have worked out differently. I reckon that a great swathe of Joe Devlin's Nationalists would very quickly have got involved in British Labour politics. Anyhow, it was not

mere Partition that led to Connolly's "*carnival of reaction*". It was the setting up of Northern Ireland government, in an exclusively 6 County political medium, with the condition of returning a Unionist majority every couple of years—the 6 Counties having twice the number of elections as the rest of the state—lest the North should fall out of the UK into the Free State.

But this has nothing to do in principle with the two nations, or in practice with the issue of whether in democratic society sovereignty is democratic or Imperial.

It was not because of the complication of the Unionist minority that Britain set about suppressing elected Republican government by force. That was made perfectly clear before June 1921 and was unmistakable after June 1921. The 6 Counties were hived off to become a hothouse of communal conflict in June, but Britain absolutely refused to recognise the legitimacy of the undisputed Sinn Fein mandate in the South.

The *Dublin Review* quotes J.J. Dillon as saying something acceptable to it. What he said on the programme was pacifist in tendency. I don't know if this misrepresented him. People interviewed had to sign away all rights over what was broadcast, according to the producers a *de facto* right of misrepresentation. Only wealthy people have an actual right of redress against misrepresentation, by going to law. The individual who is not wealthy has no rights against wealthy institutions in the sphere of civil law. The *de facto* assumption is that poor people have no reputation to lose. What happened over *Coolacrease* was exceptional—the people who were traduced gave themselves a right of reply by producing a book—and was something that the RTE power structure had every reason to suppose could not happen.

I don't know if J.J. Dillon is actually a pacifist. But the bits of what he said that were broadcast are pacifist in tendency. The *Dublin Review* says that in *Coolacrease*:

"he is dismissed as a pacifist and anti-war. Perhaps fair-minded and compassionate might better describe him".

I suppose pacifism might be descried as universal compassion, which makes no distinction between causes. But it is reasonable to treat it as irrelevant in a discussion of whether a particular act of war was legitimate in a conflict between two forces, neither of which was pacifist: "*In conflict those things occur. Like hatred comes into it, revenge, comes into it*". Therefore conflict *per se* is wrong.

A major British socialist historian and ideologue was an officer in the World War and tried to indoctrinate those under his command into killing without feeling. They were fighting for a principle and to allow feelings of hatred to enter into their killing tainted the principle. Was there ever a battle fought like that? Perhaps the area bombing of Germany was done in that spirit, and Hiroshima and Nagasaki. American military personnel at one time spoke freely about these delicate matters. There was a widespread view that bombing from the air was better: it could be entirely impersonal, and was not demoralising (and was therefore moral?) as ground conflict was. It was freely admitted that in the Pacific War the US Army rarely took prisoners, and it was admitted that in the naval war enemy survivors of submarine action were often left to die, or were put out of their misery. That is the world we live in, and it has become ever more like that.

Some further comments by Dillon:

"They'd hoist the flag in Cadamstown. The British would be out and they'd have to take it down..."

"A raggle taggle group of peasants, thinking they're soldiers, that they're going to take on the Empire, an Empire that was just after winning a war..."

There was another raggle taggle group of peasants that once did something remarkable. And they were known about in Ireland once—at least in my part of it. Mere peasants around Lake Lucerne took on the Hapsburgs, who regarded them with the contempt with which J.J. Dillon apparently regards the people of the Cadamstown a couple of generations back. They were peasants and should have stuck to their spades. War is for the gentry.

Schiller wrote a play about those Swiss peasants who refused to stick to their spades, and who constructed a peasant-state that remains utterly distinctive in Europe. Schiller's *William Tell* was part of the culture of Young Ireland, which persisted in my area for me to grow up in. But unfortunately, when I heard about such things, I was too much absorbed with football and hurling and anything else that came along, and I neglected to make interview notes.

Gavan Duffy, the most bourgeois and reformist of the Young Irelanders (and therefore, in my book, the most effectively revolutionary if revolution was necessary) had a motto: *What has been done can be done*. And those Irish peasants had some knowledge of what had been done in the world.

Unlike the Swiss peasants, they had voted before they went to war. They went to war to give effect to what they

had voted for. J.J. Dillon apparently thinks they should have stayed at home when the Empire declined to give independence—simply ignoring the vote. So does the *Dublin Review*: "*It is debatable as to whether the people in 1918 gave Sinn Fein and the IRA a mandate to wage war.*"

Everything is debatable to quibblers. Sinn Fein would not have been allowed to circulate an election manifesto asking for a mandate for war. Nor would it have been sensible to resort to war until the Great War propaganda about democracy and the rights of small nations had been proved bogus. But the other parties, as I recall, put the war issue to the electorate. The election was more extensively contested than many others, and people were urged not to vote for Sinn Fein as that would lead to war. And two and a half years later, when war was the dominant fact of life, dissent from war was not substantial enough to produce a single candidate against Sinn Fein.

If democracy is to be taken in earnest, then electorates must be presumed to be well enough informed about real life for their vote for something to be taken to include the necessary means of realising it.

"Aubane Historical Society publications will appeal to those who wish to remain steadfast to the story of the heroic national struggle, rejecting anything that might be seen to besmirch it. Recently, President McAleese spoke of the very long shelf life of the toxic seeds generated by oppression, conflict, sectarianism, plantation, colonisation and famine" in this country. She went on to say: "we are trying to nurture a much healthier and better harvest, an island comfortable with an uncomfortable past, no longer held back by the divisions it caused but energised by partnerships that flourish amongst its richly diverse people". In that spirit, is it not time to understand and appreciate all past heroism, tragedies and injustices, and just those of "our own side"..."

Meaning, in the present instance, putting the brand of infamy on the townland of Coolcrease and demanding that it become penitential. Coolcrease is defamed by the national broadcaster and the defamation is sold internationally. The healthy thing is to submit to the brand of evil. The toxic seed is what generates the urge to find out if there is any truth of the factual kind in it.

The refutation of RTE was certainly hurtful to some. David Adams, for instance, a Loyalist with a certain background who writes a column in the *Irish Times*. For him the evil of Republicanism is true *a priori*. The truth of the

RTE version of Coolcrease did not depend for him on its factual accuracy.

When I had some contact with Ulster Loyalists—and Senator Harris was a staunch Republican—I did not tell them the yarns about Republican Ireland that they wanted to hear. Senator Harris, many conversions later, did.

In the mid-1970s an energetic young Fine Gael intellectual made contact with me and told me about the ethnic cleansing that was central to the War of Independence. Protestants "*were scraped off the society*" by the Republican movement. I had no preconceptions about it, and I certainly had no reluctance about coming to that conclusion if the facts led there, because I thought national Ireland (I mean the Free State, which was the general Northern name for the 26 Counties under whatever form) was behaving very badly. It took on trust for a while what I was told by somebody who seemed to have gone into the matter. But, when I investigated a bit, I found no factual grounds for it and concluded that it wasn't so.

I set out to produce political/historical publications that were readable by people of both communities in the North, and I succeeded. I did not do this by abstracting a common viewpoint from the conflict—that would have been forgery and would have been recognised as such—but by describing the conflict without any transcendentalism. It was, of course, not generally popular with Loyalists that I did not misrepresent the other side, but quite a few of them put up with it. But then the Stickies went through their transformations, and the Senator comes along and tells them what they liked to hear rather than what they needed to hear.

With the appearance of Senator Harris's version in the mass circulation Sunday newspapers, followed by its broadcasting internationally by the national broadcaster, Loyalists had every reason to suppose that their deepest convictions about the Republican South had been substantiated. None of them ever took the kind of interest in the life of Catholic Ireland that I and my colleagues did in Protestant Ulster, and so they knew nothing about it for themselves. And they were naturally disgusted when that was taken away from them.

Coolcrease incautiously makes a reference to souls—which, of course, are out of fashion. The *Dublin Review* comments: "*Evidence about souls might be hard to come by*". The most sensible observation I ever came across was Kant's remark that, while it is impossible to say what spirit is one cannot get very

far in discussing human affairs without saying things which assume that it exists—unless, of course, you are a rigorous English utilitarian. Nevertheless I claim that I know something that is in one particular soul—that of the President who urged the uprooting of toxic seeds. In her career one sees a chameleon advancing by sensing and adapting to the changing colours of the surroundings—until suddenly she blurts out the assertion that in Northern Ireland the Catholics were dealt with as the Jews were dealt with in Nazi Germany. That was not written for her by the Government. Nor was it the outcome of calculating spin. It came from the depths, and showed that there was something constant within the chameleon.

I had intended to say nothing about the greater part of the *Dublin Review*

article which does not address the Coolcrease issue. But look at this:

"During the civil war the anti-treaty side's response to the Free State government's execution policy was "a destructive campaign of intimidation, arson and assassination on the part of the IRA, which was designed... to drive the landowning class (principally Protestant) from the country"... (quoting B. Kissane, *The Politics Of the Civil War*).

Has Dublin detached itself altogether from basic knowledge of Ireland outside the Pale? By far the biggest class in Ireland was the landowning class, and it was Catholic. Are we supposed to amend that sentence into an accurate statement of fact for ourselves?? When reading a magazine which asks for Paddy Heaney's Interview Notes on his talks with his father!

ported the Conservative candidate organised a Home Rule meeting at which Devlin was the main speaker. Shortly afterwards, partly as a result of his success in pulling the United Irish League of GB into shape, Devlin took on the job of General Secretary in Ireland.

In January 1905 Joe Devlin was selected as the UIL (United Irish League) candidate for West Belfast. He had been (rather inappropriately) MP for Kilkenny, North prior to this. Such was the way of what passed for politics in Ireland at that time, there had been no contest. Devlin was approved of by a number of Trade Unions, the Engineers in the lead. The *Northern Star*, founded by Devlin in 1898, after the Local Government elections of 1905 had asserted that local Labour could expect no help from the Catholic community. In fact, all the Labour Councillors had been elected with Catholic votes. Despite that, they had largely taken a Unionist line on the Home Rule question.

That was, apparently, forgiven and forgotten. Apart from any other consideration, the *Northern Star* was becoming a Glasgow-oriented publication. Devlin took a studiously anti-sectarian line in his campaign. However, he did not back down in his Nationalism. He said, among other things, "*I hold the cause of Ireland and the cause of Labour to be identical...*".

He promised to "...strongly advocate the taxation of land values..."—not something that would have gone down well in Kilkenny, North. He wanted "*the better housing of the poor... a complete change in the present Poor Law system, Old Age pensions and state ownership of Irish railways...*" (Irish News 11.01.1906). He got elected by sixteen votes. He seems to have been sincere in his Labour-leaning sympathies. And suggested his team had "*built a bridge, so to speak, over the Boyne*". The Unionists felt that they had lost the seat because of an Independent Liberal-Unionist candidate having stood and split their vote.

Despite his famous victory, and his promises, Devlin went on a year-long fund-raising tour of Australia and New Zealand, from April 1906. This is usually described as being at the request of John Redmond. Redmond was, at this point, the undisputed leader of Irish Nationalism. Devlin was a leading figure in the Irish Party. (He had been appointed General Secretary of the UIL in September 1904). But he could hardly refuse Redmond's request. (This was prior to the payment of MPs—the Redmonds were of the landlord class—but most nationalist MPs needed a stipend. The Irish Party spent quite a lot on publicity.

Seán McGouran

Part Two of a biographical series on the life and times of a crucial figure in Irish Parliamentary politics

Joe Devlin At Home And Abroad

In Part One of this series we saw the entry of Joe Devlin into politics in the 1880s when he founded the Thomas Sexton Debating Society, which did not stick to talking, but got involved in canvassing. The Society helped to get Thomas Sexton elected to Parliament to represent West Belfast on the basis of a mixture of Home Rule and Labour policies. In 1892 Devlin brought Michael Davitt to Belfast, hoping his Labour orientation would appeal to working-class Protestants. He continued to work in Belfast during the closing years of the 1800s, but was then deployed further afield. He toured North America with John Redmond in 1902, and Canada in 1903. And it was in Canada that he started to put an 'Imperialist' argument: that Home Rule was a way of binding Ireland to the Empire.

Quite early in his career Devlin had been offered a post with the Irish National League of Great Britain (this name dated from the Parnell period). He declined on the grounds that he did not want a paid position in the 'national movement'.

However, in 1903, while in Canada, Devlin took on the General Secretaryship of the re-named United Irish League GB. He had been asked to take on the job by T.P. O'Connor, the President of the organisation. O'Connor was President until 1918. Mainly, probably, because he was the only Nationalist MP in Great

Britain. He was, in essence, a Gladstonian Liberal. Most of the rank and file members of the UILGB were Labour leaning, and the League dissolved itself into the Labour Party at its Convention in 1918.

Devlin had more in common with the membership than O'Connor. The Party needed the Irish vote as a bargaining tool with the the majority parties, largely the Liberals—though Parnell had instructed members of the INLGB to vote Conservative in 1884. He was not successful.

Devlin, in the course of his short time as General Secretary, got himself into trouble with the Catholic Church. At a by-election in Gateshead, in January 1904 the local priests suggested that the Irish should vote for the Conservative candidate as he was thought to be more sympathetic to the funding of Catholic schools. Devlin saturated the local Irish area with canvassers—sixty, to canvass an estimated 1800 voters. He played on the traditional Liberal attitude to Home Rule. (The candidate was on the Labour wing of the Liberal Party.) In the event, the Liberal won, with a majority of 1205.

Members of the hierarchy in Ireland were—privately—irritated by the behaviour of Devlin (and of Redmond, who had signed the appeal to the electors of Gateshead). But in November 1904 some of the same priests who had sup-

Much of it to counter sometimes quite crazed allegations by Conservative and Unionist publicists).

Devlin and his friend from the Sexton Debating Society days, John Donovan (usually referred to as 'Tom'), set out for Australia. They sailed from Naples to Fremantle, landing on 17th April. They were given a civic reception there and in Perth, the capital of Western Australia. Their first meeting was chaired by the Premier of Western Australia. The Australians did not wish the speakers to separate, so they had to move about the continent as a team. Devlin decided to attempt to appeal to all Australians. He did not always succeed as the Orange Order was quite powerful in some parts of Australia. It was very powerful in Sydney, and in some scattered areas, largely in Sydney's hinterland. That hardly mattered in the greater part of the Commonwealth. But Sydney was the largest city at that time.

Devlin stressed the benefits of self government, which most of the individual states had had for some decades, and the Commonwealth of Australia had had since 1900. This was partly because Australia, like Canada, had Young Ireland input into its formation. In the Australian case, the most prominent was Charles Gavan Duffy (who had spent some decades in public life and became Governor-General of Victoria). Devlin went on to repeat in Australia the 'imperialist' argument for Home Rule which he used in Canada.

Like the Redmond brothers, who had been very impressed by the situation of Australia inside the Empire, Devlin and other Irish Nationalists surely had two different elements in mind.

One was the fact that the recently-elected Liberal Government of the UK was not in a hurry to bring about Home Rule in Ireland. Irish Nationalists needed allies in the Empire. Secondly, there was the treatment of the South African Republics only four years prior to his trip to Australia. Practically nobody could have foreseen the solution to the problem of South Africa brought about by the Liberal Prime Minister Campbell Bannerman (a Canadian). He granted 'responsible government' to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State—by way of Order in Council. Such Orders did not have to be debated in Parliament, so Conservative opposition to the move—which eventuated in the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910—was sidelined.

Devlin and Donovan spoke in most of the main towns of Western Australia. They and their listeners had to travel long distances to the meeting places.

Devlin and Donovan left Western Australia on 11th May 1906, and went

to South Australia. Devlin had great success in Adelaide: a large meeting approved a resolution in favour of Home Rule. It was moved by the Premier, who was of Protestant Irish descent. The local 'Orange' were very upset by this and trailed Devlin. But they were of very little consequence. Devlin felt they may have helped his case. At this time he heard of his father's death (his mother had died during his first visit to north America).

Moving on to Victoria, they had to deal with Australia's version of Winter. The meetings arranged for them by a local committee were mostly upcountry and they faced floods and bad weather. They sometimes had to part company and mostly got to their appointments. Devlin had earache and a chest infection at this time. Some of these meetings were quite small: Donovan told the *Irish News* (25.08.1906) "*Yarrowough... Thirty-five present. £75 subscribed.*" (Remember to put at least two zeros on the end of that sum to get the current value.) The news of Michael Davitt's death did not do much for their morale. But there were a number of very large meetings in Melbourne, which was then the Commonwealth capital.

They went on to New South Wales in August. Their first meeting in Sydney was chaired by the Cardinal, Moran. Nineteen meetings had been arranged for them. Again, mostly upcountry. But the meetings were very successful. They had to promise to return for thirty-five meetings in October after their tour of Queensland. Because Devlin was very unwell, they had to do Queensland separately. When Devlin was well enough to carry on, he did the north of the state while Donovan did the south. They then returned to Sydney to do the meetings which had been planned for them.

The next place was Tasmania. They arrived in mid-November. Devlin decided that Donovan could do it largely on his own, so he went to New Zealand. He arrived on December 10th. Only ten meetings had been arranged, and Devlin was not sanguine at his prospects. He was mistaken, and he decided to extend his visit until 5th February 1907. He was listened to closely everywhere he went. And a meeting at the Town Hall, Wellington on Christmas Day was not merely chaired by the Mayor, it was addressed by the Prime Minister, Joseph Ward. Ward made a very supportive speech about Irish Home Rule. This sort of thing should have put pressure on the (British) Liberals. But the Liberal Party was falling into the hands of an imperialist clique who thought the New Zealanders ought to toe London's line.

All in all, the Irish Party found considerable levels of support in all three settler countries (Canada, Australia, New

Zealand).

Devlin seems not to have been entirely happy with the amount of money collected during this expedition. But it amounted to £20,000. Even in the 1910s that was a very large sum. Maybe he thought the physical effort was not worth it. Either way, he made a very great impression on the public and fellow-politicians in both countries. Devlin returned to Ireland by way of America. The UIL in north America was concerned about the fact that Sinn Féin was on its own fund-raising tour, its first. He was asked to go on yet another fund-raising and morale-boosting tour around America. He declined.

Sinn Féin was an influential tendency at the time. Devlin dismissed its overall arguments in a discussion with Tom Kettle who he met in America and who was attracted to Sinn Féin's overall ideas. Kettle was on a different fund-raising expedition for the Irish League. He was a member of its 'advanced' nationalist section, the Young Ireland Branch (along with Sheehy Skeffington and Cruise O'Brien). But, some time later, Devlin suggested to John Dillon that Séin Féin be absorbed by the League, as a kind of 'think tank'. But that proposal came to nothing. I will discuss Devlin's position with regard to Sinn Féin and say something about the *Northern Star* in the next issue.

Charles Darwin

Darwin's *Descent Of Man* is rarely quoted, perhaps because of its racist justifications of Imperial man. Here are Darwin's thoughts on the Irish

Survival Of The Fittest?

"The reckless, degraded, and often vicious members of society, tend to increase at a quicker rate than the provident and generally virtuous members. Or as Mr. Greg puts the case:

"The careless, squalid, unambitious Irishman multiplies like rabbits: the frugal, foreseeing, self-respecting, ambitious Scot, stern in his morality, spiritual in his faith, sagacious and disciplined in his intelligence, passes his best years in struggle and in celibacy, marries late, and leaves few behind him. Given a land originally peopled by a thousand Saxons and a thousand Celts—and in a dozen generations five-sixths of the population would be Celts, but five-sixths of the property, of the power, of the intellect, would belong to the one-sixth of Saxons that remained. In the eternal 'struggle for existence,' it would be the inferior and less favoured race that had prevailed—and prevailed by virtue not of its good qualities but of its faults." "

– Charles Robert Darwin,
The Descent of Man,
Great Minds Edition, page 123

Report from Pat Muldowney

Land War: Local newspaper denounces Irish "Exceptionalism"
Part Two (Part One was in C&S No. 94)

Woodstock in Flames

Kilkenny People (Editorial 15 August 2008)

Making history

Anybody who believes that history is bunk should take a look at the varied and intense correspondence about the Tighe family and the Woodstock estate in these pages over the past few weeks. Much of the correspondence relates to planning issues but the meta story is a debate about the role of the Big House and the post Cromwellian aristocracy in Irish history.

There is a feeling among many historians and politicians that a post-nationalist school of history has triumphed in recent years. That has never been the case. The letters and emails on this page are just another reminder that many people still bitterly resent what happened to us in the past.

This newspaper has always been a nationalist newspaper. It was founded back in 1892 to support the great agitator and nationalist Charles Stewart Parnell and it thrived by supporting the nationalist cause while other local newspapers such as the pro-Unionist *Moderator* slowly withered. Irish nationalism is a noble cause and winning of independence after a struggle of centuries was one of the great struggles of European history.

Nonetheless, there is something futile in criticising a single family such as the Tighes for the many terrible things that happened to this country. The aristocracy everywhere mistreated the rest of the population all over Europe for centuries. In many cases, that aristocracy was not native. One of the results of the Thirty Years War which raged across the continent in the 17th century was the destruction of the old aristocracy and their replacement with a mostly foreign layer from other parts of Europe. Irish history is not as unusual as we like to think. One of the biggest problems with the way history is taught in Ireland is the focus on exceptionalism rather than the things we have in common with other Europeans. Much of Scandinavia and north Germany for example was also racked by famine in the 1840's, leading to death and emigration but we rarely hear about this here in Ireland. We prefer to believe that our suffering was unique and could have been avoided had we been independent.

The Tighes were probably no better or worse than most landlords across

Europe. Naturally, they lived in opulence while others lived in poverty but most readers of the *Kilkenny People* also live well despite the fact that there are pockets of dire poverty in this country today and people are starving to death just a few thousand miles away. We all know that the effects of the famines in Darfur and elsewhere could be mitigated by new agricultural policies and food aid but few of us lift a finger to help. Our past is instructive but we can no longer change it. The only thing we can change is the present and the future.

M. G. O'Brien (Letter, 28.8.2008)

Woodstock was an asset to the area

I read with some dismay, a couple of recent letters to the *Kilkenny People* dealing with the past history of Woodstock estate at Inistioige.

For the life of me I simply cannot understand what pleasure or satisfaction can be derived from endeavouring to perpetuate old feuds and past bitterness.

I'm a 'blow in' to Inistioige, but a number of completely reliable sources tell me that without any doubt, Woodstock was an asset to the area, providing help and employment where there was virtually none. Its occupiers—the Tighe family—were generally regarded as kind and helpful.

There are two sides to every story, but in any case, surely it's best to let bygones be bygones.

Eamonn de Paor (Letter, 3.9.2008)

Exceptionalism in Irish History

Devoted readers of the *Kilkenny People* will extend a hearty welcome to the new editor and wish him the best of luck.

There remains an outstanding issue from the *People's* lively and interesting discussion of historical issues during the summer, including the colonial legacy of the Cromwellian conquest, slaughter and land-grabbing.

The final editorial column of the former editor (August 15) castigated the *People's* readership for holding an "Exceptionalist" view of Irish history which is critical of Cromwell's activities in Ireland.

"Exceptionalism" is a big word. What does it mean?

Readers expressed the view in these columns that the Irish suffered conquest, famine, religious oppression and land-grabbing, and that these evils were the result of colonialism. If it is the case that this view is tainted with Exceptionalism, that means that what was done to the Irish was due to normal historical forces, and it means that the colonial power ought not to be blamed for it. Nobody is to blame for it, except perhaps ourselves. It was nothing special or exceptional. It just happened. That is what the *People* editorial of August 15 was driving at.

Is the former editor right about this? Are *People*-readers suffering from an obsessive delusion about foreign oppression in Irish history?

I think not. The editorial accusation of Exceptionalism is a slander against the *People's* own readers. In the course of the historical discussion in these columns, it was alleged that Cromwell was a just and fair-minded individual, and, in response, one or two readers pointed out that the facts of Irish history contradict this rosy view of Cromwell. That's all. That hardly warrants the editor's accusation of *Exceptionalism*.

To get a better idea of what Exceptionalism is, here are a few examples of a national history represented as exceptional, divinely pre-ordained, and having special privileges and rights above all others:

In his first speech to Parliament in 1653, Cromwell argued that England was "called upon by God, as had been Judah, to rule with Him and for Him". Milton's *Paradise Lost* talks about "God's special Providence for England... His chosen People". This outlook inspired Cecil Rhodes: "Milton's faith in 'God's Englishman' will be our inspired principle—to work for the Empire, to extend it." This was an aspect of the British mentality which inspired the Nazis and their concept of the Master Race: "The Goddess of History would have to be a whore if she does not give victory to the Fuehrer provided by Providence" (Ministry of Propaganda, 1941). Hugh Egleton in his *History of Colonial Policy* (1897) revealed that: "Behind the mistakes and failures of individuals and generations, there grows upon us, as we study the history, the sense of an unseen superintending Providence controlling the development of the Anglo-Saxon race." Kipling said: "The Lord our God Most High ... He had smote for us a pathway to the ends of the Earth" (*Song of the English*). A 1631 advertisement for settlers to come to New England says that "God has provided this country for our nation, destroying the natives by the plague, it touching not one Englishman". G.W. Bush said in his January 2004 State of

the Union Address: *"America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs. ... America acts in this cause with friends and allies at our side, yet we understand our special calling: This great republic will lead the cause of freedom."* And here is part of Tony Blair's address at his Sedgefield constituency before his June 27 resignation in 2007: *"The British are special. The world knows it. In our innermost thoughts, we know it. This is the greatest nation on earth."* Earlier (Plymouth, January 2007) he declared that Britain was a *"war-fighting nation"* whose real frontiers reached to the ends of the earth.

On the whole, the Irish are very well aware that the invasions, conquests, colonisations, emigration and famine visited on us, though very serious were not terminal. We died in great numbers in the famines of the 16th to the 19th centuries. This was welcomed in some quarters, just as the demise of the American natives was welcomed. In an editorial of January 2 1852, the *Times* newspaper said:

"The pure Irish Celt is more than 1,000 years behind the civilization of this age. ...we need not prove the existence of such a class incompatible with civilization. ...Calamitous as are the events {the Famines} by which it has come to pass, we now thank Heaven that we have lived to speak of the class as a class that has been. ...We may possibly live to see the day when {Ireland's} chief produce will be cattle, and English and Scotch the majority in her population."

Nowadays those who accuse the Irish of Exceptionalism often seek to explain away the Famines as a perfectly natural and normal process of thinning out excess population. Nothing exceptional, in other words.

But though we were "thinned out", so to speak, we were not exterminated down to the last man, woman and child as the Tasmanian natives were. Here is what happened to them: *"In 1830 Tasmania was put under martial law, a line of armed beaters was formed across the island, and an attempt was made to drive the aborigines into a cul-de-sac."* (Moorehead, *The Fatal Impact*.) *"The final extermination [of the Tasmanians] was a large-scale event, undertaken with the co-operation of the military and judiciary. ... Soldiers of the Fortieth Regiment drove the natives between two great rock formations, shot all the men and dragged the women and children out of fissures in the rocks to knock their brains out."* (Ziehr, *Hell in Paradise*.)

If any of the Tasmanians had actually survived, I wonder if they would now be accused of "Exceptionalism" if they ever dared to mention what was done to

them by British colonial policy in 1830?

Manus O'Riordan (Letter, 19.9.2008)

Woodstock And Its History

On June 27, as the Executive Member for Ireland of the International Brigade Memorial Trust, I had the honour of delivering the first George Brown Memorial Lecture in St. Mary's Church of Ireland, Inistioge, commemorating that locally born anti-fascist hero who gave his life in defence of the Spanish Republic in 1937. {See www.siptu.ie/AboutSIPTU/History/GeorgeBrownCommemoration/ for the full text}. On the following day, Spanish and Irish Republicans, together with Irish and British relatives and comrades of George Brown, gathered at the International Brigade Memorial Grove in Woodstock Gardens, where I was again privileged to read out the roll of honour of all those Irishmen who had given their lives in defence of the democratic right of the Spanish people to determine their own destiny. There could not have been a more beautiful setting for such a ceremony, and the present development of Woodstock Gardens is indeed a tribute to both Coillte and the local community of Inistioge.

Elementary democratic principles ought to mean that the wishes of the local community should also determine any further developments at Woodstock. It would be out of place for me to say anything more than this in respect of recent correspondence in your columns on such future possibilities. But I do have a burning desire to ensure that the historical truth of what happened in the past is not distorted in the process. And I cannot agree with the assertions of Mr. Antony Tighe, in your issue of August 8, that *"there were only a few civilians killed during Cromwell's period"* and that the lands of Woodstock *"had nothing to do with Cromwell's regime"*. In fact, an *Irish Times* article on December 19, 1936, celebrating both Woodstock and the Tighe family, indicated no reticence whatsoever in also celebrating Woodstock's Cromwellian past as follows:

"In 1649 Inistioge and Woodstock formed the estate of that branch of the Geraldines, who were Barons of Brownsford and Cluane, and whose ancient castles, now in ruins, immediately adjoin Woodstock. Inistioge was taken by Colonel Abbott for the Parliamentarians, and the estate of Edmund Fitzgerald, Baron of Brownsford, comprising 2,841 acres, was soon after confiscated."

The latter's son, Edward Fitzgerald, was killed by Williamite forces at the battle of Aughrim in 1691, and tradition holds that his horse then found its way

home to his confiscated lands in Inistioge. Subsequently, honour among thieves would undoubtedly prevail, as the robber barons put in place under the dispensations of both Cromwell and William of Orange went on to behave like perfect gentlemen with each other in the buying and selling of such confiscated lands. As that *Irish Times* article further related: *"Upon the accession of William III, Woodstock was sold; and in 1703 the estate was purchased by Captain Sweete, an officer in William's Army"*. Indeed that same Woodstock article had commenced:

"When King William III, in his march to Carrick-on-Suir, gained the summit of the hills that overlook Iverk in South Kilkenny, and beheld beneath him a country which nature had partly clothed in wood, and which art had embellished with cultivation and crowned with castles, he is said to have exclaimed, as soon as he recovered the first emotions of surprise: *'This, indeed, is a country worth fighting for!'*"

Through two sets of female lines of succession, Woodstock afterwards passed from the Sweete to the Fownes family, and then to the Tighe family. The latter were also celebrated by the *Irish Times* as follows:

"The first of the Tighe family in Ireland of whom, according to Burke, there is authentic record, was Richard, son of William Tighe, of Market Deeping [England]. He was Sheriff of Dublin in 1649, and Mayor in the years 1651, 1652 and 1655. He represented Dublin in Cromwell's Parliament, 1656, and acquired considerable estates in the Counties of Carlow, Dublin and Westmeath during the reigns of Charles I, and Charles II."

Writing of *"the Act of Union with the Westminster Government"*, Mr. Antony Tighe states that *"one of my ancestors William Tighe ...totally opposed it as contrary to the best interests of the people of Ireland, and the present Tighe family are supportive of these views too."* I am delighted to hear that this is now the case, for just as Tighe political activity in Ireland had begun with Cromwellian devastation, so also had it ended with total opposition to any expression of Irish democracy. The last incumbent of Woodstock, Captain EKB Tighe, was to be tragically murdered by a burglar in his London home in 1917. But it was not any *"armed struggle"* in his native South Kilkenny that had impelled him to move his family to London in 1914. On September 21, 1912 a headline in the *Irish Times* would boldly proclaim: *"Forthcoming Unionist Meeting at Kilkenny"*. A correspondent reported: *"It is announced that a meeting of the Unionists of the County Kilkenny will be held in the Castle grounds,*

Kilkenny, which has been lent for the occasion by the Marquis of Ormonde.... The object of the meeting is 'to protest against the Home Rule Bill now before parliament.' The meeting has been organised by Mr. EKB Tighe, Woodstock, Inistioge, and tickets can be had from him."

Captain Tighe had abandoned Woodstock and decamped with his family to London because he could not stomach the prospect of any form of Irish self-government, however limited, and more than 90 percent certain to result in John Redmond becoming his elected Prime Minister. I have been compelled to write this letter in response to Mr. Antony Tighe's outrageous whitewashing of the horrific record in Ireland of "God's Executioner", Oliver Cromwell. But in these happier times let me here end on a happier note by also acknowledging Mr. Tighe's commitment, in his own concluding sentence, that "any proposals for development of lands in Woodstock can only be done if and when they have been carefully considered to ensure it will be to the advantage of the local community, as well as the Tighe Estate".

Conor Lynch

Issues 93 and 94 of *Church & State* dealt with the imprisonment and death of John Mandeville of Mitchelstown. This followed the "Mitchelstown Massacre" of September 9th 1887. The following account comes from the *Te Aroha News*, Volume V, Issue 228, 12 November 1887, Page 7

The Land War In Cork

Part Three

The Mitchelstown Massacre

Personal Narrative Of

Mr. Henry Labouchere

COWARDICE OF THE POLICE.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT.)

London, September 16.

Two separate versions are current of the fatal affray at Mitchelstown last Friday, and the causes which led up to it. In one the constabulary figure as long-suffering victims driven to firearms in sheer self defence; in the other, as cowards and bullies of the most despicable description. Personally, I prefer to believe the narrative of Mr. Labouchere, an eye-witness and a cool-headed man of the world, who has been in plenty of scimmages in his time, and would not be likely either to misrepresent or exaggerate. He says:

"Mitchelstown is a small provincial town: close by it is the park of the Kingstons. It is of considerable extent and surrounds a large palace, built by one of the Earls of Kingston. The estate now belongs to the wife of a Mr. Webber, formerly a land agent. This lady's first husband was an Earl of Kingston, who managed to put an end to the entail by borrowing about £200,000. from the Disestablished Church on mortgage: then he left the estate to his widow.

"Most of the tenants are leaseholders, and therefore were unable to go to the land court, for a reduction of rents. One or two, however, with the consent of their landlady, did go, and the reduction they obtained was 15 per. cent. This was some years ago, and estimating by recent decisions, a Land Court would now, if it had the opportunity, make an average reduction of about 35 per cent. The tenants two years ago asked their landlady to grant them a reduction of 20 per cent. Having nothing to live in but a huge palace, and nothing to live on but the profits from farming their park, and the margin between what the Land Courts terms a fair rent and that which is exacted from the tenants, a fair rent means to the owners absolute ruin, so the demand for a reduction was declined.

"The Plan of Campaign was inaugurated for the last three years; no rent has been paid, and in reply to notices of eviction tenants have barricaded their houses, some of which are like fortresses. Mr. Wm. O'Brien encouraged them to do this, and rightly I think. It must be remembered that the people had built their homes and made their farms fertile, and that the rents are excessive and extortionate. They have never sought to escape from payment of rent; all they demand is either that the Land Courts should lay down what rent will be fair, or that Lady Kingston should give a reduction admittedly considerably less than would be granted by the Courts.

"Under the Crimes Act Mr. O'Brien has been prosecuted, and he was ordered to appear before two resident magistrates at Mitchelstown last Friday. Not wishing to recognise the jurisdiction of these two magistrates, he would not go to Mitchelstown on Friday, but left the Court to issue a decree for his arrest, and to take its own steps to bring him before it. I was in Ireland, and had contemplated going to Mitchelstown to hear the trial. When Mr. O'Brien announced his intention not to go, I and two other English members, Mr. Brunner and Mr. Ellis, determined to accompany Mr. Dillon there in order to be able to form some estimate of the rents in dispute between Lady Kingston and her tenants.

"At 7 a.m. we started from Dublin by train, and at midday arrived at Cahir. It

was market day there, and when we went to the hotel to arrange for carriages to proceed to Mitchelstown the people came round the hotel, and deputations of the Corporation of Clonmel and of the local National League presented addresses, in which they expressed their sense of all that Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party had done to promote the cause of Home Rule. Then we started in four or five carriages and brakes. Mitchelstown is about 15 miles from Cahir. At two or three miles from it we were met by some horsemen who had been waiting for us as an advance guard, and they closed round the carriages. They accompanied us about two miles. One was on a roan horse and stuck close to the side of the first carriage. This was not good enough for the roan, who proceeded to rear up and then deposited his fore legs inside the carriage. We had some difficulty in convincing him that he was an intruder, but having done so we pushed on merrily and soon reached the outside of the town, where there was a procession with bands and banners, which had been awaiting our arrival for a couple of hours. We all fell in, and with banners flying and drums beating paraded through the town, finally drawing up in the market-place.

"Now, what was the meaning of this procession? The inhabitants of Mitchelstown and its neighbourhood had heard that Mr. Dillon and some English members intended to visit the town, and they wished to do honour to Mr. Dillon, and to recognise the good feeling that now happily exists between the democracies of Great Britain and Ireland by a merry welcome to British members of Parliament who belong to the Democratic party. The most stringent orders had been issued to all composing the procession to conduct themselves properly, to remain out of the town until they were told to enter it, to indulge in no stone-throwing, and conduct themselves in a peaceful and orderly manner. I am convinced, however, that the police and the other authorities had determined to create a disturbance. They had sent soldiers and constabulary into the town on the previous evening, and it is clear to me that they had made up their minds to teach the people that in welcoming English Liberal members they are guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour. They were to be taught a Tory lesson.

"Cowardly Constabulary.

"The market-place where we pulled up is about the size of Trafalgar Square, and is on a slope. There were some brakes on the upper end, and into one of these brakes we were inducted. There were already in it about half-a-dozen priests and some other gentlemen, amongst them being the mayors of Cork and Clonmel. Along the lower end runs the main street. A more orderly and indeed a more merry crowd I never

saw. They cheered for Mr. Dillon, for the English members, for England, and again and again for Mr. Gladstone. The people were congregated round the brake, and outriders were the men on horseback. Beyond them there were men standing and walking about.

"Mr. Dillon said to me, *"Let us make short work of this. We had better only speak a few minutes each, as I suspect that the constabulary will interfere if they get a chance"*. The Rev. Father McCarthy was invited to preside, and at once called on Mr. Dillon to speak. He had hardly spoken two sentences when we saw a large body of police forming line on the lower portion of the market place. They pushed forward about a dozen men with sword bayonets by their sides and batons in their hands. Those men commenced to force their way through the crowd, and we understand that they had a reporter in their midst. Captain Seagrave, the resident magistrate, remained, I believe, with the main body of the police. By this time the reporter with his escort was as near to the head of the brake as a member at the bar of the House of Commons is to the Speaker. One of the constabulary at this moment drew his bayonet and wounded one of the horses. The horse reared, on which two policemen batoned the rider. The escort with the reporter fell back on the main body of the police, and all together rushed upon the crowd. Right and left at once, sticks were raided and there was a scrimmage, but as a few of the crowd had thick sticks, and as few even of these could get at the police, the resistance was slight: but the police seemed to be as cowardly as they were brutal.

"Captain Seagrave Ran Like a Hare.

"After a minute or two they fled in disorder to their barracks, with the exception of Captain Seagrave, who ran like a hare to a neighbouring hotel, where he seems to have concealed himself for some time. The barracks are situated in the main street, a few doors from one of the lower corners of the market place. Mr. Dillon jumped down from the brake and walked to the barracks, in order to see, if possible, the head of the constabulary, and to urge him to refrain from further incitement to disorder. The door was closed, but on his knocking he was let in. He found the police in a wild state of excitement. They had dragged two men into the barracks, and were bludgeoning them as they lay with their faces downwards. He describes the chief constable as almost beside himself, and in reply to repeated requests to keep his police within bounds, he said he would march with his police. With the greatest difficulty indeed, by hanging on to his arm, Mr. Dillon prevented his rushing-out with his men shooting right and left.

"Whilst there, some of the police mounted into the upper rooms and proceeded to fire at the angle of the marketplace which was in the line of fire. There were a few people there. Some say that a few stones had been thrown at the barracks, others that none were thrown, but in any case there was no crowd, and hardly anyone in the street, and the police were in perfect safety.

"The People Shot Down.

"Three men were hit; one was killed at once, one died in a few hours, and the third was badly wounded. It is a remarkable fact that the second man was a car-driver who had refused the previous night to drive the police from Fermoy. In the meanwhile Mr. Brunner and I remained on the brake. Soon Mr. Brunner got down, and with the priests urged the people to withdraw. I stayed on the brake. A second body of police from another police-station now rushed into the market-place wildly striking anyone that they met. Stones were naturally flung at them, and they fled, tumbling over one another into a priest's house.

"The marketplace was by this time nearly empty. The police emerged from their retreat in the priest's house, and formed along the top of market place. Mr. Brunner and I on this went to the police barracks, where we found a line of policemen with loaded rifles drawn across the road, and Captain Seagrave, who up to this time had declined to emerge from his concealment, stood plainly before them, with Mr. Brownrigg, the head of the County Constabulary. Captain Seagrave was deadly pale, and his eyes had a wild, I may say almost a demented, look. I asked him whether the meeting had been proclaimed; he refused to reply, but finally explained that we had no right to hold it on the market-place, because he had let it be known in the morning that he would not allow bands to be played in the town as long as the resident magistrate's court was sitting. I pointed out to him that the court had risen some hours ago. To this he said nothing. I asked him whether the Riot Act had been read. He replied that he was obeying orders, and that he had nothing to do with politics. I then asked him whether he would allow a meeting to be held, outside the town.

"The Military Sent For.

He said first he would, but Mr. Brownrigg took him aside, and after a few moments' conversation with that officer he answered that he withdrew his permission, he could not allow a meeting to be held anywhere, and that he had sent for the military. We all walked about, urging the people to go home and informing them of Captain Seagrave's intentions. When they, the soldiers, arrived and drew up at the

bottom of the market place, there remained no excuse for further acts of violence on the part either of the military or of the police. In spite of this, however, Captain Seagrave sent policemen in pairs armed with rifles to walk as if to invite stone throwing, in which design, however, thanks to our exertions and a numerous body of priests, he was not, I am happy to say, successful.

"Brownrigg the Bully.

"About six o'clock it was deemed expedient that with a view to ulterior proceedings the chief of the constabulary should be asked (if he had not given the order to fire from barracks) to have the rifles of the men examined in order that it might be known which of his men had fired. Mr. Dillon and I went to the barracks to demand that this should be done. We found Brownrigg standing at the door with a number of policemen round him. I have seen the Russians in Poland; I have seen the Austrians in Lombardy; I have seen the Prussians in France; but I never in the course of my life came across so offensive a specimen of an official with brute force at his back. He seemed to consider that it was almost treason for an orderly citizen to ask him a question. *"I am not here to answer you or anyone else"*, he shouted. In vain I explained that if the order to fire had not been given by him it was only reasonable that an examination should take place, and added, *"I shall state how you have acted and your present action in the House of Commons"*. *"What! a threat to me!"* he said. *"We can have none of this. If you do not go away at once I will have you cleared away."* On this I withdrew, not wishing to prolong, my interview with this master of many policemen. I subsequently heard that he had a little while ago been summoned before a magistrate for wantonly assaulting a gentleman in the street. The prosecutor urged that he was drunk and the magistrate had to commit him. He fined him one farthing.

"In conclusion I assert that two men more unfit for their delicate duties than Captain Seagrave and Mr. Brownrigg could not be found on the face of the globe. One is apparently a weak creature, who loses his head; the other is a bully, in whose eyes all who venture to look askance on him ought to be shot. They are responsible for the deaths that took place. They by their bungling and bullying created the disturbance, and if every man had his deserts they would be sentenced to lengthy terms of imprisonment. It must be remembered that all these occurrences took place under the common law, and if permissible in Ireland they are also permissible in England. Had they taken place in London what would have been said? Yours obediently, H. Labouchere. Mitchelstown, Saturday."

After the Affray.

Another correspondent, writing later, says :

"Mitchelstown resembles a place in a state of siege. On Friday evening all the public-house keepers in the town received orders not to open their premises before ten o'clock next morning. The opening of the shops made very little difference in the business of the town. Almost the only business was to talk of the deeds of yesterday. At the shop doors, at the street corners, stood groups of men, sullen and mostly silent; country women, with their heads covered by the hoods of their long dark cloaks, assembled in the streets and in the large square as if for a day of mourning. Now and again there arose a cry of execration and hate as some body of constabulary tramped past, armed with rifles. "Cowards!" "Murderers!" came the revengeful cry from men and women alike.

"On the one hand, the constabulary watching at the barrack gates, or posted at the cross roads, or patrolling the side paths with rifles leaning over their left aim; on the other, a scowling populace ready to hoot and curse. These were the irreconcilable elements into which the crime of Friday afternoon left this town divided. For the slow kaleidoscopic shifting of these groups of men and women there was one spot that seemed unchanging. It was the spot near the edge of the square, where the first victim in Friday's strife, Michael Landrigan, fell, shot through the brain. Men and women bent clown to dip their handkerchiefs in the pool of blood, that gleamed red as seen from the place where I stood watching them. "This in memory of my hatred of the English Government" one man says as he leaves the group, holding up the relic. "Yes, but the Government in Ireland", exclaims another in the crowd. Out of the pool of blood one of a number of children who stand there picks up a bullet. These too will carry away their memories of the day, perhaps into some foreign land where dwells an exiled Irish race that neither forgets nor forgives, or perhaps, and let us hope, into an Ireland happier than the present, and a generation of Irishmen who will find a real union with their English fellow citizens, and in the sympathy of the English people who are now the masters of the English Governments.

"The Dead and Dying.

"From out the group of hooded women comes a cry of grief. The mourner is the dead man's wife, who, not knowing what happened yesterday, has come from her home four or live miles away in the country in search of her husband. His remains are in the workhouse, where they were deposited last night after sundry adventures. At first they were carrying the dead body

into an hotel in the square. Then it was suggested that it should be taken to the constabulary barracks from a window of which the bullet came that killed him, and there it was laid in the mud of the street right in front of the barrack door, and so closely that a police officer emerging into the road stepped across it. Michael Landrigan leaves eight children, three of them in America, the Irish peasant's land of promise, the rest at home.

"The second victim, who, though pronounced dead on Friday night, still lives, but is doomed to die, is more fortunate, for he leaves none dependent upon him. John Shinnick his name is, and his fate, though in a sense less tragic than his countryman's, is more pathetic. He served in the Indian mutiny, fighting England's battles. He eked out his pension by working as a gardener, and he was in the employment of an hotel-keeper at Fermoy, a town eight miles from Mitchelstown. When last Thursday his employer was asked to supply carriages for the conveyance of police constables from this place only one horse, it seems, was available, but there was no driver. John Shinnick was then told to undertake the duty. Shinnick, who was an ardent Nationalist, refused. Poor as he was, he preferred dismissal and poverty to the hateful task of serving officials whom he conscientiously regarded as his country's enemies. Being dismissed on the spot, John Shinnick came on foot to Mitchelstown to share in the popular welcome to John Dillon and the English members. He was standing with his back to the wall, nearly opposite the police barracks, talking with a young man named Casey, when a shot struck him on the forehead. He staggered along the wall a distance of two or three yards, then stood, made the sign of the cross, and fell. A pool of blood still marks the spot. Casey also was struck, and fell almost simultaneously with Shinnick. Now, the facts of the Casey and Shinnick case will be of great importance in the evidence which will be given during the inquest this week.



John Mandeville's Statue in Mitchelstown:
a monument to RIC brutality

The Inscription:



The Phenomenon Of Mum, Part 2

How Professor Dawkins misunderstands both religion and the distinctiveness of human biology

Bat Feathers

Bat Feathers and Bird's Milk are just two out of the many things that evolution might have usefully produced, but happened to miss. Bats would fly better if they had feathers, but actually creating feathers from a hairy body must have been too great a leap. Likewise birds could feed their offspring better if they had the mammalian trick of producing a nutritious secretion instead of (or as well as) regurgitating half-digested food. Natural selection is fallible and misses some useful tricks.

There are also many common themes—jaws got invented several times, the jointy-legged creatures (arthropods) adapting some small front-limbs whereas our ancestral fish adapted what were originally gill-arches. Likewise limbs, we walk upon modified fins whereas squids etc. invented boneless limbs and the jointy-legged creatures refined their primitive multiple limbs to just eight (spiders and similar) or six (insects). Insects also invented wings, perhaps out of modified gills, this is disputed. It happened just once among the jointy-legged creatures, whereas creatures with bones have managed it several times, most notably the birds and bats but also the extinct Pterosaurs (which lived at the same time as the dinosaurs but are a separate group).

The most interesting themes from a human point of view are *parental care* and *social living*. Birds and mammals have both evolved it, and it seems the dinosaurs also had nests and looked after their eggs. Some quite primitive creatures also have parental care, but the turtle is about as complex and large-brained as you can get without having parents looking after their young. Biologically it should be possible, but it does not to happen.

Socialisation

Interestingly, humans have long enough lives that it's normal for grandparents to care for grandchildren and add an extra cultural dimension. Modern societies with their greater mobility have weakened or broken such ties, and it may be a reason why modern societies are failing to socialise the next generation.

It might well be pointless for a creature to have a large brain unless it had a parent that could teach it survival tricks. That's the pattern among all mammals and birds, young creatures

learning from their mothers. Sometimes there is also a wider society, meaning that it is useful to have a brain large enough to keep track of who's who and whether you should approach them, ignore them or avoid them. Studies of apes and monkeys suggest that the larger the social group, the bigger the brain. There are exception, gorillas have decent-sized brains but live in small family bands. But it's a general trend.

There's a fascinating book by Deborah Blum called *Love At Goon Park: Harry Harlow and the Science of Affection* that tells how a scientist working with monkeys discovered accidentally that a baby monkey raised with adequate food and shelter but without a mother grows up very abnormally. They could not socialise with other monkeys, and when females raised this way were made pregnant (via a device that the scientist in question unblushingly called a 'rape rack'), they were hopeless at being mothers.

A creature that had a big brain but a solitary life would be an anomaly. It might be efficient as an individual organism, but Natural Selection is not about handing down prizes to individual organisms. What counts is how many grandchildren the organism leaves behind. The bias of biologists, from Darwin down to Dawkins, is to interpret Natural Selection as if it were the handing-down of prizes to the best pupils at some harsh but efficient school. In the real world of biology, unworthy creatures like rats, cockroaches and tapeworms are much more likely to be survivors.

I'm aware of thinkers like Teilhard de Chardin, who tried to reconcile Darwinism with Catholic theology in *Le Phenomene Humain*, translated as *The Phenomenon Of Man*, though I'd have thought *The Phenomenon Of Humans* would have been better. In any case, the '*Phenomenon of Mum*' happened first. It explains how we could emerge as a very untypical product of natural selection. Why we can shrewdly calculate our selfish self-interest but also feel the need for more, a need that religion can partly meet.

We humans are the most recent product of several million years spent enlarging the brain. Our immediate ancestors were rare creatures compared to other large mammals. They were not flourishing or dominant despite having

the largest brain / body ratio on the planet. My belief is that just enlarging the brain would be pointless unless there was already cultural 'software' that could set it useful tasks. That would explain why pre-humans remained much the same across hundreds of thousands of years.

Experts now think there was a dramatic take-off among our own ancestors some 50,000 to 100,000 years ago, a process that began in Africa. We find lots of evidence of cultural / religious activities, and every known tribe of hunter-gatherers has a dense network of superstitions. If you investigate them, you often find that the pattern of behaviour makes sense, even if the explanations do not. The Hindu caste system means that the people most likely to catch an infection from sewage or dead bodies are also rigorously isolated from the rest of society. A taboo on beef makes sense when cattle are essential work-animals, and also cattle are less efficient than other meat animals at turning vegetable matter into meat. The Jewish and Islamic ban on pork makes sense in the arid or semi-desert lands where those faiths originated, where pigs typically eat food that humans could have eaten, yet meat is always more popular than vegetables where the culture or religion allows it. But in many cases meat-eating makes economic sense. If you're a nomadic herder, then cattle are relatively easy to raise on land where crops would not grow. If you live surrounded by forests, as used to be the case in most of Europe, then pigs can be left to scavenge and their meat is pure profit.

Religion

Just because religion sometimes gets things wrong, it's easy to overlook that religion frequently gets things right. It's a way to update the 'cultural software' in a generation or two, rather than slowly altering over thousands of years—which happened even in the so-called Neolithic Revolution. And if you're looking for a functional and effective creed that can promote social virtues without too much superstition, Chinese Confucianism was the nearest real-world example before the age of industry. Leninism the best real-world example in the age of industry, though it rather assumed a world of factories and shortages. Leninism adapted badly to the new world of dispersed high-skilled work and moderate material prosperity for ordinary people. Rather than claim credit for the changes and move on, the Soviet version got stuck and refused to change until its final collapse. There were socialists within the system who might have saved it given freedom to act, most notably the Slovak Communist Alexander Dubcek in 1968

in what was then Czechoslovakia.

A highly successful adaptation of Leninism has taken place in China, obscured in the West by a habit of saying that the post-Mao system was pure capitalism. I'd believed this story in the late 1980s: during the 1990s I suddenly realised that this wasn't true at all. China was in fact running a highly successful version of what we used to call the 'Mixed Economy', with the state permitting private enterprise but remaining in charge, controlling the 'commanding heights'. Unlike most commentators, I did not believe the New Right view that the period of 'Mixed Economy' or Keynesianism was some sort of monstrosity from which the New Right had rescued us. I was unsurprised that a similar system should flourish in China, just as I am unsurprised that the New Right's 'improved' economy now faces chaos with a mass of bad debts.

A weakness in Leninism was that it put little emphasis on the mother-child bond, the mammalian base-rock on which all more complex social groupings are built. The emphasis was on women doing paid work and maybe having independent careers, shocking at the time and now the agreed norm. But that's a common weakness to most forms of Modernism, a reason why Modernism has lost ground in the face of setbacks, whereas some creeds grow stronger and deeper in the face of adversity. How this will work out in the longer term is uncertain. Better child-care and more women working would make sense, but getting there may be tough. The Western emphasis since the 1980s has been to seek a society of detached individuals who all seek to avoid being burdened with each other's needs. But this has gone along with a relative decline in the West and a rise of East Asia, where different values dominate. The collapse of the Soviet Union was seen in the West as the triumph of the West. It may turn out to be just part of a general regression of Western values: Russia in the 1990s tried to be like the USA and now sees China as a better model.

Is Your Brain Really Necessary?

Natural selection typically rewards the small and stupid—mostly quite brainless. Individually they are inferior, but vast numbers of inferior organisms can survive and reproduce better than a small number of more complex creatures. Interestingly, the success of the Internet comes from borrowing this trick from nature—probably without noticing the connection, I have never seen it put like that. The standard idea of a network was to have messages that were carefully monitored and insured against loss. The internet works by splitting the message

into small chunks and sending multiple copies of each small chunk in roughly the right direction. At the other end the chunks are put together again, on the assumption that at least one copy of each chunk will arrive. Oddly, this system works better, because the cost of copying and sending is less than the cost of monitoring and ensuring an error-free system.

All life on Earth has a common origin, a shared history of more than three thousand million years. Most genes from the original life have not gone anywhere near intelligence, have remained small and brainless. Human culture thinks of lions and tigers and 'kings of the wilderness', but you could also think of them as muggers exploiting a much larger population of grass-eaters and leaf-eaters. And that's just mammals; the unseen world of insects has not just more living creatures, but a bigger mass of living flesh. Intelligence is not a very useful trick and the natural world can seem hopelessly alien—'For bloody nature's out to get you'. But of course it isn't; the whole process is unfeeling and uncaring, neither friendly nor hostile. Lots of different niches are open, so there is room for the more complex, though as a minority option.

Pioneering modernist architect Le Corbusier defined a house as 'a machine for living in'. But people are social and like to live in their own space, that's why modernism produced cities that no one at all likes, even though all of their obvious material needs are met. That's why religion is making a come-back, to the bafflement of characters like Dawkins.

If you call a house 'a machine for living in', they you might also call a mother a 'machine for babies'. In fact a mother rat is just that: she has sex with the most suitable male she comes across, gets pregnant and has babies that she instinctively knows how to care for. Take away those babies and she will do something else. Add or subtract baby rats and she seems not to notice.

Creeds like Evolutionary Psychology and Sociobiology see only half of the essential difference between a human and a rat. We are much cleverer, obviously. But we are also vastly more sympathetic: no other creature is as likely to render help to another creature that is not a close relative. An ant-nest is a gigantic extended family, so is a hive of bees. Packs of wolves and prides of lions are very close to each other, tied by blood or by sex. Humans are unusual in that we commonly take risks to help people we don't know. Pessimists complain that we don't do this often enough, and wonder why. Myself, I started by wondering why we do it *at all*. If we were 'rational' in the sense

that Modernists typically define it, we would indeed refuse help to strangers without a definite reward. You're drowning? I'll rent you this life-belt, but I am in a strong negotiating position and I want proof of your credit-worthiness.

Very few people are actually that cold and greedy, and ever fewer would admit to it. Characters like Dawkins or the New Right economists *ought* to conclude that negotiating prices with a drowning man is eminently fair and rational. I've not found any who will *actually* do this: these characters typically stop where their own logic ceased to be 'daring' and would actually be risky, at least to their reputation. They do not accept the unwelcome results of their own logic, but insist that it is 'infallible' when they like the results.

In the USA, you can indeed die because available medical help will not be given without proof that you can pay. The USA spends a much bigger chunk of its national income on health-care than the UK does, but they see universal free health-care as an impossible burden. Here in the UK, we had it for a few decades and in part we have been talked into abandoning it as a burden despite being much richer than we were when health-care was free. Of course greed can never be satisfied. If you once get into the mode of thinking, life will keep on offending you by not meeting your full demands.

If we don't help strangers as much as we should, that may be because we are not as distant from rats as we might like. And religion is typically a major factor in making us help more and harm less than our personal inclinations would allow. Pretty well every modern religion tells you that helping the needy gets rewarded eventually, either by going to heaven or by getting a good rebirth. I personally think this is unlikely—but it doesn't need to be true to be useful.

Due to pressure of space
a number of items have had
to be held over.

These include:

The Adventures Of A Bishop

Bishop Colton vs. Aubane

Jack Lane on Charles Darwin

The Scottish Constitution

John Martin

A contribution to the Evolution debate

Darwinism And Socialism

I agree with the substance of Sean Swan's article in issue No. 94 of *Church & State*. Furthermore, in my opinion Jack Lane and Gwydion Williams have a much too cavalier attitude to the real threats to education posed by the confounding of creationist ideas with science (*Church & State* No.95).

Creationism

Science and Religion are separate areas of human life. Darwin's theory may be flawed or incomplete but it is a scientific theory. Darwin formulated a hypothesis, which appeared to explain observable natural phenomena. There may be a better theory or Darwin's theory might be incomplete, but it can be discussed in a scientific context. Creationism, on the other hand, is not a scientific theory. In the first instance it relies on an interpretation of the Bible. Proponents might adduce scientific theory to support their beliefs, but the primary source is not scientific, it is biblical.

One can have a separate philosophical discussion about the role of religion or science in society, but that discussion should have no place in a science class.

The Enlightenment intellectuals separated Biblical revelation from Science. Scientific and other intellectual endeavours were done independently of the Bible. This was a great development in human thought. Most of the original Enlightenment intellectuals were Christians. Perhaps Thomas Aquinas's separation of the natural from the supernatural was the beginning of it all. It appeared that the Church initially had no great objection to these intellectual developments. Gallileo was burnt on the stake, not for his theories but for his insistence on a re-interpretation of the Bible in the light of those theories. Martin Luther also wished to bring back the Bible into the centre of intellectual life. And more than three centuries later this provoked the withering comment from Friedrich Nietzsche: *"In the great Age of the Enlightenment, the Germans produced a mouse"*.

Recently Joe Keenan declared to me and others that he did not believe. Not only did he not believe, but he did not believe in belief itself. This is in accordance with my own temperament. Woody Allen was once asked how he could be so certain that God did not exist. He replied: *"faith"*.

But I have no faith. I neither believe in the existence or non-existence of God. In my opinion Atheism is also a religion. The Soviet Constitution recognised the freedom of religion but also the freedom to conduct atheistic propaganda. This is fair enough. Religion and Atheism should be treated equally. And I have the same attitude to Creationism as I have to Atheism. Both philosophical viewpoints should be kept out of the science classroom.

Communism

While I have no faith I do have some working assumptions. I subscribe to the Marxist view of the world. To quote from the French communist leader Waldeck Rochet which I referred to in *Church & State* No. 93:

"1. Marxist philosophical materialism begins with the principle that the world is material by nature and that the multiple phenomena of the universe are different aspects of nature in movement.

"2. Marxist philosophical materialism starts from the principle that matter, nature, being is an objective reality existing independently of consciousness; and that thought cannot be separated from matter and is the product of it or more precisely the product of the brain which is the organ of thought.

"3. A fundamental principle of Marxist philosophical materialism is that the world and its laws are perfectly knowable, that our knowledge of the laws of nature verified by practice and experience is valid knowledge.

"In summary communists are in philosophy materialists in their conception of the world, which does not have recourse to the idea of God. They think that the development of science gives to the world an explanation, if not sufficient, at least rational, which approaches the closest to the truth."

Readers might think that the above is as near as damn it (excuse the pun) to atheism. However, I make two distinctions between my view and atheism.

Firstly, I don't deny the existence of God I simply don't know if He exists or not. Furthermore, I don't think the existence or non existence of God is knowable. And since it is unknowable there is absolutely no point in having a discussion about it. And if there is no point in

having a discussion about it there is even less point in conducting atheistic propaganda. (However, I am most definitely not saying that there is no point in challenging the social power of a religious denomination).

Secondly, like the French communist leaders I accept that religion has at various times in history played a progressive role. Also, a religious impulse or inspiration has often enabled man to go beyond himself and achieve great things in the world. Religion is an important element in this country's culture. About ten years ago this magazine noticed that religious surveys in this country showed that there were more Catholics than those who believed in God or an afterlife. As a communist I refuse to throw away our European Christian heritage for an arid ideological conception of the world.

Darwinism

I agree with Jack Lane that Darwinism is problematic. However, it does provide a reasonable explanation of the world. When Darwin talked about the survival of the fittest he did not mean the survival of the strongest. *"Fittest"* meant the *"best fit"* or the most adaptable to the environment. For example giraffes with the longest necks tended to survive and reproduce with greater fecundity since their source of food was on high trees (evolutionary theory might also explain the preponderance of hard rather than long necks among the species of senior executives in the financial sector!).

There is nothing incompatible with Darwin's theory and Gwydion Williams's observation that the long-term prospects for species larger than a fox are not good. The overwhelming fact of the environment on this planet is that man is the dominant species. The best survival strategy for other species is to avoid competing with man. This is something, which it is easier for smaller species to do.

Of course, the environment changes. A species or individuals within a species may be extremely fit for one type of environment but may not be fit for another. Recently I saw a television programme on the subject of obesity. One of the points made was that in a previous age of scarce food resources in which food could not be stored for long periods of time, the human being developed a capacity to store food within his body in the form of fat. The fat was slowly dissipated during periods of scarcity. A fat man can survive much longer without food than a thin man. But this ability to store fat is a handicap in modern times when food is more readily available and can be consumed at any time. People with smaller appetites are more likely to live healthy lives.

I have no difficulty in accepting that

the human being is the product of a long period of evolution. Scientific evidence supports this hypothesis. It also is not incompatible with Marxist theory, which proposes that an accumulation of quantitative changes leads to a revolutionary or dramatic qualitative change corresponding to the difference between Man and the Ape. Engels accepted Darwin's theory but believed that the latter ignored for ideological reasons the role of labour in human evolution.

However, the application of Darwinism to modern man has often been used to pursue a political agenda.

There are two characteristics of man, which distinguish him from other animals and which must be taken account of when applying Darwin's theory. The first characteristic is that man is more gregarious than other animals. He forms himself into groups, tribes and nation states. When applied to man the survival of the fittest must take account of not only the survival of individuals, but also the survival of the group.

A simple Darwinian theory based on individuals would not be able to explain the existence of homosexuality. Homosexuals' propensity to reproduce is less than heterosexuals. Logically the tendency towards homosexuality should diminish as the human race evolves. But this is not in fact the case. There is no evidence that the proportion of the population that are homosexual has diminished. This has led some people to the conclusion that sexual orientation is largely culturally determined. But even in our more tolerant society there is no great encouragement to be homosexual. Certainly not enough to counteract the basic necessity to reproduce.

The persistence of homosexuality can be explained by the gregarious nature of human beings. The tribes, which survived and flourished, were not the ones that reproduced the most, but the ones, which had a proportion of their population that did not reproduce at all. Tribes, which had too great a dependency ratio (i.e. proportion of infants to adults) were doomed. The non-productive population in successful tribes had the time to look after the interests of the whole group or tribe because they did not have to provide for their own children. Gwydion Williams in his article suggests that homosexuals also had the function of making music and thereby encouraging fertility in the rest of the population.

A second characteristic of human beings, which is not shared by the rest of the animal kingdom, is that human beings can consciously influence their environment. Engels pointed out that

other animals also influence their environment (he gave the example of goats denuding the lands of Greece of her vegetation) but that influence is not conscious or planned. (Engels also noted presciently that nature often takes her revenge on man's attempts to influence her).

Since animals other than man cannot consciously influence their environment, Jack Lane is right to say that the "*survival of the fittest*" can also be described as the "*survival of the luckiest*". A giraffe doesn't choose to have a long neck. Indeed it can be said of human beings that they do not choose their forebears and therefore can't influence their physical characteristics.

However, if an individual or group of individuals put forward the arguable proposition that the world consists of competing nations or races, that is not merely a scientific theory but is also a political programme. The proponents of such a theory have an interest in ensuring that their own nation or race will survive at the expense of other nations or races. Darwin's theory has been used to advance an imperialist view of the world.

Fortunately, the imperialists have not had it all their own way. The strongest nations are not necessarily the fittest. The wealthiest countries in the world are not able to reproduce their own population. Such nations are only able to prevent rapid population decline by immigration from poorer countries. Desmond Fennell thinks this is explained by the contradictory nature of modern European and American values (i.e. the values don't make sense).

Scientific Socialism

Socialism has had an uneasy relationship with Darwin's theory. About thirty years ago the *British & Irish Communist Organisation* produced a pamphlet on the famous American writer Jack London, which included two of his essays. In the first essay, entitled *Why I became a Socialist*, London describes his youth. He says he was like Nietzsche's blond beast. He could work harder and longer at manual labour than his fellow workers. But after a number of years he realised that he was helping the capitalists and digging his own grave. He realised that other "*blond beasts*" had become infirm in premature old age.

The second essay, entitled *Wanted: a new law of development*, suggested that Darwin's theory was redundant under socialism. Under socialism the survival of the fittest could not apply since such a society would protect the weak and the vulnerable. If competition was the motor of development in a capitalist society how could a socialist society develop?

Communists used to believe that a socialist society would develop into a communist society, which was a society shorn of the bourgeois values of a previous epoch. Class conflict would cease since there would no longer be classes and the State would wither away. A few years ago, in the course of discussing something else, Brendan Clifford wondered whether that meant that the State would be absorbed into society or society absorbed into the State.

Whatever about the form of the future communist society, communists believed that its achievement was inevitable. They believed that they knew the laws of development of society and that these laws were scientific.

But I don't believe.

Communism is no more scientifically valid than Darwinism when it is applied to society; and for the same reason. Man is a conscious being. He does not react passively to predetermined scientific laws. Indeed the mere statement of those laws can have unpredictable effects on human behaviour.

Nevertheless, communist theory does provide an insight into society. And notwithstanding what I have already said, the idea of the inevitability of socialism is not completely wrong! Marx noticed that capitalism had the tendency to socialise production. Less and less of production is by private individuals to satisfy their own private needs. Production becomes organised on a social and international scale.

The more developed societies become, the less the individual is left to his own devices. The mass media and the internet have enabled individuals in even the most remote areas to absorb values without reference to family or local community. The tendency towards socialisation has its benign and malign aspects. In some countries there is a comprehensive socialised health service. In most countries there is some form of social welfare.

However, there is greater intrusiveness on the part of the State in the lives of individuals. The proportion of the United States' population that is imprisoned is the highest in the world. Even a society, which proclaims the values of rugged individualism, finds it necessary to deny the basic elements of freedom to its most recalcitrant section.

Of course the socialisation of society is not the same as a socialist society. But Marx saw the seeds of socialism in the tendency of capitalism to socialise. Whether Marx was right or wrong I do not know. For all their scientific claims neither Communist nor Darwinian theory can predict the future nature of society.

In the final analysis, it all depends on human beings. *

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TWO SOCIAL PARTNERS

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"Celibacy is not hereditary"

DAVID BEGG: General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Begg is at the forefront of crucial Social Partnership talks with the government.

He is a member of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) Council, a Governor of the *Irish Times* Trust, a Director of the Central Bank, a member of the National Economic & Social Council, and a non-executive Director of Aer Lingus. He was also Chair of the Board of the Democracy Commission (which points out perceived flaws in Irish public life).

David Begg—was leader of the Communications Workers' Union until 1997, when he left to head the Catholic charity, CONCERN.

Begg's critics on the Trade Union side believe that he is consumed by ideals about social capital and community. He sees the mission of the Trade Union movement in a broader context than do many Trade Union leaders, whose vision is more brass tacks and money-oriented.

"In a way, they are right," Begg told *The Sunday Business Post*. "I do see the social partnership project as being primarily about social policy advance, as I would take the view that you don't need a social partnership model in order to do wage bargaining.

"I like the activity of industrial relations, but I don't see it as the be-all and end-all. I see my own role as making it a more just society. Their evaluation is probably fairly accurate, and I'm not sure I would be as enthusiastic about the job if it didn't have the capacity to have a broader influence." (*The Sunday Business Post*, 18.1.2009).

Begg's four years as head of Concern are believed to have had a profound effect on his social philosophy. He was credited with driving the organisation's income from €20 million to €53 million, while reducing its reliance on emergency TV campaigns.

Begg is a devout Catholic and has written for *Studies*, a quarterly magazine published by the Irish Jesuits that examines Irish social, political, cultural and economic issues in the light of Christian values.

He is said to be close to Bishop Brendan Comiskey and Bishop Eamon Casey.

He is also a daily communicant, often attending Mass at a church on the Quays in Dublin.

"I don't really like to discuss that, but a good lot of what I draw upon is Catholic social teaching," he said. "In the broadest sense, I regard myself as a social democrat."

Begg, who is a member of the Labour Party, said he was "*not influenced by any one person*", but had great admiration for American Trade Unionist Eugene Debs and Hungarian intellectual Karl Polanyi.

He cited left-wing British commentators Will Hutton and John Gray as modern influences. While he makes plenty of appearances on television and in newspapers for his work, Begg actively avoids the social circuit.

DERMOT MCCARTHY: Dermot McCarthy, Secretary General to the Government and the Department of the Taoiseach.

A driving force behind the Social Partnership process and the man they call the "*Great Facilitator*".

"The concept of Social Partnership is said to have had its origins in a discussion between Charles Haughey, as taoiseach, and then-West German chancellor Helmut Schmidt at a European summit in Brussels in 1982. Schmidt explained to Haughey how he was meeting with employers and Trade Unionists to agree pay terms for the coming year and that this was the most important event in his political calendar. In due course Haughey transplanted the idea to the Irish industrial scene, and the Programme for National Recovery was born in 1987.

"Although Social Partnership has its critics, there are many who say it was a critical element in the economic success we were enjoying until the crisis hit last year. It wasn't Thatcherism or Reaganism, with right-wing governments putting the boot in on the unions: this was a consensus approach and seen as more appropriate to Irish conditions." (*Irish Times*, 7.2.2009).

On a personal level, McCarthy is famous throughout the public service for his aversion to flying. It has not

prevented him from indulging his love of Italy and things Italian, including the language.

Deeply committed to his Catholic faith and inspired like former EU Commission President Jacques Delors by progressive Catholic social philosophy, he assists on a voluntary basis with the work of the St. Andrew Resource Centre at Westland Row parish. He is held in esteem in ecclesiastical circles and played a significant role in setting up a structure for Church-State dialogue. Even without the convenience of air travel, he was in attendance at the funeral of Pope John Paul II and the inauguration of Pope Benedict XVI as part of the official delegation.

Born in Dublin in 1954, Dermot Gerard McCarthy attended the Christian Brothers' school in Synge Street where he excelled at English and maths and was a champion debater. He went on to study economics at Trinity College Dublin and took a master's degree in the subject.

As Secretary General to the Government, he is the only civil servant allowed to attend Cabinet meetings. He keeps the official record, drafts Government decisions and briefs the Government press secretary afterwards, "on such matters as the Taoiseach (or other person chairing the meeting) may authorise for release to the media".

His wife Rosemary is a social worker in a Dublin hospital and they have one son.

Minister of State and former civil servant Martin Mansergh has said of McCarthy that, "*Ireland is immensely fortunate to have such a capable, experienced and socially-conscious public servant at the Taoiseach's side, who is respected by all and able to get the best out of people*".

There is a strong possibility that Dermot McCarthy will be the next Ambassador to the Holy See. And no, dearest reader, the Ambassador won't be appointed through open competition advertised in the *Financial Times* and the *Guardian* or the *Southern Star*! At that rate, the present writer himself would be a 'shoe-in' for the Vatican job, with a name like *Vox Pop!*