

personnel, they are, of course, in a much worse position, as they lack the support of every stable element of political society. It would be well to ponder on the facts and figures I have quoted. The problem raised by them is not a pleasing one to face. At the moment it is Ireland's misfortune that she has no party in existence that has authority to voice a National demand. Every party, at the moment, represents a minority. The remedy for this evil cannot be found in violent endeavors to enforce the views of any one clique upon the majority of the community that is opposed to it. Such a proceeding only hardens antagonism and perpetuates strife. We shall all have to abate our selfishness and obstinacy, making concessions in order to arrive at a common understanding that may be acceptable to the nation as a whole. If our American friends will try to aid us along this path they will render true service to our country, but their best intentioned effort can do no good so long as they endeavor to impose on us the will of a minority as being our own free "self-determination."

THE American investigation into the whole question of the court-martial system and its procedure has attracted unusual attention in Great Britain. The British critics are as one in considering our system severe and antiquated. Says the *London Outlook*: 'A former Judge Advocate has launched a detailed indictment of the present administration of military law on the score of its "gross, terrible, spirit-crushing injustice." The official defense seems to be that most of the sentences passed by courts-martial are merely nominal, and are never intended to be carried out. Men sentenced to death for desertion, as over twenty have been in the last two years, are not really shot, but are reinstated at the end of a few months. That line of argument, however, is rarely satisfactory, and complaints of excessive and pitiless severity abound. An unofficial committee which has looked into the matter reports that the sentences imposed by courts-martial are in general four times sharper than they should be. This is not a product of the war. The American military courts have always been positively archaic in

their sternness, administering, one might almost say, an eighteenth-century code in an eighteenth-century spirit. Indeed, the inordinate strictness of the discipline administered by the courts-martial was one of the reasons why, before the war, the American army suffered more from desertions and had a lower percentage of reenlistments than any army in the world.'

PROFESSOR GILBERT MURRAY recently delivered the annual address to the members and friends of the Civic and Moral Education League, and his remarks have been reprinted in all the great British journals. He took as his subject the question, 'Can we make any moral estimate of our own time?'

One's first impression, remarked the lecturer, natural enough after the turmoil through which we have passed, was one of chaos and contradiction. It was not merely that if you went to political meetings representing different views you would hear confident and contradictory prophecies about the future of Great Britain. That sort of contradiction was normal between different political parties, and was only stronger than usual now because of the uncertainties and violences through which we were passing. What was curious now was that there were equally violent contrasts of anticipation among people whose social and political ideals were much the same. The same group would at one moment be exulting in the power of the blockade and the bombing-plane and the next be chattering with fear of the Bolshevik revolution.

Consequently, before beginning to answer the main question, it might be best deliberately to put aside the most disturbing factor in it — the effects of the war itself. On the whole, continued the Professor, he was inclined to suggest that the influence of the war on the problem they were discussing would, in the first place, be a temporary and passing influence. We should gradually stagger back into equilibrium. Secondly, he thought that its chief influence, while it lasted, would be to increase every kind of social instability. The habit of war would perhaps produce a habit of violence in public things just as

we had seen it produce a habit of violence in private things, crimes of jealousy and the like; and perhaps also the war will have increased a tendency to impatience, an inability to understand anything difficult, a helpless wish, when in trouble, to knock somebody down and have done with it.

Most of the people who argue that we are living in an age of degeneration follow a misleading method. They take their examples from some small luxurious class and argue from it to the whole society. They talk far too much about courts and smart society and millionaires.

A RECENT item in the *Irish Times* reveals something of the state of affairs in 'John Bull's Other Island.' 'Raiding for arms' has begun again. Recently nearly

one hundred disguised men took part in a raid for arms on Ballyedmond Castle, the County Down residence of Captain Nugent, of the 5th Lancers, near Rostrevor, on the shores of Carlingford Lough. The raiders, who came in motor cars and on bicycles, drove boldly through the main entrance of the castle, and gained entry to the building through some ground floor windows. Once inside, they held up Captain Nugent at the point of a revolver, and sent scouts to search the house. Three shotguns and five rifles were taken.

After the raid, over a dozen wayfarers whom the insurgents, from fear of their giving an alarm, had bound and left helpless by the roadside, were rescued. Mr. P. J. Burrell, the Irish Republican Commandant, was arrested and a search made of his house.

THE EDITOR'S NOTE-BOOK

Miss Mary Edith Durham, artist and lecturer, is a well-known authority on the Balkan states, and has written several books about them.

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Philipp Scheidemann, the German Socialist statesman, was one of the most prominent makers of the German Revolution. The article printed under his name is a speech made at the German Social Democratic party conference on the 12th of June.

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Bertrand Russell, the English philosopher and student of social questions, is well

known in the United States. His most recent book is *Proposed Roads to Freedom*.

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H. Massingham is editor of the *London Nation*.

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Austin Dobson, poet, biographer, and man of letters, is the most widely read and sympathetic student of eighteenth-century people and customs writing to-day. Readers will recall his lives of Fielding, Steele, Goldsmith, and Horace Walpole.

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Hartley Withers is the editor of the great British financial journal, the *Economist*.