

Sinn Fein and France

To the Editor of the Heppner Herald.

Dear Sir: In view of the fact that the locally received newspapers frequently publish statements in regard to the Sinn Fein party in Ireland that are misleading, I take the liberty of enclosing an article by Jean Malye, one of the best known writers of France, which article I trust you will insert in your valuable dispenser of news in Morrow county.

Thanking you in advance for the courtesy, I remain, dear sir, Sincerely yours,

(Rev.) P. J. O'ROURKE.

"In the first half of the nineteenth century the debris of time had covered many of the ancient landmarks of the Holy City, and verbal tradition had acquired the unreliability with which long ages often endow it. So after a short stay in Jerusalem it was possible for Chinese Gordon—he who later added imperishable glory to England as the hero of Khartoum—to propose with some semblance of reason a reversal of many of the current beliefs concerning the identity of various holy places. Yet the doubt about landmarks, and even the complete disappearance of important sites, did not detract from the essential sanctity of the Holy City; Jerusalem still remained the city beloved of God, the cradle of our creed, the stronghold of our faith. In like manner, time had changed the outward aspect of France. The growth of materialism, which like a fungus spreads over our modern industrial civilization, had covered the essential Catholicism of France; and Latin and other cultures with which as a continental nation we come in contact, had formed a veneer over the Celticism that is the essential racial attribute of France. Excavators in Jerusalem uncovered the altars and tombs and verified the accuracy of our Biblical statements. Similarly, the upheaval of war once more brought to light in France the spirit which made men proudly point to her as the *fille ainee et ainee de l'Eglise*, and revealed to a marveling world the courage, the courage, the chivalry and the genius for self sacrifice that is France, a chapter of virtues distinctive of our Celtic origin.

"The revelation of our Celtic nature did not astonish me. I have always believed that France is a Celtic nation. Before war broke out I had only one aim in life, the revival of the dormant Celtic national spirit of France. To fit myself for the achievement of this purpose it was necessary that I should study Celticism in a country which had not been contaminated by the alien cultures that had affected France. I therefore went to the land where Celticism has shown its greatest vitality, and where the Celtic genius reigns in its purest form. I went to Ireland and spent there a most happy and profitable year, studying the Gaelic language, learning Irish history, and gaining insight into the national traits of the Irish people.

"I was delighted to find in Ire-

land many souvenirs of the close friendship which for centuries has linked the Irish and the French. As a Frenchman I had been taught gratefully to remember the debt that the arms of France owe to the valor of the Irish; the memory of Fontenoy and of the Irish brigade is enshrined in the heart of every Frenchman. Similar memories are cherished today in Irish hearts. I chanced to spend a few weeks in an Irish-speaking district of Connemara. The peasantry there told me that I was the first Frenchman who had been in these parts since the days of the '98 Rebellion. Old white-haired peasants, who had heard of these days at their mothers' knee, streamed out to welcome me with a *cead mille failte*, and escorted me amidst a forest of waving hats to a spot where a fine, tall, young fellow stood, singing in Gaelic, "The French are Coming on the Sea" for the sake of the *Shan Van Vocht*.

"These friendly relations between France and Ireland long antedate the Rebellion of 1798. It is from France that St. Patrick went to Ireland and it is from the land of the saints and the poets that St. Colum came to France. For centuries Irish missionaries, poets and teachers gave freely to France the benefits of their unrivaled culture, and traces of their famous schools still remain to remind France of these, bygone days of Irish greatness.

"In Ireland I soon became absorbed in the Irish national movement, especially in the unprecedented language and literary revival that was rapidly placing Ireland among the most notable of the cultured nations of the earth. I learned to know the Irish writers, poets and thinkers—men like Yeats, Douglas Hyde, A. E., Padraic Colum, P. H. Pearse, men of whom any nation would be justly proud, I worked with them, I played with them, I shared their hopes, and I felt their sorrows.

They welcomed me to the Sinn Fein movement because I was a Frenchman, and because of their clear vision I was a unit of a nation that had ideals of nationalism identical with their own. They were making a supreme and a successful effort to change by their mystic power the poor old jaded woman into the young and beautiful Kathleen ni Houlihan. They fought against the migration that was draining them of their life blood; against tuberculosis which was the consequence of their economic degradation; and against the drunkenness in which the weak of heart sought to forget their state. They supported Irish industries; and they encouraged co-operation among the peasantry. In other words, they strove to make Ireland young, healthy, prosperous and free. Where is the true Frenchman who would not honor these patriots, who would not applaud such a national effort?

"The Sinn Feiners were not pro German, otherwise as a Frenchman I could not have found myself in harmony with them. On the contrary, as I have already mentioned, wherever I

went in Ireland I found that my French nationality was a passport to their favor. And the Sinn Feiners were always eager to know France better and to be better known in France.

"Returning to France I worked to make the Irish revival known in France; I founded a small newspaper devoted to the interests of Celticism; I established the Gaelic League of France; and I planned for young French students to go to Ireland; and for Irish Gaels to come to France.

"Then the war broke out; and from the first day of the mobilization I have had perforce, no other interest than to aid in the defeat of Germany. I therefore lost touch with Ireland. But in the trenches I found the school of Celticism. There we daily learn that the racial attributes of the German are alien, and destructive, to the racial attributes of the Celt; and our gallant soldiers constantly reveal by their deeds that the Celticism of their ancestors is the fundamental force in their souls. They are indeed the inheritors of the chivalry of the knights of old, the knights of the Holy Grail, the knights of the Fiana of Erin. They fight not for themselves, not even for their own, but for France and for liberty, that plain peoples everywhere may live and be free.

This then is our compelling reason. I conceive it to be also the essential purpose of the Sinn Feiners whom I have been privileged to know. At the end of the war, should I survive, I feel that as a Frenchman I can then best serve my country by returning to Ireland and by laboring there to strengthen the friendship that does exist, that has always existed, and that, happily, ever shall exist between the Irish and the French. That friendship contains much that is of good augury for the future of Ireland, and for the future of France. The nationalism which the Sinn Feiners were preaching in Ireland when I was among them is the nationalism that France is now fighting to defend. I therefore consider that every true Celt is an enemy of Germany; and hence that every Sinn Feiner who is true to his essential principles is necessarily a friend of France in her present struggle."

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Marcel Gets His Barn Mended

Red Cross Helps This 15 Year Old French Boy—and His Family.

Marcel is a man. He is just fifteen years old, but yet he is a man. I say he is a man because in the last four years' time has burned into his child heart marks that should wait for sterner maturity. He is a man because he has the responsibility of a woman. He has no father. The Germans saw to that. Marcel has had to stand by and see his small brothers and baby sister ask in vain for food while he fought off the pressing call from his growling boy's stomach. He has had to see tears from his mother's eyes drop on the plowed ground as she worked the soil his father would have tilled had he not gone away out of the peacefulness of the Marne valley into the iron hall of the Aisne and on into the hereafter.

The boy, who was now a man, worked hard, yes, too hard. With his hairless hands and his boy's strength he fought almost alone the unequal fight against want with what little help his frail mother could give.

Mother Can Keep Children.

One of the 70 or 80 local societies in France, handicapped by lack of funds because deluged by calls for help, tried to relieve the family by taking away the children. But to the torture twisted brain of the woman this seemed like losing all she had.

And then when everything seemed lost and despair came they heard the news: "No, it could not be true. They would help them with food and clothing? They would till the soil? Mend the barns and stay near by to see that things went well?" Yes, and the children could stay, said the Red Cross, as they had said to hundreds of others.

That was two years ago. Today this family is self supporting and has some to spare for the more needy ones, who still are being helped. Little Jean is taller. He looks well fed—and he is well fed. The baby is so roly poly that the dimples have come again. They are in good spirits—on their feet once more.

And Marcel. He has finished the course that the Red Cross gave him in an agricultural school. It is he who has been running the farm so well. He did it all. At least they let him think so, for heaven knows he has seen the bottom of the bitter cup. And I know that the Red Cross will want me to say he did it, for that is the way they work—quietly, earnestly, efficiently, without stint, without waste, without boast.

THE LITTLE OLD LADY OF PANSY SQUARE

Timidly she entered the Red Cross Bureau and stood just within the doorway.

Her poor, dimmed old eyes spoke so eloquently: "I'm friendly, ladies, but a little afraid."

Several of us rose, but Mrs. Crawford reached her first and asked her to come in and sit down.

"Oh, thank you so much," quavered the old lady as she sat down. "You see, my boy—my grandson—has gone and"—with Spartan fortitude she restrained the tears that glistened in her eyes—"gone with his regiment. Now I'm all alone in my little cottage in Pansy Square. And, oh, ladies, do any of you know the dreary loneliness when there is no one who comes home at night?"

We almost hugged the dear old lady, so forlorn, yet so brave. We drew up our chairs closer, and she told us her story.

The little old lady owned a vine embowered cottage in Pansy Square. There she kept house for her grandson, who worked in a downtown office. When America took up cudgels for democracy the lad, in patriotic fervor, was among the first to enlist.

"Ah, how I loved him and needed him!" whispered the old lady brokenly. "But my dear country needed him more. So I told him to go. 'But what will you do, granny?' he asked. I told him I had enough, and so he went. Brave, brave heart! My husband was a soldier, and I have his pension. But it is small. After paying the taxes on my cottage there was little left, and now it is gone. I'm old, but I'm willing. All I ask is a chance to earn my bread till—till he returns."

Through the Home Service workers of her community the little old lady of Pansy Square has been provided with simple tasks, such as making preserves and delicious cakes and jellies, a labor of love for her and an unfailing source of revenue.

Some day, please God, her soldier boy will come back to the little old lady of Pansy Square, and he will find her as he left her—happy, comfortable and self reliant.



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If bigness is of benefit to the public it should be commended.

The size of a business depends upon the needs which that business is called upon to serve. A business should be as big as its job. You do not drive tacks with a pile-driver—or piles with a tack-hammer.

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