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Ireland's Choice:—Mr. Hugh A. Law, in the *Contemporary*.

The Victory of Mr. De Valera:—Irish Correspondent, in the *Round Table*.

Self-Government in Scotland:—The Duke of Montrose, in the *Nineteenth Century*.

Tragedy of Unemployment:—Editorial in *The Review of Reviews*.

The Printed Word in Soviet Russia:—Sidney Webb, in *Current History*.

MR. HUGH LAW, who speaks with great authority on Anglo-Irish affairs, has discussed in the *Contemporary Review* the recent Free State election.

There is no use, he warns us, in attempting to dispute or to explain away the decisiveness of Mr. De Valera's victory. It may, indeed, be reversed before long. Mr. Law remembers how on his own entrance to the House of Commons, in 1902, the wiseacres assured him that the Liberals would never be in power again, and how within four years the Liberals had the largest majority in the annals of the British parliament. But, for the time, the De Valera forces are triumphant. It is true that, thanks to the system of Proportional Representation which prevails in the Free State, the minority has not been extinguished in the Dail as it would have been if British electoral methods had still been in use. It is also true that the premier's supporters outnumber by only one a hypothetical combination of all the groups against him. But Mr. Cosgrave had at no time an independent majority of even one, and this did not prevent him from holding office for four years. The stark fact is that the first preferences recorded for Mr. De Valera's candidates have surpassed by well over 100,000 those which they received in 1932, and that the popular vote for him was more than 50 per cent. ahead of that cast for Mr. Cosgrave.

How is this result to be explained? Mr. Law reflects on the apparent strength of the Opposition case. It emphasised the disastrous results of the tariff war to which the Government was committed. It described the empty docks, the markets in which all were sellers and none were buyers. It reminded the electorate of broken promises and disappointed hopes. Did not Mr. De Valera undertake to abolish unemployment? Did he not announce that taxation would be reduced by £2,000,000? Was it not the grim fact that instead of reducing taxation by £2,000,000 he had

increased it by £4,000,000, and that everywhere might still be seen the gaunt figures of those whom no man had hired or would hire? Why did not such considerations produce their natural effect?

It is to be remembered that in many quarters the economic distress as set forth in the Cosgrave electioneering literature did not correspond altogether to the voters' experience. There were those who had not lost, but—so far as they could themselves judge—had profited rather heavily by the tariff war. In urban areas, where the candidates of Mr. Cosgrave were so badly beaten, there was joy because food had become so cheap. The embargo on export abroad had brought about a glut in the home market, and prices had fallen. Moreover, there had been a sudden and somewhat lavish expenditure on relief works. The *Round Table* writer mentions also the increase in old age pensions, the supply of free milk for children, and in general the dexterous appeal to those "masses" that love to live on the open-handed generosity of "Government". A quickening of such distribution, out of the public purse, at the psychological moment will have its result.

The Republicans too, it seems, exercised far more effective and unremitting vigilance at the revision of the Register. Mr. Law thinks that what served them most of all was the transformed character of the electorate. The Franchise Act of 1918 and the adoption of Adult Suffrage in 1922 have placed the principal voting strength with the younger generation, who cannot appreciate either the value of the progress to Dominion status or the difficulties against which it was achieved, who remember little in public affairs prior to the Rising of 1916, and to whom incessant warfare with England has come to appear part of the fixed order of Irish life.

What may be expected to happen in the new Dail? The oath of allegiance is bound to disappear, and Mr. Law is not disposed to regard this "too tragically", so long as other clauses of the Constitution remain as links between the Free State and the rest of the Commonwealth. There is indeed a bad flavour about compulsory oaths—something not only ineffective, but impious. The Land Annuities trouble shows no sign of accommodation, and it is not perhaps too sanguine to hope that the League at Geneva may yet be invoked to bring together two parties each of which has got further away from the other than was either contemplated or desired. In any event, the farmers' losses have been so grievous that it will be impossible to collect Land Annuities in full for some time to come, no matter to what treasury they are destined.

A feature of the De Valera policy upon which much stress has of late been laid is that indicated by the term "hair-

shirt republic." Sometimes the President talks like a Puritan about superiority to the pomp and vanities of the world, and about his preference for the austerities of a simpler age. He wants to substitute many small for a few large industries, to parcel out land with small farms for small-scale tillage, and thus to construct the ideal State whose citizens will be cursed neither with poverty nor with riches. Mr. Law feels rather attracted by this, giving Mr. De Valera full credit both for sincerity of purpose and for readiness to share in the self-sacrifice which its accomplishment would involve. But he has a shrewd misgiving that further and further subdivision of Free State land might recreate some of the conditions which led to the Great Famine. It is to be remembered, too, that the population, since America has ceased to admit more than a fraction of the former immigrants, is now steadily on the rise. Before deciding on a return to "good old times", it should be considered whether the times were really good, and also whether their conditions can now be restored. One recalls the warning of John Stuart Mill against idealisers of past and little-understood ages, who would soon find that the fabric of ancient usage would crumble beneath the necessity of imposing a rigid poor-law.

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Further suggestive comments on the subject come from the Irish correspondent of *The Round Table*. From him we learn that peculiar sagacity was shown by Mr. De Valera in choosing a time for the election:—when the movement to consolidate various forces against him had been started but had not gathered strength; when his principal supporters of the labouring and small farming class had not yet felt the full brunt of his policy; and when the taxpayers were still unaware of the degree of public affliction which next budget must impose. A "special emergency fund" of £2,000,000 had been devoted to payment by the Free State Treasury of the 40 per cent. duties on farm produce at English ports, and to many farmers it was not apparent either how temporary such an expedient must be or how inadequate to make good the losses in trade. So the moment was seized at which things, though bad, were not yet so bad as they must soon become, and at which the remedies could still inspire trust. Moreover, somehow the story that Republican success would mean the end of "Partition" had an effect in the border counties which one hopes is seldom possible for such sheer imposture.

The sudden announcement of an election was a surprise, it seems, not only to the country, but to most of Mr. De Valera's colleagues. He has a shrewd eye for an electoral position, and this

resolve was his own. The premier knew well how damning a statement could and would be made by his opponents. In the *Round Table* article it is pointed out that, as a result of the economic war Irish exports to England had fallen much more heavily in 1932 than English imports into Ireland, and that not even the retention of the Land Annuities would prevent an extremely adverse balance of trade. But Mr. De Valera relied, successfully as it proved, upon the chance that these material losses would weigh less with the electorate than a revival of what Mr. Owen Wister has called "the ancient grudge", especially if a plausible case could be urged against the Cosgrave group as agents of the historic enemy. Thus "Vote this time for Ireland," with an accompanying cartoon of Mr. Cosgrave as the bond-slave of Mr. J. H. Thomas, was a slogan everywhere displayed.

There are some curious addenda to the tale. Thorough-going as Mr. De Valera was, certain enthusiasts found his programme too timid. Miss McSwiney's group, we learn, refused to take any part in electing members to "the British Dominion Assembly of Southern Ireland". Mr. De Valera's new Governor-General (Mr. Donal Buckley) an elderly shopkeeper of a country town, is fulfilling the purpose for which he was chosen,—that of reducing the Viceroyalty to insignificance. The Vice-regal Lodge is closed; Mr. Buckley lives in an unpretentious suburban villa, attended by civic guards who speak the Erse language, and he accepts only a fraction of his statutory salary. Of the two men whose vigilance made them specially objectionable to the Republicans, the chief of the detective department and the head of the civic guards, one has been retired, the other given "compulsory leave of absence".

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It seems as if in Free State politics, as in the world depression, one is now reduced to waiting and hoping. But, happily, for such exercise of patience Irish talent has been developed by long trial. *O passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem.*

THE time seems to have gone by when Scottish agitation for the re-constituting of a parliament in Edinburgh could be dismissed as either mere sentimentality or idle jest. All movements of the sort, however vital they may ultimately prove to have been, are at first the object of contempt, of compassion, or of both, and it is indeed obvious that international intimacies of two hundred years' development will be hard to dissolve. We have seen, however, many a hard thing accomplished in our hard epoch of the

world, and many a warning that "you can not unscramble eggs" has been made to look very foolish before a *fait accompli*. The permanent veto of the Lords, the enduring strength of the House of Romanoff, and the impossibility that Great Britain would ever abandon free trade, are items in the humorous history of such vaticination. No doubt the nearest parallel of all to my present subject is the rupture of the Anglo-Irish bond, not after two centuries, but after seven centuries and a half. And though there are very important differences in these cases, there are points of agreement which we cannot much longer overlook.

The Duke of Montrose is too wary to rest his case for an Edinburgh parliament upon so dangerous a precedent as the formation of the Irish Free State. Paragraph after paragraph of his article seems rather designed to show how different is the ideal of Scottish Nationalism from the ideal we have come to know as *Sinn Fein*. One can scarcely miss the point, for example, of his insistence that not only was the Anglo-Scottish settlement of 1707 the one policy possible at the time, but it is still the policy which—in essence—no intelligent Englishman or Scotsman would wish to cancel; that it has been productive of enormous advantage to both countries, and that in any scheme for its amendment the British solidarity it has guaranteed in world politics must be otherwise made secure. The duke may well have had Mr. De. Valera in mind when he described the Act of two and a quarter centuries ago as no "tyrannical piece of oppression forced without rhyme or reason by England upon Scotland", but rather the free choice of each partner in the Union, and meant to end the absurdity of hostile tariffs, rival foreign policies and mutually destructive pieces of legislation on the part of two sections of a small island which acknowledge a single sovereign.

Having thus allayed suspicion in the reader's mind, the Duke of Montrose goes on to point out that the settlement of 1707 no longer meets the necessities of the case. Think of the difference between the demands on Government two centuries ago and the demands now! The enormous complexity of public business has got far beyond the capacities of the simple machine which was once adequate, and devolution is the sole alternative to failure. Two hundred years ago there was no such thing as what we now call "social legislation", and for such legislation as was accomplished there was nothing like the present preliminary debate. The combined revenues of England and Scotland amounted to less than one per cent. of the present revenue of Great Britain, while the National Debt has been increased about five hundred fold. It is

obvious that problems of trade, of economics, of foreign affairs, in a vast Empire with sister nations of co-equal independence, must be such as the statesmen of 1707 had no chance to realize. Only a miracle could have made the settlement under Queen Anne adequate to the situation of to-day, and it is plain that no such miracle took place. What we now see every year is the postponement of most needful legislation because the legislative machine is so clogged that it has broken down. The Duke of Montrose illustrates from several recent cases. It took nine years to get the Sheriff Courts Act passed for Scotland, and six years to get a Scottish Education Act. It is taking more than three years to get extended to Scotland those agricultural credit facilities which were allowed to England. In short, "Congestion of legislation at Westminster is fearful and unmanageable."

Cannot statesmanship devise some better remedy for these difficulties than the traditional one—of further and further curtailment of debate? Such methods as "applying the closure" and "the kangaroo" are the very negation of parliamentary government. The Duke of Montrose believes that the true plan of devolution would have been introduced long ago had not the proposal of it been complicated by the party differences and party feuds over Irish Home Rule. It was most unfortunate that it happened to have its first trial on Ireland, where so many irrelevancies clouded the issue. But now that this trouble is out of the way, now that we see no fewer than five independent legislative assemblies within the British Isles—two in Ireland, one in the Isle of Man, one in the Channel Islands, "and virtually one in London for England"—why should Scotland remain the one British country whose affairs are managed outside her own border?

It is something quite concrete and practical that this article advocates. The Duke of Montrose does not wish to have his ideas confused with those of the young Scottish enthusiasts who a few years ago talked of Scotland's recovery of "sovereign power", of "kilted sailors in Scottish ships", and of "Gaelic-speaking ambassadors". What he wants is a parliament in Edinburgh, with altogether limited and defined powers, but whose word will be the last within the scope of its authority for Scottish business. He would leave to the Imperial Parliament (in which Scotland would continue to be represented) all questions of Peace and War, Foreign Affairs, National Defence, Succession to the Crown. He would even leave to it "Dominion, Colonial and Overseas Affairs", with a few significant exceptions, such as "Immigration into or Deportation from Scotland"—a matter on which no Saxon should inter-

tere. But except for such reserved subjects, the Scottish parliament would have complete control over its country's business, and would be the only competent authority in Scottish finance and taxation, subject to (a) what might hereafter be decided with regard to Customs and Excise, and (b) a contribution by Scotland to the Imperial Expenditure. Canadians will note with interest the demand for "Finality of the Supreme Courts of Scotland".

With great force the Duke of Montrose argues that other remedies for the crisis have either remained in the realm of abstract theory or proved a ludicrous failure in the attempt at application. Meanwhile, a vast amount of the discontent with which Scotland has of late had to struggle has a certain justice underlying it: For it arises in the long-continued collapse of Government in respect of not a few of its plainest duties, and the collapse in turn comes from refusal to resort to the expedient which every congested business firm adopts as a matter of course. Finally, the devolution scheme would re-awaken and re-animate a drooping patriotism:

We require a Scottish policy, but we will never get this until we are able to attract the best brains and the most efficient men to give their services to the country. As things are now, parliament requires about nine months' residence in London, and there are very few men in active public life or business in Scotland who can afford to leave their homes and enterprises and dwell in the south for such a long period. The sessions of a Scottish parliament would be short, because business would be taken every day consecutively, and probably for most of the day. In the Irish Free State, parliament sat last year for only fifty-nine days and dealt fully with fifty-four Bills, enacting thirty-five of them.

So, after all, the obvious precedent must come back. Say what they will, the source of inspiration for the Scottish Nationalists is clear. But it is none the worse for its origin.

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN must surely have some penitential moments when he thinks of that unfortunate paragraph in his speech about the improbability of getting unemployment under effective control for at least ten years. These *obiter dicta* so lend themselves to the purposes of the enemy! And before there had been time to forget the slip he made in his contemptuous allusion to the American Middle West, there comes another that will be quoted against him incessantly. The Chancellor is winning fame for his "blazing indiscretions".

Hardly had he sat down, after his gloomy prophecy that it would take a decade to reduce unemployment, when Mr. Churchill sprang

to his feet to tell him that, long before ten years had passed, a popular upheaval would make an end of any Government which could not move far quicker than that. The English *Review of Reviews* has presented a conspectus of editorial comment and of the invective of the cartoonists, to show how except for *The Times* and *The Morning Post* the London press is united in condemnation both of the pessimism which could adopt such a view and of the sluggishness which could be content with it. Particularly savage is the criticism in a Conservative paper, *The Week-End Review*, which agrees with the Chancellor that policies such as those of the present administration are unlikely to be fruitful of any good in a shorter time than he has specified. But most entertaining, if we can conjure entertainment out of so grim a situation, are the cartoons. The *Review of Reviews* has reprinted three. One in *The New Clarion* depicts "The World's Chain Gang",—a succession of weary and worn toilers, chained man to man, ascending a rugged path, and cheering one another with the reflection "Only ten more years"! A drawing in *The Evening Standard* shows two callers at the Chancellor's door, one an obvious plutocrat, the other an unemployed workman: the butler bids the former come in, telling him that Mr. Chamberlain will see him in ten minutes. Turning to the latter, he adds "And you, my man, in ten years". Most piquant of all is a picture in the London *Daily Herald*, of a shipwreck, and John Bull urging the captain of a lifeboat to go out to rescue the people struggling in the waves. The captain, whose uniform cannot disguise the figure and features of the Chancellor, replies in language which reads exactly like a caricature of one of Mr. Chamberlain's speeches: "Alas, Mr. Bull, lifeboats are but palliatives. Let us think deeper; let us think truer—let us think about controlling the inclemency of the weather which has caused the misfortune".

I suspect that Mr. Chamberlain will have to revert to his father's method of more exact and careful preparation. Impromptus have a dangerous side.

IT was an early boast of the rulers of Soviet Russia that they would take measures to "liquidate illiteracy". Sidney Webb's article in *Current History* shows how they have at least done a great deal in that direction for the time they have spent at the job. One hears with astonishment that of new books and pamphlets a larger number now come out each year in Russia than in Germany and Great Britain put together. It is true that all publishing is directed by the Government, that all books must pass a censor, and that no publishing house organized on the old principle of

enterprise for private profit in books is allowed to exist. But in this writer's judgment it is quite wrong to speak of the current stream of literature as "all propaganda". Many of the greatest works in the literature of England, Germany, America, and France are translated and published in large editions. Moreover, the translations are into many languages, so that in that polyglot country all may be reached:

It was Lenin's programme, when the State Publishing House was established in Moscow, to bring to every family in the land in their several mother tongues, by means of cheap editions running into many thousands of copies, every kind of book deemed necessary for their culture.

And the criterion of cultural necessity does not appear to have been determined with the narrowness, or applied with the viciousness, which foreign reproaches against Soviet rule often imply. It is true that the censorship prohibits books whose influence might be expected to prove "counter-revolutionary", and such a rule is elastic enough to shelter a great deal of capricious tyranny by the censor. But while from the point of view of a French, an English or an American reader the inhibitions may seem grievous, the critic would have us remember how Russia still feels that she is fighting for her life as a Socialist republic, and within the limits of what she judges needful for her safety she has spread education in a manner never before dreamed of in the land of the Tsars. The response has been on a scale worthy of the effort. There has been an enormous outburst of craving for intellectual luxuries so long withheld. "In mere magnitude, the sudden demand for books in Soviet Russia during the past five years is unparalleled in the history of the world".

On the principle that even the Prince of Darkness deserves his due, this achievement—taken by itself—should not be denied a word of praise even in *The Morning Post*.

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