

October 8 1922 Dublin

To K S

I arrived here last night, and found all well There is a vast pile of Guild letters from all parts, so I trust the post is working again. The shooting at night is much better but has been bad.

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Dublin

To D I S

It is as usual here. I have in my time complain-
ed of the papers for writing up different fell
occasions. Now they are certainly writing things
down. That is right in one way, only in another
it gives opportunity for secret misdoings. The
truth is that when you have to record things
that never ought to have happened you cannot get
it really right.

Dublin

October 12 1922

To K S

The nights are much quieter now. Much less sniping but ambushes still continue. We do not heed them much .

I saw the Closes last night. They gave a most sad account of how the Murrays came to leave. She was in a very bad ambush in Stephen's Green , and saw the bombs thrown , and the return fire. And it sent her quite off and she was sent to England, and came back after a while apparently quite well. and then she could not stand things and had to go into a nursing home here, and for months no one saw her but her sister and husband and at last he left. Emily Close was passing along the road the night he preached his farewell sermon, and then he went off, and I described how uneasy he had seemed, and they said his whole heart is in Ireland though he is a good bit of an Orangeman. I described how bored he had seemed with his eleventh century font, and they said Yes he was doubtless quite uprooted. I am not quite sure at what point Mrs Murray saw that ambush . I think she may

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have got generally overdone , and been cured by
an absence in England, and then come in for the
ambush and had a relapse that was much worse than
the first attack. In fact I think that was how
it was. " It was just such an ambush as Flora saw
on Baggot Street bridge " says Emily " but Flora i
is more strong minded."

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Dublin

To D I S

Your letters come quite safely now and in good time
Still I think it best if you send them via Kate . One
never can tell.

Edith wrote to me today . Her letter
is dated October 16 and she says that mine of the
27th^{Sept} reached her at Foynes a few days ago. Poor
dear she goes on " As at last after several months
without it parcel post is now working, will you
kindly let me have the following books " She said
that the day before yesterday ; and yesterday a
strike began on the Gt Southern and Western. No tra
trains are leaving Kingbridge so it hopeless to thi
think of sending books . Therefore I think I did
well to tell you to write via Kate always , for
the strikes, and rebellions, and holds up, occur
without one moment's warning, and letters get lost
without redress.

Thins show no signs of mending yet. I had a
most horrid talk with Jo Russell. He is an under
graduate and comes for books. He knows Ballyconree
the orphanage which is , or alas which was five

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or six miles from Clifden. The one we saw was Clifden orphanage It was for girls, and Ballyconree was the companion place for boys, both now in Clifden parish. Last month, I forget the date, I, Jo Russell, and others were horrified that a question was asked in the Westminster House of Commons (one says that to distinguish from the Belfast institution of the same name) The question was about some boys taken off in a gun boat from the coast of Galway. Jo made enquiries, but could get no letters through. At last he got hold of young Shea, who is in business in this city, and is the son of that Rev J B Shea who is a convert from Rome , and who hangs out in the far west.

Through him and I think through one or two others Jo made out that one evening about six o'clock the Irregulars appeared at the orphanage. They asked for a boy called Butler who was most fortunately away. Butler's mother died when he was born , and he was adopted by Purkis , the master of the orphanage, and brought up as his own. He is now about sixteen or seventeen. The accu

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He is now about sixteen or seventeen. The accusation was that all the boys in the house and he in especial had been very friendly with the auxiliaries a year ago, and had given information to them. It was especially said that Butler had given information, and Jo thinks that if he had been taken he might have been shot. The Irregulars said they were acting under orders from their superiors. They were at last convinced that Butler was really not in the house, he and Miss Purkis had gone away for a few days to some place not very far off. When they were sure of his being away they ordered Purkis and all the boys out of the house, saying they would give half an hour and permission to take little things. Purkis just refused to have anything to say to them. They then marched the boys to a gate lodge there was. Jo hears that they were very rough and beat some of them, when the half hour was over they carried Purkis out in his chair, he is 72 years old. They carried him to the gate lodge, they scattered petrol, they

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set the whole place alight. The village people came in crowds and looted all they could from the burning house. Purkis and the boys made their way to Clifden, Jo could not tell exactly how, or whether they had to go over the mountains by night. But when they got there they were taken in at the girl's home that we saw. A radiogram was then sent to Miss d'Arcy in London, and an officer on a ship in Cork harbour offered to take the boys off in a gunboat, he happened to be interested about the home. It was all arranged by radio and three days later the radio station was burnt down Miss d'Arcy, poor thing, accepted the offer and said that the girls must be brought away as well. So they were all taken off, the girl's Home was left empty and next night it was burnt down. I said "Do you think they would have burned the Home if the girls had been left there?" "No" said Jo "I am sure they would not have meddled with little girls" He then said that the children are all to be taken to Australia, by some rich man, or

rich Home which has offered to adopt them. They have sailed or will ~~will~~ sail immediately. The Purkis~~s~~ will stay behind, they are too old for the journey Mrs Purkis was in England when it happened. I asked him if he thought that Mr Purkis had been rather foolish. He chuckled and said~~d~~ in words which I forget Not so very. He was it seems a master in a grammar school in England. He was quite unacquainted with Ireland when he went there twenty years ago, and he was like an old fashioned, middle class, garrison man. But Mrs P was very nice and kind, and they were both very kind to the poor. Jo thinks that if anyone had gone at once to Ballyconree, and made some effort to open something again the poor people would very likely have brought back some of the furniture which they looted. He says with truth that after all it ^{was} ~~it~~ ^{loot} it, or let it burn and what could they do but keep it when the whole thing was given up utterly? Of course Miss d'Arcy ought never to have consented

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about the gun boat . She ought to have said "Expect
me in Clifden tomorrow," gone over and made such
arrangements as she could to house the boys. It
never really pays to be a coward. But poor thing,
she is a little delicate, oldfashioned, spinster, and
all her ideas are a hundred years behindhand. Say
they are fifty years behindhand, that counts like
a hundred now a days.

I asked about the O'Connells . Jo says they are
safe, but that the line is permanently blocked
between Clifden and Galway, so no news comes out.
The Nationals hold Clifden, and they hold Galway
but they are not strong enough to hold the line
which unites them. Poor Mrs O'Connell She would
have saved both those Homes if she had had a free
hand. It is hard for her now she is growing old
but I trust Aasleagh is safe, I have heard nothing
to the contrary.

After this hateful story I will not go on with
the Hayes's and their sorrows on the boundary at
Kilkeel, I must tell that sometime, but really not
today.

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However there is one thing I must tell and that is about Killarney. You see the line is unavailable there also. It is unavailable in many places it seems. So last week there was a great account of "Transport" in Killarney. Twice a week all the farm carts that are within reach are mustered at Killarney. Sometimes 100 sometimes up to 150 A strong guard goes before, and a strong guard after and they march in a procession to Tralee, which is almost on the sea, the ships are quite near, indeed I think some can come up the Lee. The procession starts quite early, Nationals, carts, Nationals, and at the fag end "Danny Boy" He is an armed motor. There is sniping at times from the hills, If it gets tiresome, the drivers take what cover they can and the Nationals fire. If it is machine guns Danny Boy fires. At last they get to Tralee Food is waiting. They load up as quick as they can and march back to Killarney which is then victualled for three days. It is rather a picturesque account But how do people get food in remote cottages?

I feel so glad poor old Mrs Rice is out of it

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She died last November. In that lonely little house and so near the boundary it must have been anxious work. Apparently that part of the boundary, and I daresay all the rest, is a continual source of friction. The Irregulars pop across continually, and the Specials are sent to protect the people, and it is an open question whether the Irregulars or the Specials are the worst.

I am to get a girl to catalogue the library on the Dewey system, or at least to do as much cataloguing as five pounds will pay for. After spending that, and five pounds on a new shelf the library must hold its hand till it sees what comes in. It did so very well last year 191 books in all sent out and post not available. Two years ago with a parcel post it only lent 168. I am really proud of it.

Herbert is really so very complimentary he will turn my head. One night Hermione came in, and she said I was brave. I began to disclaim politely, but Herbert cut in "Oh she's as brave as a lion"

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and he said it so cheerfully. I believe a lion is a rather specially timid animal, but Herbert likes my being here, he likes to watch the Guild riding out the storm. I invited him to come and see me, he said it would hurt his feelings. I said Yes assuredly, but there was a faithful remnant. He said Was not all the remnant in London? I said Those that he came across, but there was a remnant in Ireland too. It seems so wonderful to get five shillings or even ten shillings from people who get nothing from the Guild but a couple of intercession papers in a year, and the fund would stand better than it does only that ten or twelve are at present isolated through permanent obstruction on the line, or through the railway strike.

October 22

I heard wild tales from Miss Badham and Miss Fletcher Fletcher yesterday. One had a girl come from Tralee Her father brought her by sea, and by Shannon, as far as Athenry, and then by rail to Dublin. Another girl came from Dunmanway Co Cork. Her mother brought her all the way by sea, and is now perturbed

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because

~~because~~ she gets no letters from her. The girl ~~he~~ hears from her ma every week, and answers at once, and her letters never reach Dunmanway. These times have turned some people into devils, but set ~~aga-~~ against that they are turning some quiet people into heros. I think Miss Badham is a hero. She has been spending ever so much money doing up her house and she had ever such a gay prize giving, and is making really a most gallant stand, and so is miss Fletcher, and so are ever so many more.

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To K S

It is so very dull to have no Government Over here the dullness of hearing how magnificently the two local parliaments are doing is overwhelming. I really think it is a case of Couée. The newspapers are at their wit's end how to fill their columns, and they praise the local parliaments with a feeling that at any rate they are not stimulating disorder. I really think perhaps it is the only thing left to do.

Northern Ireland has apparently accomplished getting out of debt, which I do think is very creditable.

Southern Ireland broke the postal strike and crows and screams about that, also about having got a flag and a stamp of its own, which is less interesting to my mind. Cosgrave continues ~~tries~~ to be civil to the Southern Unionists, and the Parliament says that now at last they will ~~be~~ come closely in touch with the life of the nation and be able to work for their country. To a man

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like Sir Horace that is a cheeky way to speak. but it is better of course than murdering him. I think Cosgrave himself is turning to the Southern ^{Unionists} as amongst his few remaining allies. I think those of us who survive will have a jolly good time presently. Reaction will set in, and the poor little Dail that is to be will throw its silly self into our arms. But in the meanwhile things are very bad.

Mr Quigley says that the men who raided farms in his neighbourhood were not Irregulars. They were what he calls "Bolshevists" They carried a red flag and went about shouting "The land for the people" They particularly attacked Protestants, and fifty Protestant people have left the parish. It was so definitely an attack on Protestants that the Archbishop went to the Provisional Government about it. The poor Government was quite sympathetic, and said they would help, but they did not send any soldiers. It is thought they had none to send. But they did come

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down upon a solicitor who had helped to write threatening letters. They said he was never again to appear in any of their courts, so he is ruined. I daresay he wrote the letters under threat of murder, but of course the Pro: Government is quite right, and I am glad that they did what they were able to do.

One farmer is going to stand it out. He has got one or two men from the Government to watch his house, and he is going to stay there. But with all this "Leave the Free State alone" say I. These scandals happened under the House of Commons too, and I think no good end would be served by bringing the House of Commons back again. Better leave ill alone. It must just go raging on till the middle class and the poor get more sense. That may take a hundred years or so, but then it must go raging on for a hundred years. Possibly they may learn common sense a little faster than that, but I think not. After all government is a very difficult science. It has taken the human race untold ages to develop in a

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very few places the degree of safety for life and property to which we grew up. Murder and outrage are much more " natural " .

To D I S

I am completely in the dark as to what I wish to happen.

An old fellow today sold me a paper in the road for 2d. " Oh " says I " someone is getting good from all these misfortunes " meaning that he was asking a very big price for ~~his~~ his rag,

He said " There is no good in these times we must have the British troops back again " Later I talked with Miss O'Sullivan and she said " Cosgrave is not able to overcome the Irregulars I said " What would you think to have the army back ? " She said " But that is what the Irregulars want. Last week Mulcahy met de Valera, I heard it from a friend , and de V said " Tear up the Treaty, " and Mulcahy would not , so de Valera is fighting in this way. " I said " Well the Russian Soviet is congratulating the Angora

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government on its demands to the Allies, and of course de Valera is the friend of the soviet so it becomes very complex." and she said " Oh of course he is the friend of the soviet , that cannot be doubted " And I said " You know I think if a decent republic were set up tomorrow de Valera would fight it as he fights the Free State " and she said " I am sure he would "

And I do feel it like that. I think Ireland has been sucked into immense schemes of which we , the more educated , have only a vague knowledge that they exist, and of which the less educated just know nothing at all. Miss O'Sullivan said there was talk that if the Tory party come in in England they will sweep away the treaty and put in the army to rule. I said I could imagine their doing that if the army had had any success before.

I am not surprised that you get fits of feeling that you have come to India for nothing. I think the fading away of the country makes everything

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so very dim and misty at times. ~~The country is~~
~~so very old, and has been so very~~ great, It is
a delusion, but I think it is a very natural one.
The country is so very old, and has been so very
great, it leaves a most terrible blank as it
ceases to be. One feels all lost without it.
Every minute one looks round for something, and
remembers with a fresh pang that it is gone for
ever. However in a sense it is not gone, be-
cause all the best will live in new forms, as all
the best of the Roman empire lives on and on, and
is continually reviving under new forms.

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Dublin

To K S

I am sorry that the bang at Oriel House gave you any anxiety . I hope when you got my letter about the presents that your genius for dates revealed that it was written after the explosion. We did just hear a good bang, and then revolver firing, two or three volleys , and the road was, and in parts still is frosted over with broken glass. Windows were broken in a good many adjacent houses, but Oriel House itself is boarded up, at least the door is , and some of the windows, and you do not see much damage One really does accustom oneself, and I think it is one of the evils of the time.

Do you know I think murder will out. I think the anarchists will soon stand out for what they really are, and it will be better. You saw I daresay that Clifden is retaken byn the Irregulars. They were put out since the Four Cour Courts fighting, a nd about last Sunday, in fact I think on Sunday they appeared in great force and took it.

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and made many Regulars prisoners. There were about 100 Nationals and they were quite outnumbered by the others. When they had the place they put up the Red flag.

On October 11 last the R C Bishops had a pastoral letter, and the gist of it was that killing national soldiers is murder, and that seizing public or private property is robbery, and that anyone who does these things will not get absolution in confession, which is a thing always got before communion. It amounts to excommunicating the Irregulars. Now there is a sheet printed, and pasted about in Dublin and I suppose elsewhere, a little sheet, and it says "Why does Mulcahy not get the Bishops to burn us as they burnt Joan of Acre?" I was greatly startled when I read that. It is an assault on the Bishops as Bishops, it is the beginning of an assault on Christianity.

Two days after the Bishop's Pastoral there was a reception at the Mansion House given by

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the R C bishops to the Catholic Truth Society. It is a party they give every year at this season, and when Cardinal Logue arrived there was a crowd of women on the steps, and they hooted him, and called " Let out the prisoners " and made such a row that the police had to clear them out. (You know the old D M P go on still here with a new body called The Civic Guard) and. one day the women made a great disturbance at a meeting of the Catholic Truth Society, and had to be forcibly ejected. The C T S Society is an R C S P C K It is quite useful and good, and it was a most rowdy thing to meddle. ~~by~~ at its meeting, and at its party.

I think if the Red Flag is brought well to the front, and if a real anti-religious party forms itself it may all be for the best. Those forces are there working in the dark, and I think if they come out publicly it is better.

The Provisional Parliament grows more and more civil to the Southern Unionists, and no wonder

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Oh dear me such a piece of work about the Senate. The Senate is the upper chamber, and it is to be partly elected and partly nominated. I have not mastered the details, but the object of having it is to get some Unionists associated with public affairs. The Free State ministers are taking it up most seriously, and saying how these people must have every chance, and how the Senate has not much power, still it can have great influence and its constitution, and the choice of the members must be most carefully gone into. Every one must be associated with the government, we really cannot have any class left out, and so forth, and so forth. That is only common sense of course, but to see common sense arising any where is such a comfort.

And Belfast is really better, Red Flag having gone south. X heard from Mrs Turner and she says that some of the dispossessed people are coming back~~and~~" and thank God I did not go "

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Dublin

To D I S

I spoke to Bishop Plunket of what has been greatly on my mind for some days, and I asked him if he believed that the fighting is changing its character, and becoming more definitely revolutionary, and in especial if he believed that outrages on women are committed during the raids. And he said that about the outrages on women it was quite true he was afraid, according to what he heard. And in his opinion the fighting was quite ceasing to be political, and is now the most extreme socialists and communists fighting against all restraint and order. He was dreadfully afraid of saying too much and he spoke with the utmost guardedness and with the use of most measured language.

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To D I S

This is another bad day Last night we heard crash bang about 11 30 and it was an ambush in Hollis Street followed by firing high and low. I do not know where all the shots came from . It went on for half an hour or so.

Today I was going to Donnybrook , and I had a little matter to see to first in Stephen's Green . So I went thither and as I went I heard machine guns starting. I did my business , and went along Dawson Street to pick up the Donnybrook tram, and men were shouting papers, and stop press at such a rate that I thought I would get one, and there I read that there was an attack on Wellington barrack from 9 o'clock this morning. Wellington Barracks is right ^{down} ~~down~~ on the south side, Donnybrook is south east, so I had great searchings of heart, and at last resolved not to go . I hate to put a thing off, and specially today , because Mrs Trench was very poorly yesterday , and said that the reading did her good. However I thought it was

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too hard on X to run the risk of being cut off, ~~fo~~
for the nationals are forming cordons everywhere

So I telephoned and just said I was sorry I could not come. Then I wrote a note and said I was afraid and took it myself to his rooms in college. I thought he could tell her as much or as little as seemed desirable of what I said. Since then there have been crashes, and bangs, now and again, and the worst is that I do not like to go too late to Westland Row. At the same time I do not like to post ~~any~~ anywhere but at Westland Row.

These days are oddly tiring. One would think one should be used to them but it is not so. One seems to feel more wearied at each successive outburst.

We had a big fire early on Sunday morning, the rink was burned in Rutland Square, it served as a sorting place for the letters, and all letters posted on Saturday were destroyed. The postal ~~servi~~ service is much upset since, but most happily I had not succeeded in my plan of posting the Guild

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voting lists on Saturday. They only went on Sunday morning so they escaped.

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To K S

On Sunday they burnt the rink in Rutland Square, and it was used for a post office sorting office so all kinds of delay followed the ^{burning} ~~bruning~~. This morning there was an attack on certain barracks on the South side, and I hear that fifteen or twenty men are killed. The Irregulars are growing very wild, and have apparently come back to Dublin. I am going down now to post this at Westland Row, because if one waits it may grow rowdy down there. There was big shooting last night but it did not disturb me seriously. I rolled over in bed and went to sleep again.

November 11 1922 Dublin

T₈ K S

Emily Wynne called in today She says she thinks the general madness is abating, and I trust she is right.

November 17 1922 Dublin

To K S

We had quite a nice little observance on the 11th I wonder did it get into the papers ? Alack I cannot tell about it.

~~What is the good of that now ?~~ It makes me so firghtfully unhappy that the conservatives have got in. What is the good of that now ? What is the sense in calling themselves conservatives and unionists, all the good old names, and letting this anarchy rage on here because they have put it out of their own , or anyone else's power to stop it ? The Trinity boys made quite a pretty little demonstration , but to think how those brutes in London have deserted those same boys is so maddening that I will say no more about it.

It was rather odd. Nelly O'Brien came to pass the other day , and something was said about the military courts which the provisional parliament has now authorised. So I said that if people looked on government as a charge committed to them by God they were not afraid

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ton put rebels to death . But if they looked upon it as a mere carrying out of other people's wishes they were afraid to execute for treason. And I said further that I was quite sure that Ireland never would be settled till someone came into power so possessed with a sense of a ^{commission} ~~mission~~ from God to make life and property safe that he would hang and shoot freely. Nelly to my extreme surprise was interested , and said " I never knew anyone take that line "

But I think in these days that sense of acting for God in making life safe for everybody is very dim. I think in many people it is non-existent. The dominant thought is to carry out the wishes of the majority. I am sure Lloyd George thinks that is what God requires of him, and that is why he is so pleased with his Irish achievements. They do technically carry out the wishes of the many, and he feels no further obligation in the

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matter In him I do not resent it. He is like that . That is his line. But I do hate to have people take the old names, and have none of the old sense of responsibility to the defenceless, to the Trinity boys and such like. All those people have become defenceless because it was thought better that the Govern- ment should take charge for everybody. In the Middle Ages things were so arranged that they could to a great extent defend themselves I am reading The Monastery at present. It was rather a jolly world all those moss troopers and cattle reivers, and robber chiefs.

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Dublin

To K S

After my howl yesterday I must write and tell you that I am for the first time really hopeful about the Provisional Parliament .

You will see that they have not only given powers to military courts, but have executed four men in Dublin itself. A good deal of secrecy was observed, and nothing was made public till the men were actually shot yesterday morning. But of course the executive is still very weak

What gives me hope is partly proceeding from threats to action, and partly the debate in the Pro: Parliament, The Government (I shall resume that phrase if anyone begins to govern) made the following statements in answer to questions.

It said it was told the country was shocked to hear of the executions. It hoped the shock might wake people into having some respect for human life. It was going to restore order. If many lives had to be taken to ensure peace then they would be taken. It had tried from December to June

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to avoid all fighting, and from June pretty nearly
ly ~~to~~ December to avoid taking life in battle. It
thought if it had taken life freely in June it
might be possible to take less life now. or in
deed the country might be at peace by now. (words
to that effect I ca nnot quite recall that state=
ment) There is no republican party in Ireland
now, there is only the government and the anar=
chists. It had taken the lives of average
offenders first , beca use it wanted everyone to
know that people were punished for threats(the
men executed had taken no life they were only
waiting to take it) and for breaking the law.
If awt exceptional man had been executed first
the people might have said " He is peculiarly
wicked, or he is English, or he is a leader.
That does not apply to us." The Government wishes
it to be clearly understood that their orders
apply to everybody. It was a great tragedy to
have to shoot these young men. Let the rebels lay
down their arms and obey the law and it will

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never happen again.

There was one remark about people " who want to bring the English back " , but the speaker, Mulcahy said later in his speech that if the Government is not allowed to establish the law there is another course which it will follow, It will abdicate ~~and~~ say to the British signers of the Treaty " We cannot govern The treaty is dissolved " Was not that rather a dodgy way of putting it ?

It seems rather horrible to be so much pleased with an execution, but it is not the execution one takes pleasure in. It is the acknowledgment by any body of persons that they have a real duty in the matter of protecting life and property, and it is the prospect of ~~security~~ security for everyone which now heaves in sight which is so delightful. Is it possible that the new Powers that be are going to learn wisdom by experience ? They will do better than our former rulers if they do. In fact if they begin to be

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able to see facts it looks as if very far away
a prospect might be dawning of a return to
sanity. Not a return to experienced professional
government. I do not expect that. I do not think
we shall live to see Ireland safe as it used to ~~be~~
be safe, but I now think ~~this~~ this may be the beginning
of a lower degree of settled government
And to compensate us for the lower degree of safe-
ty I think ~~these~~ ideas about those principles
on which all government rests may begin to pene-
trate the dense intelligences of the poor. I
think certain delusions about rebellion being
romantic and amusing may be really eradicated
from the Irish mind, and that in ages to ~~some~~
somehow or other we may work back ~~ags~~ again to
real security, and to a security more secure than
the one we remember because it rests on a more
conscious effort of the whole nation to maintain
it. You and I and James, and James's children
will hardly live to see that happy state, but I
think it is somewhere in the future all the same.

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Dublin

To D I S

This day Miss P completes her hundred
and second year at Ballymascanlan. I hardly know
what comment to make thereon It just seems as
rum as all the rest.

November 24 1922
Dublin

to K S

It is rather horrible about Erskine Childers. Mr Verschoyle says that he was executed this morning and that everyone says so. I said how about the other eight, and Mr Verschoyle said he knew nothing about them. It is rather horrible doing things in that secret way. The names of the eight have never been published at all.

I am wondering whether it would not be well as we are going so steadily backwards to have the executions in public again. Public executions are far better than secret executions and I think perhaps we ought to revert to them.

It is so very horrid that all these things one does not like were done first by the House of Commons. You remember in 1916 the leaders were tried by secret court martial, and executed and we never knew anything about the trials, and we know nothing now. And again Kevin Barry was tried by a secret court martial and his execution was only announced in a roundabout way

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" A correspondant of the Irish Times enquiring yesterday at Mountjoy was told that Kevin Barry will be hanged at 8 o'clock tomorrow morning. He was tried and found guilty of murder on such a date by a court martial " That was the form and it shocked me very much. It must have been just two years ago. They say that the eleven officers were killed as a reprisal for being on the jury It is a most awful mistake to set precedents that it is not well to have followed.

I am planning to go to Belfast this day week if Dublin keeps fairly quiet. But I shall not go if the nights go on being so noisy. We did have a n awful din last night. I ~~he~~ hear they were firing at each other across Fitzwilliam Square for no reason . The papers say no one was killed or hurt. That is as may be. It only means that no one presented themselves as hurt or dead at the hospitals. But I perceive that though I can do nothing my being here is a satisfaction to the household. So I shall not go away unless the nights improve.

November 29 1922
Dublin

To D I S

Last
~~Last~~

week was really rather memorable.

On Sat 18th we read in the Irish Times that four men had been executed in Mountjoy on the day before for being found in the street with firearm in their possession. So of course the question was would they go on and shoot Childers. So it was backwards and forwards. His sollicitors lodged an appeal and there was a day or two over ~~after~~ that, and on Thursday 23rd I was in town and there was a great yelling of papers, so I bought one, and the Master of the Rolls gave his judgement that the military courts had authority which overrode his authority, and he could not delay the execution. He did not exactly say that, but the sense of his judgement was plain that the military courts were entitled to shoot him if they liked. It was really very agitating. The judgement was reported in the stop press about half past twelve, and I thought they might carry out the execution that afternoon

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So I listened and listened and there was no shouting of papers , and I went down to St Andrew 's to a meeting, and oh D while we sat in the vestry of the Church I heard the awful cries of the paper sellers. I am not often frightened, but my heart stood still with fear. We seemed so boxed up in that little vestry, and it is such a rowdy neighbourhood. I made sure that the execution had taken place, and I thought a riot might follow , and the voices have a peculiarly eerie sound at night. So the meeting went on and the voices died away, and when it was time to go home everything was quite quiet. ON Friday morning (Nov 24) came the Irish Times and no news of the execution, or of when it would be , or if it would be at all. And I got very low. I was so dreadfully afraid that after shooting silly boys (of the four shot the week before were from 18 to 22 years of age) they might hesitate to shoot a well known Englishman. I went on watching for the stop press till about five and it had not

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come and I went rather early to Westland Row with K's letter , and it was peculiarly quiet, much less shouting than usual and there seemed to be no evening papers And I came in and Mr Verschoyle the agent came to call, and he remarked " So poor Childers is gone " and I said " Are you sure ?" and he said " Well everyone says so He was shot this morning. We shall have Pandemonium tonight " So I got an evening paper and it said that Mr Childers had been shot in Mountjoy at seven o'clock, and the next day it was in the Irish Times and the night which intervened was perfectly quiet. I do not think the people cared at all.

But there is something very horrid in the way the executions are managed. Mrs ^{? Childers (sic)} Churchill was not told of the shooting of her husband till half past nine , when he had been dead two hours and a half The friends of the boys shot before did not apparently even know that their sons were arrested till it was announced in an evening

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paper that they had been executed. There was another debate in the Pro: Parliament and I felt a good deal of sympathy with the labour leaders who called attention to this secrecy. The Government answered that in future they would wire to people's families as soon as possible in the case of executions, should any more executions take place. They would wire directly after the man was dead. But as for public trials that could not be allowed at present.

These trials are conducted by secret court martial, and the Government publishes a short statement after the execution. Childers was shot because he was in unlawful possession of a revolver. The boys because they were found in the streets carrying firearms.

It is exactly a repetition of the procedure in 1916. The labour members asked how it was that Childers was known to be in danger of death, when nothing was known about the boys. The answer was that the boys refused all legal assistance, and Childers employed lawyers who informed his

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friends of what happened. The labour men made one point which I much approved. They said that young boys ought to have had legal defence whether they liked it or not. They said they were too young and too ignorant to decide for themselves in such an important matter, and I quite agree. The boys are no doubt taught that to employ council is to recognize the Free State, which they being republicans are not to do, but is it right to let a child of 18 be executed without professional defence whatever his own wishes may be ? So I was very glad that labour took that up.

It has now been made a capital offence to rob with violence. I think likely that is quite right, The country is full of robber bands I do not think that the Free State is blood thirsty. Eight men arrested with Childers got various terms of imprisonment, from ten years to eighteen months I think . I daresay that was right

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Dublin

I think the Free State is just very ignorant and quite inexperienced, Also of course extremely weak .

They think to have a secret trial avoids exciting public interest , and keeps the streets quiet at the moment, which of course it *d* does. Least said soonest mended, in a way. A trial would have fanned up interest very much. But anything approaching secrecy in the administration of justice ought to be so very carefully avoided. You know I am very sorry for the Free State, also for the Northern Parliament. I do believe they are genuinely trying to govern, and they just do not know how.

Secret tribunals recall the Duke of Alva to some of us, and they recall the Inquisition, and the lettres de cachet, and the Bastille. To our present rulers what do all those associations come to ? To nothing whatever. They never heard of the Bastille etc. and their ideas of government are founded on what they saw of the

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House of Commons in its dotage. I daresay these men do not think behind 1916, and as I say it is the House of Commons at a degree of helplessness to which one still cannot understand how it ever came to fall. I think it will be generations before they work into any sort of stable government. They will just have to find out again all the things which they ought to have learned in - sensibly from circumstances. if civilization had been run on rather better foundations.

Dec I 1922 Dublin

To K S

I must not write at any great length because it seems that the city is a bit unquiet. Mrs Johnson the charwoman came late because she was held up in Stephen's Green, and when her husband came to walk home with her which he sometimes does he was searched three times so I do not want to be too late. Report says that de Valera is prisoner. I heard it yesterday told on what looked like fairly good authority, but if it is true it would be a reason for great precautions. So I do not want to be late at Westland Row, and I may have to write less than I otherwise should.

More executions took place, as no doubt you saw. Same procedure. But in spite of everything I cannot help a liking for Mulcahy. I believe his record is , well so so , for the period before the truce. But now he really talks a certain amount of sense.

Did you see about the officer who was in command of the Irregulars when they tried to

Dec 21 1922 Dublin

Blow up Oriel House ? It was very grim. And Mulcahy told the story well. Apparently it was a most diabolical plan. Four cases of explosives ~~t~~ to blow up Oriel House, and had they all gone off, the whole street would likely have gone with them. But the first made such a consussion that the men were dazed, and could not lay the three other mines properly . Also the place was much more wrecked than they expected by the first case, so the three other cases were not put in proper position, and the electric battery failed to ~~ax~~ act. They never went off at all. The officer in command was kiled a few days later by a road mine. He and some other men were taking it to lay on a road near Dublin, and it went off in their hands, and killed four of them this particular brute being one. It was to des~~t~~-troy a party of nationals who were expected shortly in motors. Someone said these were very important facts, and why had the House not been informed of them before ? Mulcahy had the

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extrordinary good sense to answer that they were very important " but you have to wait until you get them " to which of course there is no reply.

Then there was a question about priests. Had the men executed been allowed to see priests " Yes " says Mulcahy " they had provided for these men all the spiritual assistance they could to help them in their passage to eternity " " There are priests said the commander in chief with great emphassis whom we would not allow into a jail to see a prisoner going to his death, because we have men in prison who may go to their death, who had been brought there by the priests " Was it in the English papers that Erskine Childers wanted to see two special Roman priests when told he was going to be executed ? He was told that about a week before he died , so he asked for these two men, and was just refused. Then he asked for the Dean of Kildare, who went to him several times and was

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with him at the end. I think it was so very dignified to refuse to let him see any but a priest of his own church. To say "You may have a priest to pray with you but not to plot with you," Sometimes at the very end Protestant prisoners make such a set at Roman priests, like Sir Roger Casement. It is quite right to refuse access to any but the hereditary pastor.

Oh but there was another point where the government comes out well. They said in the course of this debate that... yes it was Mulcahy said it ... that the military courts and the secret proceedings were made necessary by the weakness of the government, and would cease if the Government got less weak. Of course he speaks as Commander in Chief (save the mark) but I do feel real dignity in speaking the truth like that.

Everyone says that Mrs Childers was the real villain of the piece. The man who told me that he was dead said " so his wife has his

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death to answer for as well as many other
people's "

I am sorry they released Miss McSwiney.
You have to let someone die to stop that partic-
ular nonsense. Do you realize that the Roman
clergy at Mountjoy refused her the Sacraments
because they said she was attempting suicide?
The Roman church is I fear a little apt to be
on the side of the big battalions.

I went to the Mount Everest lantern and
it was there I caught a chill. I had such a
high seat I was nearly poisoned with bad air.

December 6 1922 Belfa
Belfast

To K S

Have no fears for me I beg Things are quite changed here, and nearly normal in a way . I was in the Roman streets this morning, and the people now say I can come and go freely. The streets have become safe. I suspected that because the ~~assizes~~ assizes were held the other day, and the judge said only eleven murders had been reported as against a hundred and five at last assizes. No one arrested for murder, but evidence beginning to come in for various crimes This shows quite conclusively to my mind that it was Red Flag made the trouble in the winter. Belfast is growing quiet because Red Flag has gone south. But what I feel very much relieved about is the temper amongst the R Cs. The two houses where I was this morning both spoke quite kindly about the Northern Government, and said Sir J Cra_ig was trying to get the R Cs back onto the Island, and was rebuilding , and compensating a little for houses destroyed. Also

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what is a matter of the first consequence,
they said that the new Royal Ulster Constabulary
are a decent police force, quite different to
the Specials. If they get confidence in the
Government, and the Government forces, it means ~~it~~
the beginning of real security. Poor dears They
have had it hot. I was telling how I had a bullet⁺
mark in the garden wall, and they mocked and said^d
" Only one ?" and looking from the ~~the~~ window
they showed me a house marked all over with shot,
and one woman who was in on a call said her own
house was just the same

There was a woman shot dead in an ambush in
Harcourt Street on Monday night . I daresay you
saw about it. But I trust there will be no
general disturbance in Dublin. You know I think
the Republicans must be cutting their own throat
by being so generally detestable. It is not the
way to recommend the idea of a republic.

I am afraid these vile outrages on women go o
~~on~~
on I hear of them from many people, and in

December 6 1922 Belfast

different neighbourhoods. I think the whole
"Irregular" movement is very local. It is active
in one place where there are bad leaders, and it
hardly appears in a place five miles off where
the leading spirits are better disposed.

Dec 7 1922 Belfast
18 Clifton Park Avenue

To K S

Dear Kate Not very much has befallen since yesterday. I am still aware of a feeling of settling. The jail is unsandbagged, for the first time for years I think. I think the bags were there since the summer of 1920.

I see in the evening papers two Dail M Ps have been murdered, or perhaps one, and two wounded. There is no doubt a great effort being made to kick off the Dail, now it has taken the oath. How mean Westminster was to run away without putting down the Red Flag. However that is ancient history now, and we are greatly pleased with the list of the Senate. The first name on the list in the Irish Times is John Bagwell, and all the others seem very sensibly chosen. It is such a relief. You know I am sure the Free State and Northern Ireland will have soon to be completely re-modelled if they are to do any good, but mean while every spark of sanity is so much to the good

December 7 1922 Belfast

What is this about not kissing the book? I hope they are only rejecting the kissing as an out of date form, which it is I daresay. I think they must really mean to swear when they chose the Senate so well.

I saw Edith Brittain yesterday. I wish you to tell Herbert the following story.

Ballyconree orphanage was burnt to the ground by the Irregulars, but the boys there had got very naughty. They went and broke the Roman priest's windows, so Mr O'Connell went and apologized, and the boys broke the windows again. It seems poor old Purkis was old and ill, and ~~he~~ had not proper control. So Irregulars came and burnt down the house, and the boys sat in the gate lodge, and a message was sent six miles to Mr O'Connell. He was in Clifden which the Irregulars had taken after eleven hours firing, and ~~one~~ or two people killed. He went to the Irregular officer, and asked leave to go to Ballyconree

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...
and fetch the boys. It was at once given He brought them all to Clifden, and got them into the house with the girls. A wireless was meanwhile sent from the Marconi station, and a destroyer came round from Cork. The captain of the destroyer offered to take all the children off, boys and girls, and the O'Connells said the responsibility of keeping the girls was too great, also Miss d'Arcy I think wanted them in England, and so they all went off. The Captain offered also to take the O'Connells. Mr O'C said he could not leave his parishoners. The Captain offered to take all the Protestants. Mr O'C said Certainly not They did not want to go. So the destroyer went off and left them. Time went on, and the O'Connells thought it was time for their summer outing, so they got a motor and drove all over the place, till they picked up a train somewhere. They came to Dublin, went on board the mail boat, and went at once to bed, and had their first

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Belfast

night for months unbroken by shooting. They went on to London where they had a very pleasant time. They came to Belfast to see their son, and there they met Edith Brittain and told her all these particulars. They are collecting old clothes etc. and are going to have the girls back to Clifden as soon as possible for they are lonely without them. The boys have gone to Australia I am sorry to say. They both look very well, and are determined not to let the state of the country get on their minds. They spent about a week with their son, and left a week ago to return to Clifden. They will go as far as they can in the train, and take a motor the rest of the way. As they are both about 70 I think this is quite a creditable record. Clifden remains in the hands of the Irregulars, and no train has gone there for months. It is apparently easier to stop the train than to stop the O'Connells. I did not hear how they provided for the Church services in their absence

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Belfast

but I am sure they arranged something. If I
ever get into communication with them again I
shall send your address, and say to call on you
next time they are over.

December 12, 1922
Belfast

to D I S

The perplexity of the moment is this. How can one adopt the right attitude towards the Free State which is obviously so constructed that it must soon and completely fall to pieces? Well I suppose not completely. I daresay some trace will remain behind, but it will have to be completely rearranged I am sure of that. Northern Ireland will have to come to an end too. But I feel that the Free State has been a more ambitious venture and will be more difficult to make into anything which can work.

I cannot describe in detail what is happening about the cattle trade, but the gist of the thing is that for ever so long there has been an embargo on Canadian cattle, which means as I understand that Ireland has a great advantage over Canada in sending cattle to England. So now in the last few weeks ~~there has been~~ that has ceased. Ireland ~~will~~ is to have the standing of Canada, and will send its cattle to England on the same terms,

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which works out very badly for Ireland, and a great fuss is being made about it. But what can be more childish? Of course the Free State will lose at every turn by not being represented at Westminster. Surely we all know that, and we think the pleasure of writing up "Fbgra" instead of "Notice" and "an post" instead of "post office" is enough to outweigh the solid advantages now lost. Do you think it is conceivable that even in Ireland six men of full age were found a year ago to sign the Treaty, and not to realize that they were signing away Ireland's prosperity? Do people really believe all this talk about Ireland being on an equality with England? Do they not realize that they depend for their very existence on the King's navy over which they have resigned all control, and that they are utterly at the mercy of the King's army which they have ceased to pay?

I understand taking up that very inferior position

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through gratified vanity , and party spirit , if you are an utterly uneducated man, but I do not understand complaining about it. They ought to say that the loss of the cattle trade does not matter, they are going to supply some other market, or going to keep all the cattle at home or something like that. I may be wrong of course but the headings of the papers look to me (I am not taking a paper myself while I am here) as if they were merely complaining of the disadvantages of having a Free State. Having started so silly a game they ought to see it a little further than this.

But is it not difficult for us who have read a little history , and who have known from the first that this must happen ? I go back to my original idea. We are going back for the poor people . Perhaps the loss of the cattle trade will be the beginning of making Unionism a popular ideal, and the popularisation of Unionism may lead in a future future generation to the gathering of a sane asse-

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a ssembly at Westminster Of course in all this transaction Westminster has been as mad as Dublin That is the very alarming feature, that it has not been mere local madness. It has been a derangement at the very heart of the nation.

Meanwhile anarchy goes raging on. Pah I have no heart to go over the details. This place is much better. It began to improve when the Four courts fighting took place. Of course it was a great help for the Northern Parliament having only to clear six counties. The unhappy Dail has charge of twenty six , and no place to push the anarchists into. My advice received in Roman cottages is to visit a little . I am instructed not to be too long in the streets at a time, for fear that someone will accuse me of being a police spy. It seems there are a good many idlers about who have nothing to do but to tattle. Men's work is still very bad, the women are getting something to do, not much but just something. One hears horrid stories of unemploy-
ment,

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Belfast

There was some work to do on the roads and preference was to be given to ex-service men. So the ex-service men fag away at the tram lines, and the unemployed sit round smoking and drawing the unemployment benefit. You cannot get a man for a n odd job for love or money . I heard of some one who has to carry a heavy bag*to the station constantly , because any unemployed man who earned sixpence by carrying it would lost his out of work money. It is very hard on people like Mrs Mac who do everything in a small way, and do not have regular servants. She is fortunate in having a nice charwoman, but she wants the windows cleaned outside which is a man's job, and to get a man to come an odd time and do it for a small sum is next to impossible. You must pay the huge wages demanded by the window cleaning firms. Tradesmen are not allowed to take each other's jobs , and the unemployed are not allowed any irregular employment. I think in time the poor will learn true economics from these fearful

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experiments , and perhaps the experiments are the only way of learning , but for the moment they not only ^{cause} ~~encourage~~ economic disassters but they encourage habits of idleness, and gossiping, and the danger in the R C streets is that the idlers gossip about me. So I am only aiming at seeing a few of the people. Mrs Halfpenny has left. It was a great blow to ~~me~~ me to find her gone, but I am sure really it was well to leave the house. A married daughter of hers lives there now. She says her mother stood it out till all the trouble was over, and then she seemed as if she could bear Belfast no longer, and she went to Jack in Glasgow. He has his pension, and Sarah Jane and Winifred have work there, so it is not so bad, and really to leave the house was wise. She went in July just as the shooting was leaving off. I am solidly glad but also I miss her.

Yesterday I made a great effort and went down to the coroner to talk about Malachy.

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When it came to the point I disliked going so much that I hardly could, but now I am glad to have seen him. He was suspicious of me at first and thought I had come to make trouble, so I said I had known Malachi for many years, and was very fond of him, and I had only heard the story of his death from people who were beside themselves with terror, and as a Belfast ratepayer I thought I was entitled to have an official account of what had really happened. And he got very kind, and looked through all his books, and consulted a colleague by telephone, and at last he told me that the death had never been reported in his office at all. The enquiry had been altogether in the hands of the military, and an investigation had been held privately in Victori Barracks. I might ask about that but he thought it very unlikely that anything would be told to me. I asked if such military secret enquiries were common, He said they had been held in a very few cases of which this was one, but they

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are now forbidden. He made it quite plain that he thinks just what I think as to the whole ~~mat~~ matter. He says the soldiers change very often at the barracks, and probably those who are there now know nothing about it. He suggested going to Leopold Street barracks, I said the police change, or have changed more radically than the soldiers. We walked out of the office together, he was going away somewhere, and outside I got less official, and told how horrible it had all been, and he said all sorts of things were happening all over Ireland. There were reprisals. " It is not much pleasure to be an Irishman these days " He was a decent man I liked him. But unless someone is ever stirred to confess having committed that murder I think we shall never know more than we do now. But I am glad to know why there was no inquest.

December 14 1922
Belfast

To K S

About the Senate Lady Desert lives near Kilkenny , and is a promotor of home industries, and when workmen's insurance began she thought it was a very bad plan and on the highest grounds, and from the most lofty motives refused to pay it, and she was prosecuted several times, and paid all the fines supported by the full approval of her people. But I guess she has had to give in to it now.

It is John Bagwell, Herbert's friend who is on the Senate. You know the original Mr Bagwell died just before I left Belfast.

I met Dora Grene in a restaurant, and begged her to come and have a meal with me , and she came and began about Sir Horace. " He is quite doddering of course, but it was decent to put him on the Senate " So I said " Yes I Know he is aged. Do you think the state of the country worries him ?" and she gave a jump when she saw I took real interest, and she said quite nicely " I know him very well " and then she went on and said that he is like quite an old man, and he " chats away "

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Belfast

about public affairs, but they take no real hold upon him. He just lives very quietly, and " A E " comes in and sits with him. I was glad to hear about him . I think it sounds as comfortable as one could expect. I think the real end of his work was the Convention 1917_ 1918 and if now he can live quietly and enjoy seeing an old friend now and then I think that is as good as can be expected, and very much better than might have been feared. An interviewer asked what he thought of the state of public affairs, and he said that the government had many difficulties to contend with. They would ~~all~~ come right in time. I feel so glad that his mind should move on so reasonable a line. I think it is quite fair for anyone to take pleasure in the ultimate triumph of goodness who has brought themselves to premature old age in trying to promote it. After a life of lazy indifference I do not approve of easy optimism, but for Sir Horace I think it is all right. He is only 68, but he has got through life with hardly any health at all, so it has been exhausting.

December 14 1922 Belfast

I think all that talk about things being matters " for Irishmen " or for " Englishmen " is beneath contempt. Is the Canadian cattle trade any English matter or an Irish one ?

The people here are all quite frank about the gunmen going south. There seems no doubt that that was what settled Belfast--- as far as it has been settled. The R Cs have told me that it is all right for me to come to their streets for a little while , but I am not to stay too long or people will say that I am a police spy. I have taken this advice and only intend to see a few friends living on the outskirts of the district. For the remaining days I intend to visit in the Roman streets for a short time each morning. There is still Curfew at 11 30 , and the police still run round in caged lorries , with rifles in their hands, but they no longer point them at the passers by. Belfast is in rather a queer temper, so wildly exhilarated at the shooting having ceased that it really pays no heed to these little departures from the days of peace.

December 14 1922
Belfast

Fancy Mrs Mac says she is so sorry for the Republicans who have been deserted by their former colleagues. They at least are consistent to their ideals. But I say if your ideal is a very wicked one are you to be praised for keeping to it ? Mrs Mac consoles herself by praying equally for the Republicans and the Free Staters.

December 22 1922
Dublin

To K S

I am much pleased that Herbert thinks I cannot find out any more about Malachi by asking anybody. That is what I think myself. I am glad I saw the Coronor, but I think I will take no further steps. It is a vile story, but after all that fall of an Empire and the close of a civilization are likely to contain vile stories.

Nelly O'Brien comes to dinner tomorrow, and to the carols at St Patrick's afterwards. More carols on Sunday. Miss Rush to dinner on xmas day, a dinner at the Trenches as soon after Monday as I can manage, and various engagements for the Lantern. This is a more cheerful xmas than I remember since 1914

People are saying that the worst is over. Seems too good to be true. But I feel like that myself.

1922

