ERIN DEMORALIZED AS DISORDER GROWS

People Refuse to Pay Debts and Court Decrees Often Prove Worthless.

O'HIGGINS SEEKS PEACE

BY WILLIAM H. BRAYDEN.

By Cable to The Star and Chicago Daily News. Copyright, 1923.

DUBLIN, January 24.—Ireland is not only sick with armed strife, but is suffering from wide-spread demoralization and the dissolving of the common sanctions of life. While the irregulars are bombing troops and wrecking trains, many normally decent people are refusing to pay their debts. They are sued in the courts and decrees obtained against them, but these decrees are often waste paper and the sheriffs in many districts have sheaves of them which they are unable to execute.

Putting down the rebellion is the work of Gen. Mulcahy. The restoration of civil law is the task of Home Secretary Kevin O'Higgins, who has given the correspondent an interview as to his plans. Mr. O'Higgins is well under thirty. He is a nephew of Governor General Healy and grandson of T. D. Sullivan, once famous as the poet of the home rule movement. He has shown remarkable ability and unflinching courage. He is President Cosgrave's chief assistant in the government and would be capable of taking Cosgrave's place if circumstances necessitated it. Hence he is especially hated by the enemies of the Free State and has to live permanently in the shelter of the government buildings.

O'Higgins Backs Sheriffs.

Secretary O'Higgins told the correspondent that it was his intention to enable all sheriffs to enforce civil decrees. Everybody who can pay his debts will be forced to pay. He is giving each sheriff an armed guard of fifty picked soldiers to protect him in making seizure of the goods of defaulters. Even seizures when accomplished have hitherto been fruitless to extract money because in many places the goods seized could not find buyers.

Therefore, O'Higgins said he is taking power to sell seized goods anywhere, even outside of Free State territory, and this obviously means that seized cattle could be sold in Liverpool or in Belfast. He believes that extreme measures on a large scale will not be necessary and that once the defaulters are convinced by effective demonstration that the government is in earnest they will pay up without further trouble.

New Police Unarmed.

Mr. O'Higgins expressed great satisfaction at the efficiency of twenty-six new magistrates he had appointed for the local courts and said that they were functioning with popular sympathy. He has great hopes of his new police. The old constabulary was a semi-military force fully equipped with rifles and thereby obstructed in its civil duties. Hence he has sent out the new police force entirely unarmed.

The correspondent asked him whether he thought it safe to expose these men to the risk of armed attacks by irregulars, and he replied that the irregulars, he was convinced, would prefer to see them armed. They would be encouraged to attack them in the hope of capturing the weapons, and would try to justify their attacks as acts of war.

Drink Problem Serious.

The police, according to O'Higgins, are standing up courageously to all intimidations. They are mostly men who proved their mettle in the fight against the English when many irregulars showed no fight. The principal task of the police will be to check illicit drink traffic. Not only are the licensing laws in many districts disregarded and drink sold at prohibited hours, but the manufacture of poteen (illicit whisky, paying no tax) has become a flourishing industry. O'Higgins attributed some of the recent terrible outrages to frenzy caused by this powerful drink. Four thousand police are enrolled. Most of them are at work, with the rest in training, and he expects that they will succeed in checking these evils.

Damage Grows Apace.

Secretary O'Higgins, like other ministers, receives many threatening letters and must be conscious of extreme risks, but he ignores them and goes ahead. The correspondent thought it significant that he had as the sole picture in his room a memento mori in the shape of the last portrait of his friend, Michael Collins, laid out in death. He would reply to no questions as to the suppression of the rebellion. He said it was a military matter, but within his own department he would do all possible to restore Ireland to normal conditions.

But everybody here realizes that all betterment plans must fail unless this rebellion is stopped, and as yet there is no prospect of a speedy end to the conflict. Each week seems to bring a heavier toll of damage than the last.

At the Bottom of the Ladder. —By KESSLER.

WHEN CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW WAS A BOY HIS UNCLE WAS POSTMASTER AT PEEKSKILL. AT TIMES SOME OF THE CITIZENS WERE KNOWN TO HAVE MISSED THEIR PERIODICALS.

TENNESSEE DAIRYMAN MUST DIE FOR MURDER

John W. Hudson, Sr., Makes Ineffectual Effort to Shoulder Crime for Son.

By the Associated Press.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., January 24.—John W. Hudson, jr., dairyman, of White Haven, Tenn., today was under a death sentence for the slaying of Mrs. Hattie B. Ferguson last February, despite the dramatic testimony of his father, in which he assumed blame for the woman's death. Young Hudson received the sentence to electrocution stoically, but his father paled and trembled.

The younger Hudson during the trial repudiated a confession he was alleged to have made upon his arrest and testified in substantiation of the statement of Hudson, senior, that the young woman had been killed while the three of them struggled for a pistol she had placed in the older man's hand, with the request that he shoot her and his son. Mrs. Ferguson was killed in a woods, from which young Hudson fled and was arrested near Chattanooga.

Defense attorneys filed notice of an appeal immediately after sentence was passed. They indicated that the confession alleged to have been made by Hudson and introduced as evidence at the trial would be a chief point of their attack.

In selection of the jury Judge J. Ed Richards held that counsel for the state and the defense could interrogate veniremen only through the court, and he held further that having formed an opinion based on what purported to be a copy of a confession did not disqualify a venireman for jury service if the venireman said he could and would lay aside any opinion formed from that source.

The defense interrogated only one venireman through the court and challenged him peremptorily, but challenged every juror for cause, and thus, they indicated, placed the question of the qualifying of jurors through the court in the record for review by the supreme court.

Mrs. Edward Lazansky, whose husband is a New York supreme court justice, believes that if more wives had interest in the business world there would be fewer protests when business keeps husbands out of the home. Mrs. Lazansky knows whereof she speaks, since she is the proprietor of a successful interior decorating establishment in New York city.

British Propose Appeal for Page Memorial Fund

By the Associated Press.

LONDON, January 24.—An appeal for funds for a permanent memorial to the late Walter Hines Page, former American ambassador to Great Britain, will be issued within a few days over the signatures of Prime Minister Bonar Law, the Earl of Balfour, Herbert H. Asquith, David Lloyd George and Lord Grey—the British ministers with whom the ambassador was brought into closest contact. The form the memorial is to take will be dependent upon the amount of the contributions.

The appeal results from the activities of the committee appointed recently after St. Loe Strachey had proposed in the Spectator, of which he is editor, a memorial in Westminster Abbey to Mr. Page, and Sydney Brooks, writing in the Landmark, devoted to the interests of the English-speaking peoples, had declared it was not creditable to Great Britain that the splendid services Mr. Page had rendered during the war, through five years of his ambassadorship, should remain uncommemorated. Mr. Strachey has received many letters from all classes approving his proposition.