

Newspaper Articles-1904-B

Newspaper Articles

1904 Part 2

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Newspaper Articles for 1904 (Part 2)

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THE IMPARTIAL REPORTER
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THE 'PILGRIMS' OR 'TRAMPS' THE RITE OF BAPTISM.

IMMERSION OF 27 FOLLOWERS IN THE BALLINAMALLARD RIVER

Ballinamallard has become the Jerusalem of Pilgrim Tramps, and the Ballycassidy River their Jordan. Last Sunday witnessed the baptism of about 27 Tramps, male and female, and the unusual scene was witnessed by a crowd of interested spectators.

It is right to mention that for the last few weeks a Conference of the Tramp fraternity has been held at Crocknacrieve, which has been converted into a huge hotel by Mr. John West for his numerous guests, over 120 are said to be accommodated in the house alone.

Hither flocked Tramps from Scotland, England, and Ireland, and so far as the outside world can judge, Mr. Edward Cooney (after whom they are generally called Cooneyites) seems to be the accepted high priest or leader, a post at one time held by Mr. Irwin.

A HIGH CLASS PLAY

On last Saturday night the conclave separated into three parts, the English fraternity speaking on the Diamond of Enniskillen, advocating the denial of self and the effacement of self at the very time that the high class play, 'A Message from Mars' was advocating altruism or 'otherdom' on the stage of the Townhall. The Scotch band preached in Irvinestown, and the Irish band in Ballinamallard.

One result of the convention was the baptismal ceremony of Sunday. The place first chosen as the scene was the river under the bridge at Ballinamallard, but this place was abandoned for the mill race, and hither a large number of people flocked on Sunday evening, and while they were waiting, to the amusement of the onlookers an unexpected dipping took place, when a young man forcibly pressed a young boy head foremost into the water in imitation of the rite soon to follow.

UNCOMMON CEREMONY

It was found, however, that the water at this place was not deep enough for total immersion, and a place lower down the stream was selected. Hither the whole party of Tramps proceeded and conducted devotional exercises, while all around were a number of spectators anxious to see the uncommon ceremony.

Mr. Edward Cooney delivered an address, in the course of which he spoke of his own experience, how he went out to preach the Gospel, and the commission given at the day of Pentecost. It is but just to say that on this occasion Mr. Cooney made no personal references to his family such as he is unwisely in the habit of indulging.

He proceeded to say that when he became saved he felt constrained to confess Jesus as his Lord. He then referred to the passage, 'Repent, and be baptised and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost,' and pressed upon his hearers, first to repent and then be baptised after the manner of the Scriptures.

Mr. Cooney had no hesitation in affirming his own authority to baptise, his own authority to preach and teach.

I am commissioned, he said, 'By Jesus Christ to declare that you may have your sins remitted.'

REPENT

Having spoken for some time on repentance and having quoted the passage 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,' he gave some of his personal experiences, and related how the death of his elder brother had impressed him seriously, that he resolved to give everything up to the Lord Jesus Christ, not to live in his own strength, but by that given by Him. He then asked them what brought many of them there? Curiosity?

Yes, and he thanked God for that curiosity, as it enabled him to speak to them about the eternal Salvation.

He then referred to John the Baptist baptising our Lord in the river Jordan, and said that in the same way our Lord's disciples must confess His name and be baptised in the same manner as all the baptisms in the scriptures had been carried out.

They were to be baptised, not as the Archbishop of Canterbury said, nor by the manner prescribed by the Moderator of the General Assembly, or the President of the Methodist Conference;

"HE HAS COMMANDED ME"

"But," said Mr. Cooney—"You must follow the example of Jesus of Nazareth, and not only to make disciples of all nations, but to teach them to be baptised in his Name." He then warned scoffers and jesters not to make light of baptism. They should not scoff at what Jesus Christ himself passed through; it would make their hearts harder and deaden them to good influences.

GOOD COMPANY

Perhaps some of them might think he was not good enough company for them, but so long as he followed Jesus Christ he was the best of good company for them, and he would thank them to show him from the Bible where they were not acting up to the Scriptural method of baptism.

Mr. Cooney, at times, dipped into the usual Evangelical method of advising his hearers to repent and to be baptised. Baptism was not necessary for salvation, but just as a wife should live in obedience to her husband, so they should live in obedience to the example of the Lord Himself, and be baptised in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Mr. Cooney, in the course of his remarks, described himself as '**A Tramp Preacher**,' and quoted examples of baptism from the Scriptures by adult immersion, from the baptism by John the Baptist of our Lord down to the baptism of Lydia by Paul; and invited any one to show him a proof from the Bible of infant baptism.

DIPPING COMMENCED

Having made an appeal to his hearers to repent in time before it was too late, the dipping ceremony commenced.

The party congregated near the bank of the river and sang a hymn, while those to be immersed undressed themselves in a barn at the mill. As the neophytes approached, the party divided itself into two lines in semi-military fashion, and a Mr. Robert Elliott, formerly

of the Dairies, near Derrygonnelly, a strong man of powerful build, clad in woollen shirt and trousers, entered the water up to his waist, while the neophytes came one by one through the living lane made for them.

First came five young men, and Mr. Elliott, repeating the name of the person to be immersed, said—'I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and Holy Ghost.'

GIRLS FOLLOW

He then ducked the neophyte completely under the water, neatly, and without splashing; his great strength enabled him to restore the ducked person to an erect position again easily.

Some girls then followed, and the shock of the water was so great to the first girl that it was feared she would faint, but she composed herself sufficiently to go through the ceremony.

Notwithstanding the exhortation not to scoff, some young men were provoked to laughter by the splashing of some of the girls in recovering the erect position, which caused a Scotch Pilgrim subsequently to warn these young men that they would have to answer for it on the Day of Judgment.

ENTHUSIASM

By this time another number of young men had caught the enthusiasm of the moment, and they also decided to be dipped, so that on the whole 27 people received the act of immersion.

The ceremony itself was over half an hour late in starting. Certainly, the manner of clothing of some of them, a coarse shirt and brown jersey, make them anything but clean looking; but it must be said that a few of them did wear the white collars and cuffs at one time discarded by the Tramp community.

It should be said for these Tramps that they have succeeded in influencing several people for good.

EVIL WAYS

Some people who never professed religious views have forsaken their evil ways, and there are many people who would be willing to acknowledge the efforts of these Tramps, and, perhaps, assist them, if they would not be so continually finding fault with the ministers of churches and the churches generally. However, they are not so uncharitable as they used to be, and are continually being reminded of 'Judge not, that ye be not judged,' a saying that they would do well to keep before their eyes.

October 1, 1904, p 12

Anglo-Celt, Cavan

A new religious sect of Protestants, known as the Cooneyites and numbering 150, was started in Ballinamallard district, Co. Fermanagh, their chief doctrines being "confession and baptism by immersion."

October 6, 1904, p. 5

THE IMPARTIAL REPORTER

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THE TRAMPS

ANOTHER DIPPING SCENE AT BALLINAMALLARD.

ARGUMENT BY AN INTERRUPTER.

35 PERSONS DIPPED IN THE RIVER.

Ballinamallard was the scene of another 'dipping' on Sunday last. The account of first baptismal service of the Pilgrim Tramps in the IMPARTIAL REPORTER brought double the number of spectators on Sunday, and the weather was quite as favourable, but there was an unexpected interruption which quite marred the effect of the proceedings.

The scene was the same, that bend of the river which is now called '**Cooney's Hole**' locally. The Tramps had conducted their convention during the week at Crocknacrieve, and the same 120 or 130 persons were lodged and fed in the house—some of the rooms accommodating eight or ten people.

Miss Gill, who had charge of the cooking arrangements at Crocknacrieve, had no idle time. Assisted by a band of willing helpers, she had a great number to cater for. On Sunday last a whole sheep was cooked for soup for her large company of 150, and there was a lot of bread-cutting for the hundreds who assembled at tea; for the Tramps follow the scriptural injunction of being 'given to hospitality'

—according to their means. This being 'given to hospitality' is a feature too often forgotten in the rectory or the manse, and where it is observed it binds people and minister in stronger bonds. The Tramps certainly are hospitable, and entertain even strangers.

A large number of people congregated on both sides of the river waiting for the 'moving of the waters.' The big wheel of the mill was motionless in its place; the bell of the neighbouring church was silent, and nothing but the rush of the hurrying waters of the mill-race broke the silence of the afternoon.

The baptists came, as before, in semi-military array, singing some verses of their hymns, and assembled on the point projecting into the river where they had assembled before. After the singing of a hymn, Mr. Edward Cooney offered up prayer, in the course of which he said they were gathered there in harmony with the command to preach the Gospel to every creature, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things as the Lord had commanded them, and his promise to those who obeyed was, 'I am with you always, to the end of the world.'

Some of the Tramps then 'bore testimony' as to their having been saved from sin, and to their godliness. They were certainly no way modest in proclaiming, on the one hand, the enormity of their sinfulness, or their assurance into being called to be sons of God. The tone of the addresses was largely that of the old revival times in which neither the love nor the mercy, the goodness or the beneficence of Almighty God was pointed out, but Heaven was made a sort of insurance office against the terrors of Hell.

The fear o' Hell's a hangman's whip
To hand the wretch in order.

Number One speaker said—'You sinners, stand with fear and trembling. This is the time to repent, for there is another day coming.' Having dilated upon the terrors of the Day of Judgment, he said that God told them, if they neglected salvation, 'I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh,' a terrible passage, no doubt; and the speaker went on to emphasise the point by saying, 'And your fear will come, for it will be eternal fear, but today Jesus stretches out to you the hand of reconciliation.'

Number Two speaker also dwelt on the terrors of the sinner before God. They all must face Him. It would not be God's fault if they would go to hell. They were there to warn the people, that there was no hope beyond the grave if they were not upon God's side down here. He went on to give an example—'There are many of you fellows that stand here that have no thought for God, no time for thinking of God; but just look at that man being in Hell, who was in torment. There is no time for mercy in Hell, so call upon His name, and be saved while there is time to be reconciled.'

The next speaker was **Mr. William Irvine**. He referred to John the Baptist baptising our Lord. He said all the churches taught the doctrine of immersion, though they don't practise it. Every church believed in immersion in a river of running water, but they went from that to their synagogues and temples, and evaded the plain command.

Mr. Cooney then said the reason they were there to have baptism was because Jesus commanded it—'Go,' said Jesus, 'and make disciples of all nations, and baptise them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' Mr. Cooney then went on to repeat the words—'Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?' when a young man from the other bank of the river cried out—'It was not to be immersed in the Ballinamallard river.'

Voices from the Tramps—'Put him out.'

Some of the police then came forward and asked the young man not to disturb the meeting, and he said that he had as good a right to speak there as Mr. Cooney had, just the same, and he could not bear to hear such stuff being put forward in the County Fermanagh.

Mr. Cooney then proceeded to speak, but the interruption caused considerable distraction. Mr. Cooney went on to ask—'Why was he baptised? Simply because Jesus was baptised.' Mr. Cooney then went on to deal with the argument that it was the heathen that had been baptised in the time of the Lord Jesus, and said that they were not heathen who had been baptised by Peter.

The young man in the crowd referred to here again interrupted, and said that they ought to be baptised by fire and the Holy Ghost, and again voices cried for 'order,' and the young man, Mr. Willie Robinson, cried back, 'You are like a good attorney; you don't give the other side a chance.' Mr. Cooney continued to speak of baptism, and young Mr. Robinson cried out, 'Sure, if we are to be baptised with water, it is not in the Ballinamallard river that is not fit for a dog.' The distraction caused by the scene rather shortened the proceedings.

A man named Robert Law, who, it appears from his own testimony, has given up an evil life 'since he gave his heart to God,' spoke of the new state, and said to his hearers that by going into that water they would see Jesus by doing so.

A woman standing close by said—'That man's wife must be glad to hear him. She'll get some peace at last.' Another young man got up and spoke. Some other testimonies were given, and the proceedings concluded by Mr. Cooney extending an invitation to his hearers to attend the evening meeting, and they would remain another week to ascertain what the will of God was concerning them.

The dipping was then proceeded with. The workers formed two lines, as before, singing verses of well-known hymns; the men, young and old, and the girls, to be immersed, having undressed at the mill close by, walked or ran to the modern Bethabara, and, passing through the singing lines of comrades, were received by Mr. Thomas Elliott, and dipped in water as cold as 53 degrees Fahrenheit, while he announced that they were baptised in the name of the Trinity. The proceedings terminated about half an hour earlier than the preceding Sunday, owing to the diversion referred to.

Belfast News-Letter
October 11, 1904

THE NEW SECT IN FERMANAGH
MORE BAPTISMS IN BALLYCASSIDY RIVER

The new religious sect, known as the "Tramp Pilgrims," has made Ballinamallard its headquarters for the last few weeks, as a result of which some thousands of people attend to see the converts immersed in the Ballycassidy River.

On the 9th inst. ten persons were baptised by total immersion, Mr. Andrew Moore, Breacho, a large farmer, being the first man to enter the water. Mr. Elliott, who formerly resided at Derrygonnelly, but sold his farm to follow "Pilgrims," officiated by standing up to his loins in the water for nearly half an hour and administering the rite of baptism. Hymns were sung during the ceremony.

There was a large crowd present, and a young man created a scene by asserting that the "Pilgrims" were interfering with religion in a manner that they ought not, with the result that the police had to interfere. The interrupter, however, remonstrated, and declared that he had as good a right to be present, and put forward his views, as any other person. Cheers were given, and at this stage it looked as if matters would end seriously, as the speaker had a following who seemed to support him.

The proprietor of the field, Mr. Crozier, having in vain asked him to leave, the police attempted to seize him, but he broke away from them, declaring that he would address a meeting of his own, which announcement was received with cheers by his supporters. Eventually he was removed from the field by force. He then addressed a meeting near the Ballinamallary Orange hall, condemning the pilgrims.

Mr. Edward Cooney, the leader of the "Pilgrims" addressed his hearers briefly, and was followed by Mr. Betty, after which Mr. Carroll (Dublin) invited all who stood on the opposite side of Ballycassidy river to come over and join those who were "saved." Mr. Irvine and several speakers followed.

Nearly fifty of the "Pilgrims" have left for different parts of the United Kingdom to "preach the Gospel."

Yesterday one of them attended Enniskillen Fair, carrying a large blackboard on the top of a stout pole, the board bearing a religious inscription.

The "Pilgrims" had a large audience in Belmore Street and was not in any way molested.

Mr. John West, Crocknacrieve, Ballinamallard, is giving the "Pilgrims" sleeping accommodation both in his house and out-offices. Seventy- four local men and women have already been baptised in the Ballycassidy River.

October 13, 1904, p. 5

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THE TRAMPS
CHANGE IN THEIR VIEWS
THEIR ENTHUSIASM AND ZEAL.
WHERE THEY DIFFER FROM THEIR NEIGHBOURS
FIRST ARTICLE

'I', said Mr. Edward Cooney, at Ballinamallard, 'am a Tramp Preacher.' Therefore, if the writer describe the latest phase of religious enthusiasm, by the name given by one of themselves, it cannot be misunderstood.

The Tramps have revived the interest taken in them some two years ago, by their convention at Ballinamallard and the baptism of new members in a river of running water. They gathered from Longford and Meath, from Derrygonnelly and Brookeborough, from Enniskillen and Dublin, from Scotland and England, till they mustered about 130, and the two leaders are Mr. Wm. Irvine and Mr. Edward Cooney.

They have changed from their methods two years ago. They had, of course, as they said, all the sight then, just as they have now, (they believe)—but, whatever the cause, they are not the same people we used to know two years ago. They have improved, and just in proportion as they have improved they have received accessions. They do not now denounce their neighbours as they did in 1902; they do not name relatives and friends as going to hell; but Mr. Cooney did forget himself so far as to describe those whom he should not have named in a public place as worldly, because they did not reach his idea of what was unworldly. The Tramps found out that it was a mistake to send so many people to hell, that public opinion was too strong for them, and they stopped it.

There is another change. Mr. Cooney was at one time of the opinion that a man should give all that he possessed to the poor. The logical outcome of that argument would be that there would in that case be no one to support the Tramps; and whatever caused the change of opinion, that doctrine is not now preached. There is more light on it, though the Scriptures remain the same as two years ago.

The Tramps, to do them justice, while sometimes called loafers, did not idle at Crocknacrieve. They had three services during the day, and during the rest of the time they either helped Mr. West, or some other brother, to save his crops or took a ride for recreation, for all or almost all of the Tramps are cyclists—and an old Presbyterian of Co. Antrim or Forfarshire would be horrified to see these 'men of God' cycling on a Sunday. The Sabbatarian would be certain it was against the fourth commandment to cycle: the Tramp would be equally certain he was justified in pedalling himself for a lawful purpose on the Sabbath Day, though our Lord whom they follow with such exactitude, did not cycle.

One purpose of the convention was to educate the 'young workers,' many of whom may be diamonds, but they are diamonds in the rough state. They are full of zeal, they lead good lives, they exhort others to be reconciled to God; they have certainly been instruments in reclaiming many who have been given to evil ways. They have many good points, but for all that they are rough diamonds, and for the most part uneducated, and of the servant or small farmer or artizan class, who have to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. Therefore, daily toil is more in their line than education. Peter and others of the apostles were only fishermen, and had not much education either, the Tramps can point out, and Paul was a tent-maker. But Paul was a remarkably able fellow, and an educated man, too, wherever he obtained his education, or he could not have spoken and written as he did.

It is not likely that there is even one of the Tramps who can read the New Testament in its own tongue, except perhaps the Rev. Mr. Grubb, if he be one of them. A knowledge of Biblical Greek was deemed an essential to the ministry some time ago, but now it is not insisted upon in some quarters. A minister of the gospel, however, would be better equipped for his vocation if he were versed in the language in which the New Testament was written. The Tramps, therefore, are to some extent at a disadvantage. They are greatly in earnest, they are full of zeal. They do not play the hypocrite. No one can say that Mr. Edward Cooney says one thing and practises another. Nay, the very thing which gives most force to his preaching is the fact that he has himself practised the self denial and abandonment of 'the world' which he preaches; that he gave up good commercial prospects to follow the Lord, and that in daily life he shares with his brethren in common, and gives of what he does possess to those more in need than himself. Present Mr. Cooney with a new top-coat, the probability is that he would transfer it to one of his workers more in need of it than himself. He practices self-denial as a virtue. Mr. Irvine, the co-leader, it is said, has done the same. So that we have here two leaders who have sacrificed worldly advantages to serve God, as they believe, by a life of following the Saviour's example.

Of course the Roman Catholic will say—'You have no more self-denial than we can show you; we can give you thousands of examples of men and women who have forsaken the world to give themselves in the cloister to a life of holiness, and serving God by works of charity and prayer.' And other churches may say the same. There is no monopoly of self-sacrifice. It is nothing new. Even in heathen India the fakir or Hindoo will be found who believes he does God a service by reciting so many prayers daily and shows an example of devotion by flinging his child into the Ganges, or immolating himself under the car of Juggernaut.

Anyhow, here we have men with a following of 200 people or so, who in this sense proclaim nothing new; who in preaching total immersion preach nothing new, for the rite is as old as Christianity itself: there have been Baptists in all ages: and in preaching the necessity for repentance, proclaim nothing new. Their ways are copied chiefly from the Methodists; and their only new feature may be said to be preaching against the churches and a paid ministry.

The poverty of the Tramps is nothing new, for the Roman Catholic church has Orders given to greater poverty than the Tramps, and who would consider the daily fare of Crocknacrieve or the well furnished lards of Mullaghmeen a luxury which their stern views of poverty would compel them to forego. It may be novel to Protestant people to gratify their vanity or their religious zeal by the idea that they are like the Lord in not having much food, raiment, or lodging, and that they occasionally suffer for His sake, but in poverty they are not 'in it' with some of the Roman Catholic religious Orders. A teaching Christian Brother has only £20 a year to exist upon; others very much less.

However, here we have a small sect, full of religious zeal, burning with enthusiasm, strong in faith, confident in their aggressiveness, and fully satisfied that God is with them. But they are not more certain of this idea than every church on the face of the earth. There is nothing new or odd in this. And while he would be a bold critic who would say God is not with them, since, He likely is with them or any one else in all that is done right in His name, they must remember that they have no monopoly of the Almighty, and that He is not to be used, constrained or pocketed to suit their exigencies; neither by Pope nor Tramp, not by Archbishop or preacher; but that over the whole earth, He is with 'whosoever' doeth right. Perhaps the Tramps may say with whoever is 'saved.' We need not argue that question they would limit those who work in His name to a small circle; and if their views were disclosed about some of the greatest leaders of religious thought which the world ever saw, many would be surprised. **For mention such names as Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Ira D. Sankey, John Wesley, John McNeill, Dr. Torrey, &c.—'Oh, he was good enough, but he is not right!'**

The true Tramp thinks he only is right, because the Tramp is a law unto himself. Speaking on the 25th Mr. Cooney, when supporting his argument for baptism, asked his hearers not to mind what the Archbishop of Canterbury said; what the Moderator of the General Assembly said, or the President of the Methodist Conference said, but to follow what the Lord said.

This is true doctrine, but there is this point about it—The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly are very much unlike Mr. Cooney. He is a law unto himself, and interprets the Bible as he pleases, according to the best of his skill and ability—conscientiously, no doubt, and preaches it accordingly. He is the High Priest, if we may employ the phrase, of his followers, and expounds what they are to accept as the correct version of interpreted Scripture. He has no 'credo,' he is not tied to any form of faith; he expounds the Bible as he interprets it. The Archbishop and the Moderator, on the other hand, have a distinct and definite conscientious theology which has stood the test of centuries and the very best criticism of the ablest critics. The Church of England has its 39 Articles; the Presbyterian church its Confession of Faith. The Methodist body, we believe, has no defined

Confession of Faith, except whatever John Wesley thought or taught. The other two great Protestant churches of the world have. So that the Christian world knows exactly where the Archbishop and the Moderator are in theology. On the contrary no one knows where Mr. Cooney may be. He flatters himself that he is where Christ is, since he most devoutly endeavours to follow the Lord according to His revealed will—but after all this just amounts to what Mr. Edward Cooney thinks is right, not what the hundreds of leaders of religious thought unite in defining as right.

(To be continued in our next.)

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WITH THE TRAMPS
LAST SUNDAY'S EXPERIENCE
ANOTHER INTERRUPTION OF PROTEST
THE POLICE HAVE TO INTERFERE
MEN BAPTISED AMID WINTRY RAIN

Our representative at Ballinamallard on Sunday writes:—Sunday's service was solemn and simple. During the week a large number of Tramps left for various parts of the United Kingdom, but Mr. Edward Cooney and some of his followers remained at Crocknacrieve, where devotional exercises were conducted. Hundreds flocked to Ballinamallard on Sunday, notwithstanding the drizzling downpour of wintry rain.

Quite a large crowd of pilgrims and those apparently in sympathy with them marched to the banks of the Ballycassidy River on Sunday, singing hymns. The attendance was not as large as on former occasions, but the enthusiasm of the pilgrims was by no means abated.

A COUNTER SERMON.

On the opposite bank of the river a Mr. Robinson addressed a counter assemblage, in the course of which he forcibly condemned the followers of Mr. Cooney, and asserted that all who were following him were on the wrong road to salvation. His words were so warmly expressed and his language so severe that the police interfered and quite a number of people said he should be removed from the field. There was at this stage a good deal of commotion. Mr. Robinson asserted he had as good a right to speak there as any other person. The police, in the interests of peace, advised him in a friendly manner to refrain from interrupting. His friends did likewise, but it was in vain, for Mr. Robinson asserted the Tramps should be swept off the field and that no one was in sympathy with them. He added in an excited tone

'WE ARE ALL IN A LAND OF HELL.'

Continuing, he made reference to individual members of the pilgrims and told his listeners, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Again the police interfered, as also did outsiders, but Mr. Robinson declared that he was a British subject, and entitled to free speech in a free country under the British flag. Indeed the police were exceedingly courteous, and so were his friends, all of whom advised him to maintain the good name his name and household bore, and not interrupt the proceedings by his acts.

Intercession with Mr. Robinson was of no avail until finally the police removed him. Then he conducted a service of his own near the Ballinamallard Orange Hall, in the course of which he directed complimentary reference to the IMPARTIAL REPORTER, which, he said, sent its man there to show up the truth and warn the people against the invasion which had been made in the County Fermanagh. Boldly he believed that the coming crisis would grow and end in religious and political riot. He did not blame the police for doing their duty, but he denounced in no unmeasured terms the pilgrims individually and collectively.

'GATHER AT THE RIVER.'

The gathering at the river was small. Ten persons were 'dipped.' Mr. Andrew Moore, Mr. Thomas Elliott, as usual officiated at the dipping, and did it so ceremoniously and quietly as to elicit admiration from a crowd who were more prone to laugh than to praise the proceedings. The service by the river was more brief than heretofore. Mr. Cooney preached.

OTHER SPEAKERS.

Other speakers followed, including Mr. Tom Betty, who couched his language in milder terms than was his wont.

Egotism was most discernible in the address of **Mr. Carroll**. His entire speech was honey combed with capital 'I.' He told what he had done and how he had been saved, and invited his audience to follow his example which he started full seven years ago.

Mr. Irvine also delivered an address. He wanted all people to be saved, as he had been, and not to be ashamed of openly confessing their sins, so that they might not only obtain remission for them but become followers of Christ, and so enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and there enjoy that everlasting glory promised to them by the Giver of All.

The proceedings shortly afterwards concluded.

October 14, 1904
Freeman's Journal

A great number of people, as we know, are beginning to lose their heads in Great Britain and America on the question of religion. We have been pretty free from modern religious fanaticism in Ireland—although, unfortunately, we still have our Orangemen. The "Prophet Dowie," however has evidently no chance in this country...any more than the Christian Scientists have.

It is rather astonishing, under these circumstances, to learn from an English paper, the "Morning Leader," that a new religious sect, the "Tramp Pilgrims," which has been conducting a mission at Ballinamallard, Co. Fermanagh, "continues to draw converts and attention." On Sunday, it appears, ten persons were baptized in the Ballycassidy River, the ceremony being conducted by Mr. Elliott, who formerly resided at Derrygonnelly, but sold his farm to follow the 'Pilgrims.' "

The founder of this sect, whose tenets are not defined is, it appears, **a Mr. Irvine, a Scotchman**, who resided for some time in Tipperary. According to Mr. Irvine, the "Tramp Pilgrims" number 150—50 in England, 30 in Scotland, 50 in Ireland, and 20 in the United States. The "Tramp Pilgrims," it is stated, take no collection and make no appeal for money. If this is so, perhaps it explains why they have not made the same progress in the United States as the Dowieites, for it appears that in twelve months Mr. Irvine succeeded in enlisting only twenty members of the family of Uncle Sam.

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THEIR ENTHUSIASM AND ZEAL
WHERE THEY DIFFER FROM THEIR NEIGHBOURS
SECOND ARTICLE

Mr. E. Cooney thinks it correct for his followers to relate particulars of their conversion and to tell what God has done for them.' Devout Christians, equally sincere, would consider the vain repetition by young men and women of what they thought or believed God had done for them as an imitation of the Pharisee. One young man at Ballinamallard in an exhortation thanked God that he was not like his friends on the other bank of the river, for 'he was saved.' 'Thank God,' said this Pharisee, 'I am not as other men,' so that just as individuals and minds differ, people differ about their conceptions of what the Lord Himself intended. He told one man to go and show himself unto the priest, and to another, 'Tell no man.'

However, we have here a band of Christian workers full of zeal, earnestly struggling to do right, and they came to Crocknacrieve for mutual guidance and profit. Among the rank and file there is little education, and without education (natural or acquired) there cannot be the power desired. Thus it is, that the Tramp leaders have for so far only been able to influence those of least education, or least reasoning power.

The Tramps do not heed that: they are satisfied they have quite enough education to fight the Devil with: and they have had quite enough, it must be frankly admitted, to persuade several who followed evil ways to abandon their wrong-doing and turn to the right path. There can be no denial of this fact, and in so far as they do good, let them be accorded all praise. Let us all thankfully give them that credit. **Time has toned down some of their crudities.** They, perhaps, are not so uncharitable as they once were, when they judged their neighbours and said this one and that one was going to hell. Something of that sort of thing may be done yet by some young and indiscreet Pharisees wrapped up in the complacency of their own exalted state of holiness, but their unctuous egotism is being killed, as it ought to be killed. Protestants smile at the idea of the Pope claiming the power to bind or unloose on earth or Heaven; but the Tramps go further, they pretend to know who is going to hell or Heaven, and one of them one Sunday at Ballinamallard was on such intimate terms with the great Creator of all worlds, that he warned his hearers there was no mercy after this life. He was quite certain about it.

The glibness with which some of these loud-voiced men talk of sacred things is repellant. Some of the men who spoke on the Enniskillen Diamond were utterly unfitted to preach.

On the other hand Mr. Cooney can talk: by dint of practice he can pitch his voice without shouting: he can reason: he can enforce his argument with chapter and verse; and therefore, he is listened to, and his reasoning has power and force. But his copyists, while they may be very good people, are not preachers. They simply speak jargon; indeed the old Saxon word 'blather' would almost be justified.

The Episcopal Church requires an apprenticeship of four years before a minister be allowed to preach, and even this time is rather short. The Presbyterian minister must serve his seven years and pass a stiff examination, before he is licensed. But the Tramp gets 'converted' in an instant, and forthwith proceeds to expound the Book which has exercised the most profound minds, the best of men, the deepest thinkers, and left certain problems yet unsettled because they are not plainly expounded in Holy writ. The sinner of Ballinamallard who reformed his ways on Monday, and told of his conversion on Tuesday, is scarcely qualified to expound Bible

theology on Wednesday. The man may be a very good carpenter or blacksmith, for perhaps he served his time to it, but as to theology, if he attempt it, he must as we would put it in every day language, be a botch or a quack if he presume to adumbrate it.

So Mr. Cooney and Mr. Irvine were educating their followers at Crocknacrieve, warning them not to be too free in getting up in public to speak before their seniors, and not to propound doctrine till they had more experience. For some of the young people are rather presumptuous in this regard. In this advice Messrs. Cooney and Irvine were right. They have themselves given years of study to the Bible, and find these years were all needed for the purpose, and that it has abundance of stores for further elucidation. And they were studying it reverently, to see what the revealed will of God Himself is. It is just on this point that they differ with other people—as to what our Lord did really intend or define in his words of 1900 years ago.

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WAITING FOR THE 'DIPPING' AT BALLINAMALLARD
ANOTHER DAY'S DIPPING AT BALLINAMALLARD RIVER
ALLEGED ROMANIST DOCTRINES
THE ROAD TO HEAVEN
BAPTISM IN BALLYCASSIDY RIVER

Rain was falling on last Sunday as some 300 people assembled on the banks of Ballycassidy river to witness the baptism by immersion of six persons—four men and two women—who had embraced the faith expounded by the Tramps under the leadership of Mr. Irvine and Mr. Edward Cooney. Contrary to expectation, there was no counter demonstration, because of Mr. Robinson who held antagonistic views and forcibly condemned the Pilgrims the previous Sunday, was on Saturday committed to Omagh Lunatic Asylum at a special court held in Irvinestown, before Captain Wm. D'Arcy Irvine and Mr. James Maguire, justices.

SUNDAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

Sunday's proceedings were conducted amid unfavourable atmospherical conditions. The ceremony was brief, and it was a dreary autumn afternoon when the Pilgrims advanced in semi-military marching order from the mill beside the Ballycassidy River. Hymns were sung, and that inspiring one 'Crown Him Lord of All' was admirably rendered by some 80 people.

Mr. Edward Cooney opened the proceedings by leading in prayer, in the course of which he earnestly exhorted all present to openly acknowledge Christ, and avail themselves of the glorious privileges afforded them to join Jesus by that river bank.

A hymn was then sung, during which Mr. Elliott as the person allotted to prepare the baptismal ceremony, entered the water and awaited, patiently, the arrival of the converts. It was bitterly cold. Mr. Elliott was divested of all dress save his trousers, shoes, and shirt. The first man to be baptised was Mr. Glenn, Drumsclion, and the next was Mr. Stutt, Ballinamallard. Then two women were immersed and the baptismal ceremony terminated by two youths being put through the ceremony.

Mr. Cooney delivered an address, after which a Scotchman followed, giving what is called a 'testimony.' A Mr. Carroll followed, calling on sinners to repent. .

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

Mr. John West, Crocknacrieve, delighted in being able to give a personal testimony as to how he had been 'saved' ten years ago. [Editors Note: this would have been in 1894, before the Go-Preachers were started. He was 'saved' outside of their instrumentality, and he spoke openly about it. They had not yet decided they were God's ONLY Way.] He was, he said, bound to the Devil and was anxious about all this world's way. He found he was wrong. He did not know where he would be on the day he would be called to eternity. He thought for himself and found that so long as he sought after the things of this World he had no hope for eternal life. It was not man who had brought him to Christ; it was his own thinking—thinking that he was wrong—thinking that he had no hope for salvation unless he joined Christ, which he had done ten years ago, and now could look to him as his Lord and Master. He used to attend the Episcopal Church, and some time ago he had a conversation with a minister whom he was very fond of in the flesh, and who told him that to be baptised was to be born again. A priest had told him the same. Now that was Romanish doctrine. He (Mr. West) did not believe that; he believed that they would all have to be baptised as they were doing by that river bank that day, and he thanked Christ He had given him the grace to be there to bear his testimony as to how he had been 'saved' by the mercy for which he from his heart felt thankful, for Christ's sake. .

FROM DERRYGONNELLY.

Mr. David Donaldson, who had as on previous Sundays, driven all the way from Derrygonnelly, next gave his testimony as to the mean whereby he had been led to be a follower of Christ. He used, he said, to attend all religious services, all meetings and 'things of that sort,' but he found that he was wrong and then he turned his heart to Heaven. He also gave the usual warnings, about eternity, and its terrors, and pointed out that peace was to be found by those who went with them (meaning the pilgrims). After an address by Mr. Irvine, the proceedings terminated.

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THE TRAMPS
CHANGE IN THEIR VIEWS
THEIR ENTHUSIASM AND ZEAL
WHERE THEY DIFFER FROM THEIR NEIGHBOURS
THIRD ARTICLE

The Tramps object to a paid minister. If the County Fermanagh were tomorrow all of the one way of thinking and its people Tramps, would it not require to be divided into parishes or congregations for the purpose of ministration? And to each parish or congregation there must be, of necessity, a priest, minister, teaching elder, preacher—whatever term be applied to a spiritual overseer. Is he not to be sustained? Messrs. Cooney and Irvine would say—'Let him be sustained by the gifts of the people'—in kind or in money. But that would work towards inequality. The pastor might obtain too much or too little. Mr. Cooney's answer to that point might be that the real man of God would divide to all in need. But really, we are not in heaven or Arcadia. We are poor human nature, the best of us, and the saying of our Lord to his disciples that 'The labourer is worthy of his hire,' is as true today as when he declared it 1900 years ago.

Mr. Cooney has been hospitably entertained at Ballinamallard and comfortably domiciled. It is only fair to say that Mr. Cooney has often slept in a barn, and been hungry and exposed. But he has been well cared for lately. If he or his preacher were to remain in the parish or district, or congregation, he must of necessity adopt the old Methodist plan of going round the houses, and being entertained by his followers—or allow the followers to do what would please them best, place him in a central position, easy of access to all, where he could study and minister, and discharge his work to the best advantage. Mr. Cooney may say that our Lord had no salary. No, our Lord was the missionary Himself, of his own cause. The times are different. The present is not a heathen world but a Christian world. Mr. Cooney does not go about clad in skins, but in tweeds; he is not fed on wild honey, but on beef or mutton. Our Lord fasted for 40 days and nights: Mr. Cooney very properly enjoys his turkey or fowl. Our Lord had a seamless robe: Mr. Cooney goes in trousers and vest and coat. Our Lord walked from place to place: Mr. Cooney goes on a train. Our Lord rode on an ass: Mr. Cooney rides a bicycle. Our Lord kept the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath: Mr. Cooney observes the first day of the week. Our Lord slept on the roof of a house: for Mr. Cooney to do so would mean death.

And so on ad infinitum. The scene is changed: the age is changed: the climate is changed: the world is changed. And no man is wise who will persist in keeping in the First Century when he is living in the Twentieth. The times have changed, but the great principles remain. Mr. Cooney to some extent wishes to adhere rigidly to the former, to the outside of the cup and platter of the First Century, while we are in the 20th century. His heart is right: his soul is overflowing with love and compassion for fallen human nature; his mind is full of the great need of preaching to perishing creatures 'Ye must be born again.' His whole being is seized with 'the Enthusiasm of Humanity,' and he wants all men to 'Repent and be baptised.' Yes. But the Ballinamallard River is not the Jordan. The unbelieving Jews are not those who accept the Christian Faith; and there are many true simple people now as then, who when they hear loud professions, and cries of 'Thank God, I am not as other men'—may still cry in lowliness of heart and contrition of spirit, 'Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner.' There are ways and means of preaching the Gospel without reviling those who, however worthily or unworthily, have dedicated their lives to God's service; and a pure Gospel can be preached without saying—'The churches are all wrong, and no one is right only those who are with me.' Is such a man not more likely to be wrong himself?

Mr. Cooney is not blind to everything. He specially inculcated on his disciples the need for cleanliness, and most likely they are just as clean as their neighbours. But they do not look it. Formerly the men discarded white shirts and collars. A few have overcome that folly. They still cling to beards, as they are entitled to do. But if a man with a beard will wear brown underclothing he cannot complain if people think him dirty-looking. It may suit a Tramp, to go about in that fashion; but he is not tidy looking. God made no such mistakes in nature. He fitted his creatures for their place in the order of His creation; and He ornamented the tiger and leopard, the moth and lizard, the parrot and wagtail for its place in nature. It is repulsive to sensitive eyes to see a number of what ought to be sensible women going about in black sailor hats and black jackets, unrelieved by a little white, acting under the foolish idea that thereby they are doing the Lord a service. It is all very well to talk of eschewing vanity. There is vanity and vanity. There is far more vanity in repeating the jargon of 'being saved' and 'I am safer than you,' than in copying the daisy or the tulip, the simple primrose or the mayflower, the stately purity of the lily, or the queenly glory of the rose. This vanity—genuine vanity, of self-abnegation in dress is part of the Pharisaism which says, 'Thank God I am not as other women.' There is a moderation in dress as in all things, and there is an extravagance which is sinful; but to wrap one's self up in mournful black and glory in one's own denial of self for so doing, resembles the ignorant folly of the self-tortured Indian fakir instead of the comeliness of the Christian.

Could any one imagine that our Lord went about in disagreeable looking garments? or with a woollen comforter round his neck to make him look dirty? We always think of Him in spotless white. Can any stretch of fancy conceive the possibility of the Mother of our Lord dressed in black garments, which must have invited sunstroke? Women were created to look attractive. That is one of the functions of their being, and it is preposterously absurd for any one to teach young girls that they should unsex themselves or render themselves as ugly as possible by unbecoming attire, or immolate their sense of the beautiful on the altar of Pharisaical vanity. Are we next to look out for tattooed faces? or the agony of a crown of thorns?

Yet with all this folly these people lead pure lives. The men have given up drinking—(to many of them no self-denial, to others a great cross)—and the use of tobacco, which is genuine self-denial to those who have used it. The women, who cannot have done much

harm, may perhaps talk less about their neighbours and more about themselves. But their lives are irreproachable. That is the hard fact.

What a pity they could not have used their energies inside some of the Christian churches! They are Baptists, yet repudiate the Baptist church. They use Methodist ways, yet are very severe on the very church to which many of them owe the Christian graces they possess. They oppose a paid ministry. And it is chiefly where ministers are weak or idle the Tramps find followers. There are, of course, exceptions, but they rarely succeed where the local minister is an active worker. One venturesome man, who failed in properly minding his own business, went over to Brookeborough a few times to teach the Brookeborough people how to mind theirs. But the Rev. Morris Davis is there; Rev. Mr. Clayton is there; and the humbug of it all became apparent, and there was no proselytizing at Aghalun. The Tramps went to Cleenish and succeeded, and it is only fair to say that Cleenish was the better of their visit. One of their hottest converts now has stood in the dock before this, and it is a cause to feel thankful for that he is now a new man.

So if the Tramps do nothing else, they will stir up clergy who are paid specially for special work too often neglected. Yet people—sensible hard-headed people—should not be carried away by religious excitement so as to mistake emotion for sanctification. We have all witnessed examples of these fluctuations of religious feeling, and in many cases, unhappily, the last phase is worse than the first. Let common sense have play with emotion. There are several cases in our lunatic asylums from this excessive religious fervour, chiefly the result of picturing the terrors of hell by people who to all appearance know little of the love and mercy of the great God.

We must extend a kindly and charitable hand to enthusiasts whom—if we are obliged to condemn them in some respects—are struggling in their own way towards something better. There is no new Divine revelation. Their people may and do accomplish some good. But there is the harm also which we have indicated, and above all, of **their ignoring the solemn rite of the Lord's Supper commanded by our Lord Himself**. What excuse can possibly be offered for ignoring the most solemn and sacred of all Christian institutions, we cannot tell.

Mr. Cooney says, 'I am commissioned:' no one knows who commissioned him: and no one knows who commissioned his followers or any of preachers to disregard the command—'As oft as ye do this, do it in remembrance of Me.' No excuse that we know of can be urged for the serious offence of avoiding the Lord's Supper.

The new movement may live a time, or it may die. It may be spasmodic: it does not appear to possess the elements of endurance, yet it may last for a time. History repeats itself. The late Convention may develop some new factor, which may blossom into some new idea, or tabernacle. And time will test it, and whatever is good will likely remain, and whatever be unworthy will be dissipated. Let me say no unkind or uncharitable word of the Cooneyites. They do harm in creating division and causing schism. They have caused dissension in families, and fanned fanaticism. Even a mother has handed her child to her mother-in-law to nurse, so that she might tramp the country on this fanatical errand. Others have lost their voices, other have left their parents. Others can do little more than grumble and growl, and will likely join the next newest thing that appears, for they are given to change. They have done some good; they may do more; but neither let them nor any one else imagine they have a monopoly of such a power, and let them not attempt to build up their own sect by decrying others.

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THE DIPPING OF TRAMPS
In River at Ballinamallard

As some interest has been taken in the dipping of converts by the Tramps at Ballinamallard in the river there, we give a picture of the process. The convert is taken into the water until it reaches above the knee or up to the waist, and immersed in the name of the Trinity. The convert returns to land, and gives way to another, when a similar performance is gone through, till the ceremony is concluded. The converts are clothed in an old suit of ordinary clothes, but without collars or stockings, which they discard as soon as possible inside the shelter of a neighbouring farmhouse. After the baptism concludes hymns are chanted and discourses delivered, in which all are exhorted 'to go forth and preach the Gospel.'

A great crowd assembled at the Weirs' Bridge, Killybevliu, on Sunday, expecting that a dipping would take place at Enniskillen. But none of the Tramps appeared, and it is now said that if any immersions take place here, the dipping will be done secretly to avoid the ridicule which would be expected to take place among the 'unsaved.'

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