

Newspaper Articles-1911

1911

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Newspaper Articles for 1911

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Unnamed Religious Sect Holding Convention Near Lancaster, Kentucky The Central Record Newspaper Lancaster, Kentucky

Our constitution gives to everyone the right to worship God in concordance with the dictates of their own conscience. And we have neither the desire or intention of either interfering or criticizing anyone in the exercise of this prerogative.

For the last few years, a little band of worshippers have been gathering in different parts of the country, at each other's houses, in schoolhouses, often in the open air, or wherever they might, to worship God according to their belief and teachings. This small band of a few years ago, has grown gradually until now perhaps 300 souls are numbered in its following. They have been criticized, often adversely called "Mormons," "Holy Rollers" and other names, all of which were equally distasteful to them. However, they were not daunted from their worship by the opinion of the world, and they seem to be continually gathering strength.

They are now holding what they term a Convention or Special Meetings, on the premises of Mr. Hunter House, about three miles from Lancaster on the New Danville Pike. Delegates are there from far and near: Tennessee, Alabama, Illinois and far off Canada. They came unostentatiously on foot, on horseback and on the trains. Representatives of The Record visited the Meeting on Sunday afternoon, and found more than 300 people camped at the meeting place. Clean comfortable tents afforded sleeping quarters, as well as dining room and kitchen. Reaching there shortly after noon hour, we were courteously invited to dine with them. Three services were held during the day, and at the conclusion of the afternoon service, one of the speakers announced that there would be a service at 7 o'clock in the evening, and that no one need leave the grounds, that they would be glad to feed all who would care to stay and eat with them.

These services were marked with the utmost simplicity and were absolutely free from any fanatical actions or anything that would indicate that they were not a body of religious people deeply intent upon their worship. Every member carried a Bible and looking over the audience, we were surprised to see many citizens of the country, whom we had known in former years to continually disregard the laws of God and to frequently violate those of man. And the thought came to us that if these people succeeded in recalling people of this class, they were undoubtedly doing a good work for the Master.

Their services differ somewhat from the services usually heard in our churches. But we were unable to find any grounds for the various accusations which we have heard against them. As to their creed or doctrine, from its tenor we are satisfied that it has nothing in common with the Catholic religion. And from a remark by one of their speakers bitterly scathing as to the Mormons, we were assured it was not in sympathy with that church. They are extremely reticent as to their doctrine or manner of worship and frequent questioning of those who seemed to be in authority elicited the sole reply that they were followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene. They teach humility in all things and follow out their teachings to the letter.

We heard three speakers, one of whom appeared to be Irish, while the others were apparently either Scotch or of that descent. They were unusually intelligent men and presented their views in a clear concise manner, and in such simple language that the humblest of their followers might understand. The Meetings were in progress for three days last week and closed Monday. We were told the leaders folded their paraphernalia and departed for some other place to hold meetings.

The Nenagh Guardian
April 15, 1911
Cloughjordan Fair "Preaching" Incident

To the Editor of the Nenagh Guardian.

Dear Sir,—In reference to your remarks in last Saturday's "Guardian," to the preachers at Cloughjordan fair, I do not think you will find many of any denomination of Christians to disagree with you. I enclose an extract from a Belfast paper giving an account of an address, at one of their conventions, by a man called Irvine or Irwin, who visited this neighbourhood some years ago. I hope you will, give it in full. All Christians should unite in putting down this devilish movement—Yours, &c CHURCHMAN

[Extract]

A Mr Irvine, who seems chief lieutenant to Mr Cooney, next gave an address. He said, "Presbyterianism was not Roman Catholicism, it was whitewashed Popery; where they saw the clergyman there they saw Rome; where they saw collections they saw Rome; where they found men worshipping in a building put up for that purpose that Was devilry. That was what was filling hell. How was it he did not believe in men paid for preaching? Because Christ, Moses, Elijah were not men like that. Why did he not believe in making collections? Because Jesus never did so. Whenever that was done it was the devil who did so. The devil's work was the building of churches with stone and lime throughout the world's history and every church was a monument to the power of the devil over the hearts and lives of men.

"The Filling of Hell.

"Most people prided themselves, saying they were Presbyterians; poor blind fools. People said they were Methodists; poor blind fools. Poor blind fools with the mark of the devil to go down to hell. It was the clergy who were filling hell. The publicans were blamed for making the drunkard, but many a drunkard was saved. None could believe in a clergyman and get to heaven, and if any of them had friends who had gone down to hell through belief in the clergy let them stop and think. The clergy were men sitting in a manse, fettering and destroying their fathers and mothers, their brothers and sisters."

The speaker referred in his denunciations to several clergymen by name. One whose name he gave was "a dirty greasy man, a devilish fellow, and a fat, lazy, good-for-nothing man—that man was going to hell; and the speaker's relations were following him gladly on.

"I will give you my head," said Mr Irvine "if I can't prove that there is not the slightest chance of a clergyman being in heaven by the way set forth in the bible. You say that these are strong words; they are not half as strong as the occasion demands. There was more tyranny in the world from the clergyman than anything else. They were worse than wolves, lions or tigers. They were the most deadly creatures on God's earth,"

The speaker went on to speak of "dirty devilish Methodists," and to complain about a Church of Ireland clergyman dismissing a teacher because he refused to teach the "prayer book and devilish lies." "How do I know the Methodist preachers are wrong? Because they preach against me; they fight against all who preach the Jesus way," "Christ said to the clerics, ye generation of vipers how can you escape the damnation of hell." "That is the eternal message of God to clericalism. Any man capable of courting the patronage of the clergy was inviting a pat of the devil on his shoulder on his way to hell."

With regard to the burial of a woman in Co. Wicklow, the speaker said her body was refused burial in the churchyard. "Better to bury her in a dung heap. He would rather be buried there than in consecrated ground. In the consecrated ground there was marked off a spot for drunkards, harlots, and unbaptised babies, babies not sprinkled with ditty, devilish hands." "When he said 'dirty and devilish' he meant it for the clergymen, the servants of the devil; every time they look at one they beheld the work of the devil. You will not find priest nor clergymen in the New Testament," continued the preacher.

[It may be thought waste of time or worse to give these out-pourings in detail, but it is well to know the sort of teaching that is being de-livered over the country. Such, however, is the stuff that is uttered—I won't say preached—by these Cooneyites, and such is the stuff that the people at Cloughjordan fair were expected to stand and listen to. Indeed, it was a clergyman that drew my attention to the matter and caused me to write the remarks that I did.—EBAG DHU]

To the Editor of the Nenagh Guardian.

Sir,—As a Protestant will you allow me, through the medium of your columns, to protest against Mr Birrell applying, in reply to Dr Esmonde, the term "Protestant doctrine" as preached by the people who were the subject of the discussion in Parliament last week. Protestants have no connection or sympathy with these preachers, and I, as one, would be glad if a stop could be lawfully put to them.—Yours faithfully,
 PROTEST-ANT

July 6, 1911, p. 5
THE IMPARTIAL REPORTER
 Established 1808
Newspaper for Enniskillen, Northern Ireland

THE TRAMP 'CONVENTION
BIG GATHERING NEAR ENNISKILLEN

The Tramp Preachers are again holding their annual convention at Crocknacrieve, near Enniskillen, and in comparison with former years there is no falling off in numbers or the enthusiasm of the members of this sect.

During the past month some 30 male members of the sect have been engaged in preparing for this annual fete. A large tent has been erected on the lawn with seating accommodation for some 3,000 people, and some dozen wooden halls and marquees have been erected on the grounds for sleeping accommodation, whilst Mullaghmeen, the residence of Mr. W. H. West, has also been transformed into a suitable place for the men for sleeping.

Large numbers have arrived from South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, United States, Canada, England, Scotland, and all the colonies.

The principal meeting on Sunday was in the afternoon, when some 2,000 people were present, some coming a long distance. Mr. William Irwin, the leader and founder of the movement, was the principal speaker.

Meetings are held each day and are well attended. Amongst those present is Mr. Irvine Weir, who was one of the first party to conduct a mission in Enniskillen town some six years ago, in connection with this work. Since then he has been conducting missions in various parts of America, and was in San Francisco the time it was destroyed by earthquake.

July 27, 1911, p. 6
THE IMPARTIAL REPORTER
 Established 1808

Newspaper for Enniskillen, Northern Ireland

The annual convention of the 'Pilgrims' was continued on Sunday in glorious weather, and amid much enthusiasm. From ten o'clock in the morning every road that one would look to were to be seen crowds of people flocking to Crocknacrieve, the scene of the convention, by bicycles, motor cars, and a large number by foot. The morning meeting was given to those who wished to speak, a large number taking advantage of the open meeting. In the afternoon there was an enormous crowd, the large tent being packed. The principal speakers were Miss Barton, Miss Smith and Mr. Bill Carroll. All visitors were heartily invited to participate in the tea provided after this meeting. Mr. Edward Cooney was the most important speaker at the evening meeting.

IMPARTIAL REPORTER
 Circa November 11, 1911
 IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE IN IRELAND
 KING'S BENCH DIVISION
 BETWEEN
 W. H. WEST AND JOHN J. WEST, Plaintiffs
 And
 W. D. WILSON
 WILLIAM MILLISON ALLEN
 JAMES WILLIAM WILSON, Defendants
 APOLOGY

I, WILLIAM DENNIS WILSON, of Cretingham Rookery, Framlingham, Suffolk hereby admit that for several years past I have printed, published and circulated various letters and pamphlets of a grossly libellous character reflecting on the moral character and integrity of Mr. James John West, of Crocknacrieve, Ballinamallard, County Fermanagh, and William Henry West, of Mullaghmeen, Ballinamallard, County Fermanagh, as members of what is called the 'Go-Preachers' or 'Pilgrims,' and styled by me, the said William Dennis Wilson, in my pamphlets as 'Cooneyites,' 'Irvineites,' and 'Dippers,' &c., in respect of which the said John James West and William Henry West have brought actions against me in the High Court of Justice.

I admit that all such charges against the Messrs. West are absolutely untrue and without foundation, and I hereby unreservedly withdraw the same, and request them to accept this apology and expression of sincere regret, and I hereby undertake not to continue or repeat the circulation, writing, or publication of the same or similar matter in any way directly or indirectly referring to them in their capacity as members of the said Society, personally or in any manner whatever.

And we, the said William Dennis Wilson and James W. Wilson and William M. Allen, of 40 Foundation Street, Ipswich, having, as the Writer, Proprietor, and Publisher respectively, of the newspaper called the Independent, Ipswich, printed, published and circulated in such newspaper similar grossly libelous charges against the said John James West and William Henry West hereby admit the same to be absolutely untrue and without foundation, and hereby unreservedly withdraw the same, and request the said John James West and William Henry West to accept this apology, and our expressions of sincere regret, and hereby undertake not to print, or allow to be printed in the said newspaper, any further libellous matter reflecting in any way upon the oral character and integrity of the said John James West and William Henry West, as members of the said Society, personally, or in any manner whatever.

Dated this 10th day of November, 1911.

W. D. WILSON
WILLIAM MILLISON ALLEN
JAMES WILLIAM WILSON

The defendants agreeing to pay £100 damages, all costs, and consenting to perpetual injunction.

Solicitors for plaintiffs: CLARKE & GORDON, Ennisillen

November, 1911

Fermanagh Times

£100 Damages and Full Apology

Mr. W. D. Wilson and the Pilgrims

Our readers will remember that a couple of years ago, when the advent of the Pilgrims or "Go-Preachers" in this district was creating so much discussion, a Mr. W. D. Wilson, of Framlingham, Suffolk, held a couple of public meetings in Enniskillen in which he denounced that sect and all its doings and teachings in language more forcible than polite.

Subsequently, he issued large numbers of leaflets and pamphlets in which he made many serious charges against the moral character of the new movement and its members, accusing them, amongst other things, of inducing young girls to leave their homes and go away to other countries for certain unlawful reasons.

This system of denunciation having proceeded for a length of time, and growing more virulent in its character, Mr. John West, Crocknacrieve, and Mr. W. H. West, Mullaghmeen, members of the religious sect in question, brought an action for libel against the author, and after the lapse of a considerable length of time and many communications between the legal gentlemen representing the respective parties, the matter has at length been settled by Mr. Wilson paying £100 damages and all costs, and unreservedly withdrawing all his assertions, and publishing a full and ample apology for having made them.

While every religious creed in the world is legally open to criticism and discussion, yet there is a limit beyond which thinking and right-minded men will not transgress, and certainly when certain members of a sect are boldly named in pamphlets, published broadcast through the land, and falsely accused of all sorts of serious misdemeanors and crimes against decent society, then indeed it is only right that the law should step in and put a stop once and for all to such conduct.

However much people of other Churches may criticize the doctrines propounded by the Pilgrims, yet ever person acquainted with them knows that the wild aspersions cast on their moral character as a body are absolutely and entirely false, and that they are as clean living and upright a class of people as those belonging to any other sect in any part of the world. The results of the libel action in question may, and we hope, will put a stop once and for all to criticism that outsteps the bounds of decent comment.

It is clear that the Messrs. West brought this action simply and solely for the purpose of vindicating their own character and that of the religious body to which they belong. There is no doubt that had they persisted in bringing the matter into Court, a judge and jury would have awarded them much larger damages than those they have accepted.
