

**THE RUIN OF  
EDUCATION IN IRELAND,  
AND THE IRISH FANAR**

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The ruin of education in Ireland, and the Irish Fanar by F. Hugh O'Donnell

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"The Catholic University College, Dublin, was handed over to the Jesuits in November, 1883. I am the Rector, and I have eight Jesuit colleagues."—*Evidence of Rev. Dr. Delany, S.J., before the University Commission.*

"The Catholic Church has the right and the duty to kill heretics, because it is by fire and sword that heresy can be extirpated. Mere Excommunication is derided by heretics. If they are imprisoned or exiled they corrupt others. The only resource is to put them to death. *Repentance cannot be allowed to save them, just as Repentance is not allowed to save civil criminals; for the highest good of the Church is the Unity of Faith, and this cannot be preserved unless heretics are put to death—haec servari nequit nisi hereticus morti tradatur.*"—*Contemporary Jesuit Doctrine, approved by the Theologians of the Society, and actually taught to-day by their leading Canonist, Rev. Dr. Marianus de Luca, Professor of the Decretals in the Vatican University.*

"A war of this kind declared against heresy, in which not even repentance could save the victim from the stake, caused a deep dread of Roman fanaticism and Roman power, the effects of which have not entirely passed away to this hour."—*On the Marian Heretic-Burnings, by Mr. Wilfrid Ward. B.A., Catholic Member of the University Commission.*

Educat.  
Hist.  
Q.

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BY

F. HUGH O'DONNELL, M.A.

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## INTRODUCTION

IN placing before the public the accompanying summary of my experiences of Irish education, in the form of an Outline of Evidence for the University Commission, I may be accused of a certain precipitation. I am supported, however, by other pioneers of reform in Ireland in thinking that not a moment can be lost in making known, at least, a sketch of our position. We have recognised well-known influences at work before the University Commission. We have marked the familiar selection of evidence. All the pliant personages, with whom the Senate of the Royal University was stuffed, are answering to the roll call. A full exposition of the struggle in Ireland between an incompetent but overwhelming dictatorship, and the unorganised and intimidated aspirations of the educated Laity, would fill a large volume, and easily two; nor need the revelations be wanting in piquancy any more than in importance. Truth can be livelier than fiction; and the facts of what Irish culture has, and had, to suffer would rival the rollicking gaiety of farce, if anything less serious were in question and at stake than the highest intellectual interests of a gifted race

and the common patriotism of three Christian denominations.

It may be instructive to relate my personal experience of the difficulty which may beset the tender of independent evidence before a University Commission, on which, outside of a number of non-Catholics of position or distinction, no place has been found for non-Clerical representatives. At the beginning of December I sent in my name to the Secretary, mentioning my position as a Master of Arts of the Queen's University, my experience as a Member of Parliament, and my desire to give evidence before the Commission should visit my old college at Galway. I received an acknowledgment from the Secretary, stating "that my wish to give evidence would be submitted to the Commission." The Sittings of the Commission continued down to Christmas, but I heard nothing more of my application. I waited for some six weeks, and then renewed my inquiry in the month of January. I received the same acknowledgment from the Secretary, stating "that my desire to give evidence would be laid before the Commission." *Then it had not been submitted yet to the Commission*, though the sittings of the Commission in December lasted for a couple of weeks after the receipt of my first application.

Who were drawing a ring-fence round the inquiry? Who were preventing the access of evidence of which they were not quite sure?

I wrote a third time to the Secretary, referring to my repeated applications, and pointing out that, if