

THE CASTLECOMER ELECTION.

(Communicated).

Not for a long time has there been such excitement in Castlecomer as there was over the elections for County Councillor for this Division, and that the result was a popular one was shown by the celebrations that took place as soon as it was known that Mr. Prior-Wandesforde had won by the splendid majority of 140.

Mr. and Mrs. Prior-Wandesforde motored into Kilkenny early on Tuesday morning to attend the count, and received heartiest congratulations from all their friends in Kilkenny; all along the road on their return from Kilkenny they were met with cheers and waving of hands. In the meantime the result had reached Castlecomer, and the staff and estate labourers took a half holiday to celebrate the occasion. They and a large number of residents in Castlecomer, headed by Father Grant, met Mr. Wandesforde's car in the town and cheered him enthusiastically. Mr. Wandesforde, in a short speech, thanked the people for their hearty welcome and for their support in the election, stating that he would do all in his power to look after their interests and the interests of the division. Father Grant, in a few chosen words, conveyed the congratulations of the people to Mr. Wandesforde on his magnificent victory, and assured him that he had their regard and would always have their loyal support. In the evening a large bonfire was lit in the main street and the town was illuminated. The members of the fife and drum band turned out and marched to the Wandesforde mansion, where they played a fine selection of music, which was much appreciated. The bandmaster conveyed the congratulations of the band to Mr. Wandesforde, and after suitably replying, Mr. Wandesforde proceeded to the fountain in the main street, where he was received with a great outburst of cheering by a very large gathering, which included some of the staff and men of the collieries. Mr. Wandesforde again made a short speech, thanking the people for their magnificent reception, and in the course of his remarks stated that now that the election was over he hoped everything would settle down quietly, and that no ill-feeling would remain; on his part the election had been carried on in a good-humoured way, and he hoped that he and his late opponent would be as good friends as they had been before the election. He also stated that the election had been carried on on purely non-political lines and that his election was not to be considered as a Unionist victory. He was an Irishman, and loved his country as much as anyone present, and when Home Rule became the law of the land he would do all in his power to make it a complete success.

Father Grant again conveyed the congratulations of the people to Mr. Wandesforde; also to Mrs. Wandesforde on her practically unanimous election to the District Council by the people of Moneenroe.

After further cheers for Mr. and Mrs. Wandesforde, and also for Canon O'Halloran, Fathers Power and Grant, the proceedings terminated.

Mr. Wandesforde stayed with the people for some time talking with them and watching the bonfire and illuminations.

There is no doubt whatever that Mr. Wandesforde's election to the county council is an immensely popular one, and he has the confidence of all classes and creeds.

Castlecomer, 17th June, 1914.
Sir—Owing to the resolutions which have been passed by public bodies in the county Kilkenny, as well as the comments which have been passed upon worthy Nationalists of Castlecomer District over the result of the recent election in which Mr. J. P. Fogarty, the Nationalist candidate, was defeated by Mr. Wandesforde, I feel called upon in defence of the reputation of the Parish of Castlecomer as a Nationalist centre to protest against my native parish being placed amongst parishes of Ireland that have reneged the national colour and gone to the enemies of Home Rule.

I say above board that Castlecomer Parish did its duty as a Nationalist centre in the recent election, notwithstanding the fact that two of its priests separated themselves from the olden reputation of Castlecomer's priesthood in matters of this kind, and showed an utter disregard for local sentiment and feeling as always displayed by Castlecomer parishioners and Nationalists. I feel proud that the men and women of Castlecomer Parish who stood loyal to the teaching of Father Aylward when the open voting was the rule of the day were still, through the action of their children, faithful to the grand old cause of Irish Nationality, and recorded their votes for the Nationalist candidate, Mr. J. P. Fogarty.

There were more parishes than Castlecomer concerned in the County Council contest, and let the other parishes concerned act for themselves. In these parishes I know there have been found the very best of Nationalist spirit, as displayed in the recent contest, a spirit of manhood and grit that withstood terrible forces, in several townlands, but they were not able to counterbalance the numbers that surrendered their independence to temptations of a nature that history will yet disclose, and the parties answerable for will have to give an account of.

Castlecomer is the chief centre of the district, but Castlecomer as an entity cannot be held blameable for the result of the recent election, though history will hand down to posterity the names of those who have been responsible for getting the fame of Castlecomer, as a Nationalist centre, stained as betrayers of the trust of the people and enemies of the national cause.

As one Castlecomer man who was prevented from taking any part in the recent election, owing to official status, I make my protest against my native town being saddled with the blame of the result of the poll, and I enter that protest so that when the history of all things in connection with the recent contest and the hatchings which took place in several camps before it was brought off are being recorded, Castlecomer Nationalists will not be charged as a whole for deserting the flag in the hour of danger.

The fight was not a fight of Mr. Fogarty against Mr. Wandesforde, but it was a fight of the National Organisation against an enemy of the National Organisation, and the National Organisation considered it purely and solely as that, and let those who were responsible for the reverse of the National Organisation, if they are Nationalists, reconcile their consciences with their action and their membership of the organisation, if they still wish to pose before their fellow-countrymen as supporters of the Home Rule movement.

An open enemy is always better than a false friend, and false friends of the national cause have been found too plentiful in some importations to Castlecomer.—Yours very truly,

Denis O'Carroll.

A CALL TO NATIONALISTS.TESTIMONIAL TO MR. J. P. FOGARTY,
NATIONAL DIRECTOR, CASTLECOMER.

Fellow Nationalists—At the unanimous request of a specially convened meeting of the United Irish League of Castlecomer, Mr. John P. Fogarty, National Director, submitted himself as a candidate for re-election on the Co. Council for his native division of the county. There was no talk of any opposition being given to him before that meeting, or for some time afterwards, and until he went, in the ordinary course, to the President of the Castlecomer U.I.L., to have him act as his proposer (as was always the custom in Castlecomer) he did not know that opposition was to come from the local landlord and mine owner, Mr. R. H. Prior Wandesforde, who is a pronounced Unionist.

Not only did the President of the League decline to nominate Mr. Fogarty, but he took up the candidature of Mr. Wandesforde, proposed him and canvassed and addressed meetings for him in Castlecomer and Clogh Parishes.

All of you who know the circumstances of the position in Castlecomer, can understand the hard struggle which Mr. Fogarty had to contend with to secure victory for the National cause. Mr. Fogarty fought the fight with all the vigour in his power, and kept the issue always plain to the voters' eyes—the real issue that was at stake—but his opponents shirked that issue, and used their influence to keep it in the background, and with the result that the National cause being made subservient to personal ambitions, Mr. Wandesforde won.

Mr. Fogarty during his whole life has given his best to the National movement, not only in County Kilkenny, but wherever his services were requisitioned. He has been for over ten years the representative of the United Irish League as National Director. He filled the position of County Councillor for over nine years, and always attended to the wants of the ratepayers. The prosecution of this fight against the enemy of the National cause, has placed him under considerable expenses, and we consider this is a matter which should not be let remain as it is, and we appeal to the Nationalists of County Kilkenny and neighbouring counties to join with us in opening a Fund which will recoup Mr. Fogarty his expenses, and let his opponents see that we thoroughly appreciate his work for Ireland, and that as Home Rulers and opponents of Unionism, we will not let a brother Nationalist be victimised for his spirited defence of the National cause.

Subscriptions will be thankfully received by any of the undersigned and duly acknowledged.

Faithfully yours,

Cornelius Brennan, Castlecomer;
John Hughes, J.P., Wallslough;
John Grace, Freshford;
John J. McGrath, J.P., Bootstown, Freshford;
Edwd Callanan, Callan;
J. Quinn, Castlecomer;
Thomas Bergin, do.;
Thomas Collins, do.