

Kilkenny People June 3rd 1916

Neath the Shadow (GAA)

Apologies, for the non-appearance of these notes are due, and, are hereby tendered to my readers. Gaels can readily understand the reason. Since any last Gaelic notes appeared we have passed through a trying time. Things have happened on which it is not good for one to dwell, and which, had I so wished, a rigid censorship would prevent my dealing with in these columns. For some weeks past we have been 'neath the shadow of martial law. Things Gaelic have been banned, all our meetings proclaimed; British rifles have been substituted for , hurleys, and for the nonce the clash of the caman has been stilled. As in other parts of Ireland we have had an enforced holiday, and Gaelic matters have been at a standstill. The prospects here in Kilkenny do not look bright for the coming year. Here in Kilkenny we have not yet finished our championships, and of course the holding of our annual convention must of necessity be further postponed. In connection with the Thomastown Bazaar a match has been arranged- and will take place between Tullaroan and Mooncoin. The contest is arousing a good deal of interest and should be worth travelling to see

THE G.A.A. AND POLITICS

In the course of the evidence given before the Rebellion Commission a series of allegations were made, particularly by Sir Matthew Nathan, the Under-Secretary; with regard to the G.A.A. and politics. A Galway police Inspector, also thought that the G.A.A. used their sports meetings for political meetings too.' The governing body of the Association met specially on Sunday last in Croke Park, Dublin, when the Secretary drew attention to the matter, and after discussion it was decided to issue the following statement: —

The position of the G.A.A. in relation to politics is clearly defined in the following rule, which, as far as the Governing Body knows, has been stringently, acted upon:—The G.A.A. shall be a strictly non-political and non-sectarian Association. . No political questions of any kind shall be raised at any of its meetings, and neither Central Council, Provincial Councils, County Committees nor Clubs, shall take part as such in any political movement.'

The Central Council, therefore, gives an unqualified denial to the statement of Sir Matthew Nathan that the G.A.A. signed a manifesto on the eve of the Prime Minister's visit to Dublin in September, 1914. The Central Council goes further, and states, without any qualification or reservation whatever, that neither directly nor indirectly had the G.A.A. any connection with such opposition to the Prime Minister's visit as was displayed,

Since the G.A.A. is non-political, it follows that the members thereof are at perfect liberty to join any political organisation they may choose to be identified with, and hence the Central Council finds that many members of the Association are attached to the United Irish League, All-for-Ireland League, Irish Volunteers, National Volunteers, and various other National Associations. The statements, therefore, that the G.A.A. has been used in furtherance of the objects of the Irish Volunteers are as untrue as they are unjust. -

It is perfectly inaccurate to say that police and military are not admitted to gatherings under the rules of the G.A. Association. They have always been admitted to all such gatherings provided they were prepared to, pay the fee charged to the general public.

The Central Council strongly protests against the misrepresentation of the aims and objects of the G.A.A. as tendered to the Commissioners by Sir M. Nathan and other witnesses, and thinks that all such allegations should be accompanied by definite proofs.

A REASONABLE REQUEST.

The demand made by the Central Council is certainly a reasonable one. According to any and every law, a man is deemed innocent until he is proved guilty. So also with an association or organisation, and it only common justice to expect that before the G.A.A. is condemned definite proof as to its guilt should, as the Central Council asks, accompany the allegations.

IN CORK.

By the casting vote of the Chairman, the Cork G.A.A. County Board on Tuesday night declined to ask the County Inspector R.I.C. for permission to start hurling and football matches, Mr. Sullivan saying that the flower of the Association were in English gaols. It was decided to ask the Chairman for an explanation of his refusal to allow a resolution, passed at a previous meeting protesting against Sir Matthew Nathan's evidence about the G.A.A. to be forwarded to the Commission, and the Secretary said he had asked the Central Council to take action.