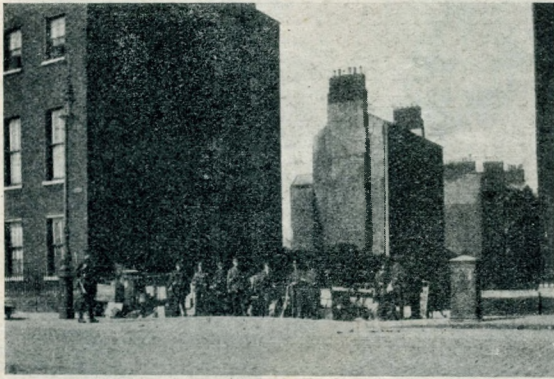


THE LOOTERS.

The looters were mostly young lads and women, although there was a sprinkling of men amongst them. It was curious to observe the different demeanour of the men and women looters. The men did their looting in a furtive, hang-dog way and cleared off the moment they had as much booty as they could carry.



The barricade across Holles street, Merrion square, which proved of use to the military later on.

The women flaunted their spoil: they seemed to be totally without shame or any remnant of moral sense; to have thrown off the conventional trammels of civilization and to have relapsed in an instant into the savage state. Moreover, the looters were by no means confined to the submerged slum population. A remarkable proportion were well dressed and belonged to the wage-earning working class, or perhaps to classes still more "respectable." The shops which came in for the most attention were boot shops, drapery establishments, tobacconists and sweet shops, in which almost invariably the goods were temptingly displayed in the windows without any shutters or blind. In very few cases was there any looting for food, and those only late in the week.

In Sackville-street on Wednesday evening the scene was of the weirdest description. An immense crowd of sightseers was promenading up and down the centre of the street under a blaze of electric light. All along the east side of the street the looters were working with frenzied energy. Every now and then the shouts from the shops would be drowned by the crash of glass as another window was hammered in. At the Earl-street corner, Noblett's sweet shop, which had been looted the day before, was empty save for one thin-faced, unwholesome-looking youth who was working furiously to remove the brass handle from the door. What on earth will he do with it when he gets it? Further on a little girl of twelve or so is tottering under the weight of a huge circular office chair. A passer-by knocks

against it and is rewarded with a string of the most appalling blasphemy. A fresh-faced youth is crossing the street with an armful of boots. He is brandishing a pair of white satin shoes and shouting hysterically "God save Ireland."

Meanwhile the crowd move up and down in the centre, silent, dejected, and disapproving, but no one of them interferes by word or deed, while dominating all on the other side of the street is the sinister menace of the Sinn Fein fortress with barricaded windows and levelled guns.

On Wednesday the Brunswick-street and Westland-row neighbourhood saw a repetition of the scenes of Sackville-street. I saw one of the priests of the Westland-row Church make a valiant effort to save some of the shops opposite the station; but it was quite useless; the crowd had got far beyond the control of moral suasion. The mob here, as everywhere, was quite good-tempered, but of course they had everything their own way. As I listened to the jokes and chaff of the looters I could not help thinking of the delighted purring of a cat who has just captured a mouse, and how easily a little opposition would turn her into a spitting fury. There was no want of ludicrous incidents. As I came round from Brunswick-street into Westland-row I met a tall old man, I should say of eighty, with a very long white beard and a most patriarchal appearance; he was supporting himself with a stick in his right hand, and under his left arm he was carrying home a large glass cylinder full of coloured sweets, obviously from the looted sweet-shop in Westland-row. I hope he didn't make himself sick.



A silhouette of Sackville street from the end of Westmoreland street.

On Thursday morning the top of Grafton-street was the scene of operations. During the night of Wednesday the corner sweet-shop was raided, but on Thursday morning, shortly

after eight o'clock, as I was passing through, the work was being started methodically and in real earnest. I found afterwards, however, that the looters were unable to get further down the street than Knowles' fruit-shop. The street here makes a bend which brings it within view of the roof of Trinity College, and I was told that a rifle volley definitely put an end to the industry as far as Grafton-street was concerned.

On the same Thursday I think the most impudent looting that I observed took place in Dorset-street, on the North side, where Baker's, a very extensive drapery establishment, was looted in broad daylight. In all the other cases the loot was carried away, one could not tell where; here one could see where it went. Of course there were raiding parties from Hill-street and the neighbouring slums; but the bulk of the stuff went into the houses beside the shop. Hardwicke-street and the lanes off it got a good proportion, but I do not think there was a single one of the tenement houses in the crescent facing St. George's Church which was not stuffed full of Baker's goods. I doubt if the women in those houses ever worked so hard before in their lives. In the middle of the proceedings Father Dempsey, of Berkeley-road Church, arrived on the scene. Father Dempsey is a big man, and on this occasion an angry man, a fact which he made no attempt to conceal. In about five minutes the women were flying helter-skelter, abandoning their booty. About a dozen young

lads, most of whom had been looting enthusiastically the moment before, were converted in an instant into equally enthusiastic defenders of law and order. They collected the stolen goods off the street and threw them back into the house, and collected loose timber and made a sort of barricade to the windows. I shall never forget the ludicrous face of pain and bewilderment of one old harpy in a cape covered with black beads. She was returning for more spoil, and was making her way through the window, evidently unaware of the fresh development, when she was received by one of the youthful defenders with a jab on the face from the end of a curtain pole. Then she looked round and saw the priest and fled incontinently, amid the laughter of the crowd. It looked as if the place was saved, but I had my doubts. The priest obviously could not stay there all night, the boys would soon get tired of their new amusement, the barricade was flimsy, and above all I observed that a stout young woman at the upper window, with a broad, rather good-humoured face, who had been showering down parcels of goods on to the street, and who was obviously hugely enjoying her role of Lady Bountiful, made no attempt to leave her post, but sat fanning herself with some broad white feathers and waiting for the fun to begin again. Next morning I passed the shop again. It was cleared out, lock, stock and barrel. They had even stolen the timber of the boys' barricade.

VIEWS FROM THE TOP OF NELSON'S PILLAR.



ON THE SUMMIT OF THE PILLAR.



LOOKING OVER THE RUINS OF CLERY'S
TOWARDS THE CUSTOM HOUSE.