**Casement letter to Father Murnane**

**16 July 1916**

**NLI 14,100 (very neat manuscript copy)**

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**Extract in Gwynn**

No. 1270

Pentonville Prison,

16th July, 1916

My dear Father Murnane,

I got your letter of 8th July; it came to me just after your visit. For both I thank you warmly – the visit and the letter – I know not how to thank you indeed for your affection and thought for me – and for your prayers for me. I have not been so happy of late in my mind, or in my spirit, as I was – doubts and perplexities assail me and leave me troubled – troubled always at myself and my own imperfect understanding. There are times when I feel that my doubts are settled and then they revive and I cannot say what motive actuates me. It is very hard to be sure of one's convictions – to be certain always one is convinced – I thought I was – and today and yesterday I am not sure – and questions come to me, from myself, that I find no answer to. The trouble is – am I convinced? Or do I only think I am? Am I moved by love or fear? I can only accept, in my soul, from love – never from fear – and part of the appeal seems, at times, to be my fear – the more I read the more confused I get – and it is not reading I want, but companionship. I am sure you understand.

And then I don't want to jump – or rush – or do anything hastily just because time is short.

It must be my deliberate act – unwavering and confirmed by all my intelligence. And, alas! to–day it is not so. It is still, I find, only my heart that prompts, from love, from affection for others, from association of ideas and ideals, and not yet from my full intellect. For if it were thus the doubts would not beset me so vigorously as they do. I am not on a rock, but on a bed of thorns. I will not say any more to you in a letter – you must continue to help me, as you have done in the way you wrote?? of and in the way you say so many more are doing.

I return you the Fr. Provincial's letter and that of Fr. Gorman – with very many thanks for sending them to me to read.

I guessed that Fr. Gorman had been prohibited from again visiting me at the Tower – at the time. I was sure he would come if he could and when he did not come next day I knew quite well why.

I'm glad indeed to hear the news from Putumayo of the Fathers there. The Franciscans were loved in Peru of old, and it is a good thing to think of them there now in that dreary region, and I am glad for their sake. Once I grieved at it – and thought I was sending or asking for them to be sent out to bitter trial and disappointment – but it is not so – and they will see the fruit of their privations and of their self–sacrifice in the lives they save, and in the increase of life & happiness around them to replace the old dread and fear and mortal misery.

I am writing to Sydney [Parry] to–night too – I fear some of the books he so kindly sent me to Brixton have been lost there – one I know has – your three books – Aubrey de Vere and St. Augustine – I have here with me. I hope they may be returned to you later on – I cannot ensure it – for I can ensure nothing, and possess nothing – and can only leave the expression of a wish that they should go back to you.

To-morrow I go to the Appeal Court to hear my Counsel against the indictment – and I shall return here. That is the one thing I am sure of. However interesting from the point of view of “the history of treason law in this country” I anticipate no other interest than that of listening to the arguments, for and against, and coming back to the place I started from in the morning.

If I had Solon for an advocate the result I fancy would be the same – for we know that “the law is an ass” – and is always true to itself, let Solons state what they please.

Please read Grattan's indictment of “the law” in his Declaration of Irish Rights February 1782 – particularly in regard to – “that Leviathan of the Law” (Lord Coke) or the “luminary” Vaughan – He trounced the whole Bench, from the Middle Ages down, in a Phillipic that will warm your heart if you turn to his Speeches.

I was going to read it out in Court, but my eyesight failed! – it is in small print – and, besides, I felt sorry for the Jury! They had had enough – and their kindly faces deserved a change of scene, from that dreadful Court.

Goodbye, my dear friend – for such in truth you are – friend in the deepest sense and true sense – and I thank you with much affection for your intervention and all your loving effort in my behalf.

Yours affectionately

Roger Casement