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Hope for Ireland

Some shafts of light are breaking through the dark clouds hanging over Ireland. A very representative meeting of men who are described as "moderates" has been held in Dublin. The meeting included not only men who have long pleaded for a liberal scheme of Home Rule, but also many Unionists who in time past have resolutely opposed all Home Rule measures. These freely admit now—pity the admission did not come years ago—that some sort of Home Rule, some readjustment to give Ireland a large measure of self-government, is necessary to put an end to the present sad state of affairs. With that acknowledgment as a basis, they ask the British Government to co-operate in a new effort, through a representative convention of all classes of Irishmen, to prepare a Home Rule measure which will commend itself to Ireland and to the Empire. The Home Rule Act which is now on the statute book, and which was held in suspense on account of the war, is admitted by all to be no longer adapted to the Irish situation. Some other plan is necessary. The Government have brought forward a new bill, unquestionably an honest effort to deal with the problem, but one which finds small favor anywhere.

The existing law and the one proposed are alike condemned. Something else is required. What shall it be? The Sinn Fein leaders have no hesitation in answering the question. They declare that an independent Irish Republic is the only thing that will now satisfy Ireland. The moderates who assembled last week in Dublin frankly admit that such a settlement of the question is impossible. To persist in demanding an Irish Republic is to condemn Ireland and the Empire to a continuance of the present deplorable state of affairs. Rather than that the moderates are ready to recommend and support a measure that will give Ireland something like the Home Rule that the Dominions enjoy, in fact independence in all but a few things in which the safety of the Empire requires unity of action.

On such a ground almost all Irishmen who are not leaders of the Sinn Fein movement should be able to unite. These leaders will continue to say that nothing but an Irish Republic will meet the situation. But

it is by no means clear that, under the new conditions proposed, the mass of the Irish people will adhere to Sinn Fein. When it is made clear that all parties are willing to give Ireland such a liberal measure of Home Rule as the Dublin moderates suggest, it is more than probable that many of the Irish Catholic clergy will advise acceptance of such a measure and that their advice will be followed.

The Mennonites

When the Mennonites, a group of people whose views are much akin to those of the English Quakers, proposed many years ago to settle down in Manitoba, they asked exemption from military service, in accordance with their known objections to war. They received from the Canadian Government of that day an assurance that their convictions on that subject would be respected. This agreement has been fulfilled with regard to them and their children. Canada has kept faith with them. Recently they have desired something more. Manitoba, prolific in school questions, has required all her citizens to submit to the educational laws of the Province. Concessions loosely allowed to some groups of foreigners having produced trouble, the Government have been applying the general regulations more strictly than formerly; and particularly have required that all schools receiving public aid shall provide an efficient education in the English language. The Mennonites, who speak the German language, have desired German schools. The refusal of the Manitoba Government to recognize such schools is regarded by some of the Mennonite leaders as oppression, and they have been seeking for new fields in which they may have the liberty, as respects their schools, that is denied them in Manitoba. Several months ago it was announced that the Mennonites were preparing to remove in a body to the Southern United States, the State of Mississippi being particularly mentioned.

Many people who read the announcement must have wondered how any group of settlers of foreign origin could obtain greater privileges respecting education in any State of the American Union than in a Province of Canada. There are indications that the