

and Ireland, where, by the way, the distance is only some fifteen or sixteen miles. Well, stranger things have happened, and it may be that modern science is equal to the task, or possibly the advances in aviation may provide a solution of the difficulty. A nation which could afford to spend two hundred and fifty millions sterling on a Boer War need not shrink from facing a pretty heavy outlay to get rid of the Irish difficulty, if money would do it, and it is by no means a matter of indifference to us in Canada that it should be got rid of.

REPORTER. Do you not think the importance of the Irish vote in the United States was somewhat over-rated?

SIR RICHARD. By no means. In the first place, though the total number of persons born in Ireland who emigrated to the United States may not have been so very large (it was put down at 1,871,000 in the census of 1890), it must be remembered that the Irish are a very prolific race, far more so than the average American, at least in later years, and that the number of persons of Irish descent, or one of whose parents was Irish, is vastly greater than the above figures might seem to indicate. The exact number is hard to obtain, but I am inclined to think that the assertion that there are from seven to eight millions of persons, either of Irish blood or born in Ireland, now residing in the United States, is not an exaggeration. I have heard indeed that Mr. Gladstone on one occasion, referring to this very matter, observed that he did not mind Mr. Parnell so much when he only represented four millions, but when it came to his being spokesman for fourteen millions he had to be considered. Moreover, in the period from 1860 to 1870 the temper of the American people generally was embittered toward England by reason of her attitude during the Civil War. Incidentally, the old memories of the Revolution had been stirred up, and even in journals of high character it was very common at that time to see allusions to the way England had prosecuted the war of 1776-1784 by letting loose red savages on peaceable settlers and by importing hordes of Hessian mercenaries to subdue a free people