

"Another Irish Problem."

MR. KINSELLA'S OPINION.

Editor Evening Telegram

Dear Sir,—The message of March 8th from Dublin, Ireland, stating "that the Government has instituted an inquiry under the Crimes Act of 1887, regarding the relations of certain Irish banks with the Sinn Féiners; and that the object of the inquiry is to ascertain the amount and location of Sinn Féin funds, and especially, it is said, of recent large sums received from America," calls forward another Irish Problem that will prove of a certainty a tough one—it is not an impossible one—to solve on the part of the English Government. The Crimes Act of 1887 (the gist of it) decides that monies collected for the purpose of building up, or aiding, or financing Revolutionary cause may be seized by the Crown, and that persons or custodians (Banks) may be prosecuted for the holding of such monies. Here is a pretty tangle indeed, particularly in view of the fact that from all parts of America have come hundreds of thousands of pounds to aid the Sinn Féin movement in Ireland. American papers to hand tell of large contributions from the clergy and laity of America to this new Irish body, and in Brooklyn, N.Y., there was collected on a recent Sunday \$15,000 alone, a mere unit to the hundreds of thousands that has been and will be collected still. In an illustrated Toronto paper of date March 3rd, is shown an armored car guarding a Government Unit in a part of Galway, and the car is sippantly described as one which had done duty in the late war and had gotten its crop of Huns. When one considers that apart from Ireland herself who gave thousands of her best men to the Allies in the great war, the Colonials were largely made up of Irish descent, it supersedes Tragedy and becomes Comedy this consideration of the fact that a weapon, which had been thought necessary to bring to the destruction of the atrocious Attilian, should be turned on the Irishman in his home town. To the least discerning mind the trend of the latest Home Rule contortion (which it really is) is actually a clever effort on the part of the Premier and his convenient Government to draw up an Irish Constitution inimical to any future settlement of the Irish question. This very point was insisted on by Asquith in his successful canvass of Paisley, and he put it nicely when he declared that the present manner of settlement of the Irish question was to unsettle it. "Are we doing justice by Ireland?" asks Harold Begbie, in his book "The Lady next door" and goes on to examine the eternal misery of a broken people by every superannuated who may have the insignia of British Tammanyism. And now this last question and last problem arises "Will the contributing millions in America have their monies offered to the Sinn Féin Funds, seized?" That is the question? And it may raise another very serious issue to the now strained relationship existing between Britain and the United States; and the Peace Treaty. In the Senate at Washington recently whilst the question of the position of America in the League of Nations was being discussed, one of the Senators called out "What about Ireland?" and a cheer that would have delighted the heart of Washington himself, had he been there to hear, was raised, proving, if nothing else, that a straw does show how the wind blows. It is not impossible, it is not hard, to make of at first a small question an international one, let the interests of the people be an issue and the matter becomes a grave one. The French Revolution sprung (indirectly) from a vulgar Butcher, and the Thirty Years War from a thought. Recent troubles in Ireland prove that the country is not to be undemonstrative in its oppression, and there is no Legislation ever formed that can intimidate a whole people; if they fear not even Death in the espousal of a cause. 'Tis a hopeless Law, one that seeks to punish a Nation for a Nation's plea; for it is utterly impossible to down the heart's demand signed by blood and slavery,

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and sacrifice and death. Prime Ministers have ruled and have passed away. Governments have administered their little sway of power, parties and peoples have gone from the arena carrying their honors and their deeds from ken, if History does not give a line or two to mark the epoch in which they lived. But the Irish Question goes on forever. Renewed oppression means renewed rebellion; the people will not submit. That is the quintessence. Today, out of the four counties of Ireland, three are solid Sinn Féin. Munster, Leinster and Connaught are supporting the Sinn Féin movement, and never since the day when Young Ireland stepped into the breach and from the Phoenix-like spirit of the old Agitators formed a new defensive, has there been such a universal and determined force recognized. Let the

Government call it the spirit of Rebellion; the act of Treason; open revolt against the Commonwealth; political disturbance, or what it will; there it is, and if it is a truth that "The voice of the people is the voice of God" then the voice of God is heard in Ireland to-day—loud and insistent. Is it known by many of my readers that as the "Wearin' of the Green" was forbidden to be sung in Ireland during the years of from 1798 to 1807, another chant is to-day prohibited by law. This is called "The Soldier's Song"—a song which the Sinn Féin have made a National air; and which in its reading has nothing more objectionable in it than is to be found in the French Marseillaise. The words run thus.

"In valley green, on towering crag,
Our fathers fought before us;

And conquered 'neath the same old flag
That's proudly floating o'er us.
We're children of a fighting race,
Who never yet have known disgrace,
And as we march the foe to face
We'll chant a Soldier's Song.

Chorus.
Soldiers are we, whose lives are pledged
To Ireland,
Some have come from the land beyond the wave,
Sworn to be free, no more our ancient
Shall shelter the despot or the slave;
To-night we'll man the Barne Weal
In Erin's cause, come woe or weal,
Mid cannons' roar and rifles peal
We'll chant a Soldier's Song.

This song is being sung all over Ireland to-day, and if those who chant it are to be incarcerated, then it will be necessary to send over the whole British Constabulary (including Scot-

land and Wales) to handle the Minstrels.

Remembering it all then, one feels like putting the terse question to Mr. John Bull. "What are you going to do about it John? and if figures count for anything, and if hard facts in the synonymy of the Irish situation as it is to-day seeks to amaze (as they assuredly do) then our John in his House of Commons should be very wary, and besides instituting an inquiry regarding the amount and location of Sinn Féin funds, he should feel the "Irish-American" pulse that may not remain normal when the source of the inquiry is found out. Thanking you for space Mr. Editor,

I remain very truly,
P. J. KINSELLA.
St. John's, March 10th, 1920.

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