

## IRELAND'S DEBT TO JOHN REDMOND.

OWING to the War it was judged inappropriate to hold the Annual Banquet on St. Patrick's night, 1918, but an informal Supper was held in the Green Lantern. In response to the toast of "Ireland" the following speech was delivered by Professor H. L. Stewart, 1st Assistant Vice-President

*Mr. Vice-President, Your Honour, and Gentlemen of the Charitable Irish Society:*

Irishmen abroad, who rise tonight to respond to the national toast, will differ very widely from one another in the sentiments which they will think it fitting to express, in the estimates which they will think it right to offer regarding their country's present situation, and in the forecast which they will think it reasonable to indulge about what the future holds in store. Someone may remark that this is nothing new, that such divergence in feeling, in judgment and in outlook has been characteristic of men of our race at all times, and that the most bewildering crisis in our affairs can hardly any further confound the long-standing confusion. I remember some years ago, during a general election, that the walls of a certain English town where the Irish vote is strong were inscribed every here and there with the legend "God save Ireland." During the night some wag amended this by prefixing the word "Can" and adding a mark of interrogation, so that as the voters went down next day to their business they were confronted everywhere with the startling and somewhat impious interrogatory, "*Can* God save Ireland?" The newspapers took up the question, dwelt upon the ceaseless quarrels of Irishmen with one another, and asked whether the balm of Gilead itself could minister either solace or healing to a people so torn by internal strife, so resistant against every reconciling hand.

If I were addressing an audience of such unkindly critics, I should try to show a different aspect of this picture. I should ask whether it is not a fact that a charge at least equally frequent is the charge of clannishness, whether we are not reproached just as often because we stand together as a solid block for merely Irish interests, whether our countrymen in Boston and New York and Chicago are not accused of an unscrupulous racial solidarity which has won for them a political influence quite out of proportion to their numbers. I should ask whether this does not indicate a deep-seated underlying harmony of which the differences are a mere ripple on the surface, a harmony of