

A PLEA TO THE JURISDICTION.

I would even go further, and say that no Sinn Feiner would be in the smallest degree influenced by a verdict of guilty, even after an open trial at Bar conducted in accordance with all the great traditions which attend the administration of justice in England. It is part of the Sinn Fein creed that *quoad* Ireland, England is a foreign country. Roger Casement, when on his trial for high treason two years ago, refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the court which tried him. His successors would undoubtedly do the same. In all the circumstances the Executive are undoubtedly adopting the wisest course.

We have at various times had occasion in these columns to call attention to the employment of judges on work outside their proper sphere. The objections we have expressed have naturally had less weight during the war, when judges have been doing outside work of a quasi-judicial character; such, for instance, as the work of Lord Justice Pickford on the Dardanelles Commission, and the work of Younger and Atkin, JJ., on the Internment Commission; and notably, too, the work of Mr. Justice Younger in connection with the exchange and treatment of prisoners of war. But these are tasks which, speaking generally, have had no direct political effect; though the Mesopotamia Commission, which was appointed at the same time as the Dardanelles Commission, led to the retirement of Mr. Austen Chamberlain, and it is impossible to foretell what result such inquiries may have; and, of course, political effects may follow on an ordinary judicial investigation, such as the retirement of Mr. Mundella from the Presidency of the Board of Trade in 1894 in consequence of the remarks of Vaughan Williams, J., in the *New Zealand Trust and Loan Co.'s case*. But it would have been a very different matter had the proposal to submit to a secret tribunal of two judges the issue as to the veracity of the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer raised by Major-General Maurice's letter to the press been accepted. That raised a political issue of the first importance, and we are glad that the proposal was withdrawn almost as soon as made.—*Solicitor's Journal*.