

IRELAND SINCE THE LARNE GUN-RUNNING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE
MacNeill's policy was to give a promise of soldiers for a promise of Home Rule, and actual soldiers for actual Home Rule.

John Redmond's offer that Ireland be entrusted with her own home defence, an offer with which the most advanced Sinn Feiners agreed, was refused by England. It was some six weeks after the War had been on, before the King signed the Home Rule Act, but it was immediately held up by a suspending Bill.

Consider now the position of the Irish nation in September 1914. Her position before the War was tragic enough. She had been on the eve of obtaining legislative autonomy and was thwarted of her right by the armed defiance of a section of her own people; for Orangemen are Irishmen.

Official figures have never been given showing Ireland's total military contribution to the War. The official number of recruits accepted for the Army was 135,069. This does not include those who joined the navy, nor does it include the reservists who joined up when War was declared, nor the Irish regular soldiers who were already in the army at the outbreak of War.

There are some who belittle Ireland's war effort. To my mind, it is not merely wonderful, it is unparalleled in the history of the world. I know of no other instances in the history of Europe, where our 100,000 men of the subject race volunteered to fight for their own conqueror, because he was engaged in a just war.

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It would be superhuman for the whole Irish race to have maintained this unselfish martyrdom for five years. To begin with, a considerable section of the Irish nation, the Unionists, were never called upon to play the role, as they fought for their friend and for a continuation of their own ascendancy.

I knew Patrick Pearse and six years since I first met him at the Connacht Fels in Galway. For years I read his inspiring editorials in Irish and English in the Claidheamh Soluis. That was before he covered politics. He was one of the noblest and most idealistic teachers this century has produced. His charm can best be seen in Iosagain, a volume of Irish tales, which are a proof that Irish literature can be written even by some who learn Irish when they are already adults.

Carson's adoption of physical force changed the patriotic teacher into the revolutionist. Just missed seeing Pearse in Dublin in August 1914. He wrote me that he had left for the West. A fortnight later I learned that in the very first month of the War he favored setting Dublin Castle as an act of national self-assertion. He was so engrossed with Ireland's national wrongs that he failed to read the international situation aught.

IRISH AND ULSTER VOLUNTEERS

The Sinn Feiners said: "No. We are under no obligation to England, till England fulfils her obligations to us." Redmond and the Nationalists judged differently. The Allied cause was just. Therefore Ireland must fight for it. Ireland thus began to fight for her own enemy, against the enemy of Europe.

Pearse made the streets of Dublin red with blood, first because he considered that constitutional agitation would at most obtain for Ireland a provincial status; secondly, because he saw it cheated even of this fruit by the armed resistance of Carson's volunteers; and thirdly, because he believed that the only way to convince his own country (and the world) that Ireland must have all the rights of a sovereign nation, was to proclaim and establish an Irish Republic.

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IRELAND'S WAR EFFORT UNPARALLELED

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SOME HUMAN NATURE IN IRISHMEN

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KNOW PATRICK PEARSE

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SINN FEIN AS A POLITICAL FACTOR

To provide an atmosphere of goodwill the Government released June 17, 1917 all the Rebellion prisoners. The leader of these, a young Irish-speaking schoolmaster, Eamonn de Valera, presented himself as the Republican candidate in Clare, to fill the vacancy caused by the death in action of Major Willie Redmond.

MORAL EFFECT OF IDEALIST'S REBELLION

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CONVENTION IN SESSION

Meanwhile the Government's Irish Convention had been sitting. Practically all interests in Ireland, except Sinn Fein, were therein represented. It opened in Trinity College on July 25, 1917, and began by electing Sir Horace Plunkett as Chairman. The Southern Unionists agreed to a modified form of Home Rule for the whole of Ireland, but the Ulster Unionists refused all overtures from their fellow-Irishmen, even scoring to accept the proposal of the leading Protestant in Ireland, the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, who advocated the Canadian plan of both federal and provincial parliaments.

NATIONALISM OUT OF TOUCH WITH IRELAND

The Nationalist Party, which before Easter week had been willing to postpone a settlement of the Irish question till after the War, believing that the Government of Ireland Act of 1914 and Ireland's 100,000 Catholic soldiers were a sufficient guarantee that she would get national autonomy, now realized that the nation did not approve of this one-sided bargain, but rather demanded a delivery of the goods.

REPORT OF CONVENTION WASTE PAPER TO LLOYD GEORGE

The report of the Irish Convention, a very valuable document, was finally laid on the table of the House of Commons on April 7. It was found that the fundamental proposition, establishing an Irish Parliament, consisting of King, Irish Senate, and Irish House of Commons, was agreed to by all except the Ulster Unionists. Lloyd George, without reading the report, announced to the House of Commons: "That the majority was not such as to justify the Government in saying that it represents the Government's agreement. Therefore, the Government will take the responsibility of submitting to Parliament such proposals for the establishment of self-government in Ireland as they thought just."

STATEMENTS WORTH RECALLING

One written statement of Lloyd George to the chairman of the Irish Convention is worth recording, as it contains in advance his present partition bill. "The only hope of agreement," he wrote on 25th February, 1918, "lies in a solution which provides for the unity of Ireland under a single Legislature with adequate safeguards."

THE IRISH CONVENTION

The Government put forward as an alternative proposition a Convention of Irishmen to draft a scheme of Irish self-government. A new chapter in contemporary Irish history now began. By granting this Irish Convention, England thereby admitted Ireland's right to self-determination. Sinn Fein immediately demanded that the instrument of self-determination be adequate, namely that the Convention be free to choose complete independence if it wished, that the English Government pledge itself to the United States and the Powers to ratify the decision of the majority of the Convention, and that the Convention consist of none but persons freely elected by adult suffrage in Ireland. All their demands were refused, so Sinn Fein refused to recognize the Convention.

RESISTANCE TO CONSCRIPTION SPIRITED AND DETERMINED

His promise of some vague form of Home Rule at some future date was received with derisive incredulity. His attempt to conscribe Ireland met with the same opposition in that country which a similar proposal on the part of the British Parliament would have met in Canada, Australia or South Africa. The Military Service Act, nevertheless, was passed on April 15, and the Nationalist Party left Westminster. The menace of Conscription drew together all Irish parties, except the Unionists. A convention of leaders was called for April 18 at the Mansion House by the Lord Mayor of Dublin. After consulting with the Irish Bishops, who were holding a meeting the same day at Maynooth, the Mansion House Conference issued the following declaration: "Taking our stand on Ireland's separate and distinct nationhood, and affirming the principle of liberty, that the Governments of nations derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, we deny the right of any external authority to impose compulsory military service in Ireland against the clearly expressed will of the Irish people."

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RESISTANCE JUSTIFIED

Looking at the Conscription question at this distance of time and space it is hard not to justify Ireland's resistance. I was in the British House of Commons when it was introduced, and I felt that a greater blow had been struck at the British Empire by this action of Lloyd George and his Tories than by the German defence of the world. The whole of Ireland except North East Ulster and the Belfast-Dublin railway line.

BOHEMIA—A PARALLEL

I will conclude this sketch of Ireland's political history since the armed Orangemen successfully defied the British Parliament six years ago at Larne, with a comparison with Bohemia. Austria united the crown of Bohemia to hers in 1526. Henry VIII assumed the title of King of Ireland in 1541. Just as there were English colonists in Ireland before Henry VIII's time, so there were German colonists in Bohemia before the battle of Mohacz. There was this difference, however, in the early sixteenth century, in nineteenth century Ireland the Norman, Welsh, Saxon and English colonists had been absorbed into the

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into the recent Irish Municipal elections gave Derry, the second Orange capital, a Sinn Fein mayor. Ulster, apart from the city of Belfast, is in majority Catholic and anti-Unionist. In the so-called six county areas, four of those counties with Derry City have combined a Nationalist or anti-Unionist majority. To maintain an Ascendancy there "No Catholic need apply" the old wicked maxim—Divide and Rule—is to be applied to Ireland.

LLOYD GEORGE'S MOTIVE

This is the motive behind Lloyd George's partition bill. This carving out of Ireland a country which may be called "Carsonshire" gives to this Carsonshire and to the truncated body of Ireland petty provincial parliaments and demands that this divided Ireland pay as an annual tribute to the Imperial master eighty-seven million dollars. That Britain may be sure of getting this toll, she herself holds control of Ireland's Customs, Excise and Income Taxes. Needless to say, the vivisectioned Ireland will not be allowed to have a Militia. If she had soldiers of her own, as had every other nation under the sun, she might be unreasonable enough to insist on enjoying all the rights of a free nation. Ireland is not even to have the privilege of saying where the surgeon's knife will enter her body. Two counties, Tyrone and Fermanagh, and the borough of Derry, which have a Nationalist or Sinn Fein majority, are against the will of both the nation and of the local majority, to be added to Carson's pound of flesh. Armagh, the Sea of St. Patrick, will no longer be in Ireland. The vivisection will cut the heart from the body of the nation. A purely illusory means of reunion is proposed. These English Solomons want actually to divide the living Irish child into two and wish the world to admire them for their wise partition.

PARTITION OF NATIONS AND DISRUPTION OF EMPIRES

The world remembers the partition of Poland; the world remembers that the three strongest Empires on the Continent of Europe, as three imperial eagles or vultures, fed on the prostrate body of Poland for a century and a half; and the world remembers that less than two years ago these three Empires were broken to pieces and the once partitioned Poland resurrected into a sovereign nation. It is some satisfaction to note, however, that the future rulers of England, the Labor party, reproduce this proposed crime of the Coalition Tories. This proposed partition which Bonar Law complacently calls Home Rule, is a much greater denial of Irish nationality than is the present Union. For the Union while it puts the Irish Nation under the control of England, nevertheless recognizes the existence of the nation it subjects. The King is sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland, that is of two nations. The Irish nation he rules through a Viceroy through an Irish Executive Government and an Irish Privy Council. All the local Government boards and departments, whether under popular or under government control—are national. Dublin Castle itself is a proof of Irish nationality, for only a nation can be a subject nation. Even the 87 coercion acts of the nineteenth century bear witness that the island of Ireland is one nation. Ireland is not merely one administrative unit, she is also one judicial unit, with her own national judiciary, under an Irish Lord Chancellor. This judiciary is of course appointed by the conquerors. The educational system, from the Irish National Schools to the Irish National University, is again a recognition of the nation it was originally intended to denationalise. The Churches of Ireland, both Catholic and Protestant, the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterians, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and the Irish Catholic bishops unite in National Synods. I make no appeal to the geographical or the historical arguments which are conclusive in favor of Ireland a nation. Only contemporary history concerns me tonight. I maintain that the very machinery of the Union recognizes one national unit. To prevent that nation from ever enjoying the political rights of a nation, England is now engaged in partitioning Ireland. She forgets that she cannot hurt Ireland without hurting herself. She forgets that the history of Europe since 1918 shows that the partition of nations usually ends in the disruption of Empires. For nations survive empires. Empires were made by men, but nations by God. There is room both for England and for Ireland in the world. Each has her cultural mission to perform, and neither can perform hers fully unless both be friends.

GENERAL SMUTS' PROPHECY

I will conclude this comparison with the words of the greatest Dominion statesman in the British Empire, one of the really constructive forces at the Peace Conference, Lt-General Jan Christian Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa:

SUPPORT IRELAND'S JUST DEMAND

I appeal to all who care for the British Empire, to all who support democracy and hate ascendancy, to all who cherish patriotism and love liberty, to support the just, national demand of undivided Ireland for a government of her own choice. For Mr. Chairman, it is imperative that the present cruel martial law in Ireland with the unlawful reprisals it provokes should forthwith cease. It is imperative, not merely for the sake of Ireland, not merely for the sake of England, not merely for the sake of the British Empire, but also for the sake of the whole League of civilized Nations. For "No flags are fair, if Freedom's flag be furled."

THE WHOLE OF THE HUMAN BROTHERHOOD SUFFERS FROM A WRONG DONE TO ANY MEMBER.

The whole of the human brotherhood suffers from a wrong done to any member. Christianity is not practised when brother hates or harms brother. May the saint who was chosen by God to be the greatest benefactor of the Irish race, our own glorious apostle St. Patrick, obtain of God, by his powerful intercession, peace and justice for the land he converted to Christ.

FRANCISCAN FATHER PILOTED BATTLESHIP

Birmingham, Jan. 31.—How an English Franciscan Father piloted a battleship was told a few days ago at a reunion of the Birmingham Catholics, when Father Alexius Calderbank returned to his parish, after serving as a naval chaplain during the War. Father Alexius was asked to undertake the duties of liaison officer with the French ships in an Allied squadron of British and French war vessels. During the fulfillment of this duty the squadron with which Father Alexius was serving was ordered to return to its base at Scapa Flow. When the squadron was off the north coast of Scotland foul weather set in, and the ships were separated. The French flag-ship when Father Alexius was serving got into difficulties, and the ship's navigators, not being familiar with the coast, which is very dangerous especially in rough weather, got out of their course, so that the ship was heading for a dangerous reef of rocks. Father Alexius had some knowledge of the coast, and he told the French commander of the imminent danger, and volunteered to pilot the ship into port. His offer was accepted, and acting under his orders and guidance the steersman got the vessel into harbor with perfect safety. For this remarkably capable and gallant achievement Father Alexius received the Cross of the Legion of Honor from the French Government, and was also mentioned in dispatches. Father Alexius is Guardian of the Franciscan Monastery at Olton, near Birmingham.

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