

Ireland Since the Larne Gun-running

FOREWORD

The selfishness, cant, hypocrisy, and humbug of the Governments of the Allied and victorious Powers are putting a severe strain on the loyalty of millions of men who did their full duty in their various spheres during the late War. To maintain that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, to protect small nationalities, to establish the supremacy of Right over Might and Brute Force created and sustained that marvellous spirit which, persevering through trials indescribable and woes unutterable, finally drove the armies of Germany to irretrievable defeat. Have the results of victory verified or vindicated our lofty principles? The shame of Shantung, and the theft of liberty from Persia and Egypt, the crucifixion of Armenia, the anchoring of the Turk on the Bosphorus, and the enslavement of Ireland furnish only a partial though a most discreditable answer to the question. The Peace Conference of Versailles of 1919, sank immeasurably below the Congress of Vienna of 1815 in undisguised and indefensible trickery, dishonesty and deceit.

For many of us the case of Ireland is the worst. But, conceivably, that may be so only because blood is thicker than water. One thing, however, is certain. The disillusionment that has followed the War is engendering in many minds a new orientation of thought regarding the political fabric to which had been given the name of "British Commonwealth" and more lately, of "Community of British Nations". They have about come to the conclusion that all the high-sounding phrases which hurried them headlong into the World War were but hollow and shameless mockery, signifying nothing.

As that staunch Englishman Philip Gibbs, well says in his latest book, "Now It Can Be Told."—"Appeals for the rescue of 'the little nations' struck old chords of chivalry and sentiment—though with a strange lack of logic and sincerity, Irish demand for self-government was unheeded"; and, to talk of loving liberty is, "a blatant hypocrisy on the part of a nation which denied self-government to Ireland."