

pathy with Irish aspirations to wonder if the Irish people are equal to self-government. All of us who have believed in the natural humanity of the Irish character have been amazed at the cowardly, brutal and inhuman methods which have been adopted to force British statesmen to their knees and to humiliate and discredit Great Britain before other nations. Probably in Canada there is less active sympathy for the Home Rule movement than there was twenty-five or thirty years ago. There is evidence also that even in the United States the appeal for Ireland against Great Britain has become less effective for political purposes. The references of Cox and Harding to the Irish question in the recent Presidential contest were far milder than were those of James G. Blaine when he was among the chief spokesmen of the Republican party. When Hon. Edward Blake, a sincere and courageous Home Ruler, was leader of the Liberal party of Canada, he did not hesitate to make Home Rule for Ireland a direct issue in Canadian elections. Even Sir John Macdonald permitted a Home Rule resolution to be adopted by the Canadian Parliament and Sir Oliver Mowat followed his example in the Legislature of Ontario. One wonders if any political leader would now think it profitable to raise Home Rule as an issue in Canada. No faction in Ireland which demands an Irish Republic can command much sympathy in the Dominions while in other countries responsible statesmen recognize that Sinn Fein demands what Great Britain dare not concede.

The Republican leaders of the United States do not forget the conditions and the issues which gave birth to the party. They remember that the North fought a long and bloody war to hold the South and prevent the dismemberment of the Union. Mr. Lloyd George has not overlooked one of the supreme facts of American history nor has he hesitated to challenge the American people to pass judgment between himself and De Valera upon the evidence which their own teaching and example affords. It is still true, however, that in the Dominions and in Great Britain there is a stronger and more universal sentiment than has ever existed before in favour of the most generous measure of local self-government for Ireland. The only condition required is that the measure shall not be such as will merely pave the way to an Irish Republic and dismemberment of the United Kingdom. For organized reprisals against Sinn Fein there is and can be no justification but one does feel that among certain political groups in Great Britain there is a vigour and anger in denunciation of reprisals which is not so vehement in denouncing the cruelties, maimings and murders by which they were provoked. There are things which revolt human nature and produce a temper which cannot be controlled. In history there is a curious toleration for Ku Klux which drove the carpet-baggers out of the South and whose methods had a close likeness to reprisals in Ireland. But to reprisals which meet murder with murder no one would dare give his sanction.

The new Home Rule Act cannot be without effect. It is clear that Mr. Lloyd George will go far to establish peace and goodwill among the Irish people and despite all the excesses of Sinn Fein there is singular restraint and a flavour of compassion in Irish debates in the Imperial Parliament. Even the House of Lords reveals a new spirit. Possibly we may be nearer than we have ever been before to a united Ireland and a united Empire. In the speech from the Throne, dissolving Parliament a few weeks ago, the King expressed the hope that "this Act, the fruit of more than thirty years of ceaseless controversy, will finally bring about unity and friendship between all the peoples of my Kingdom".