

and even our religious discords. But let the Irish people realise this—that excuse for Irish misery can exist no longer. From now on the British Government will not be responsible. The responsibility will rest with ourselves. We have been fond of boasting through long generations that we were capable of self-government. Irishmen, the test has come. In heaven's name, let the Irish Nation realise fully

The Gravity of the New Responsibility that has come home to them. This is not the time for personal or local dissensions. This is not the time for mere party bitterness or sectarian rancor or political selfishness. We stand at the most solemn moment in the whole history of our country; and I say here to-day that the interest of Ireland as a whole must over-ride every other consideration if, indeed, we are to behave as sane men worthy of freedom. The claim has recently been made that because the victory has been won the machinery and the organisation that won the victory should now be discarded. I say a greater piece of political insanity was never suggested. The discipline and the unity of the Irish Party, the discipline and the unity of the National Organisation—that is the United Irish League—were never as necessary as they will be in the interval between now and the assembling of the Irish Parliament, and if that interval is not to be turned into a period of dissension, confusion, and chaos, with every local and personal issue bitterly contested to the grave injury of Ireland—if this is not to happen, then the power of the National Organisation must be maintained. Attacks have recently been made upon the system of holding conventions for the selection of Nationalist candidates, so as to prevent purely personal and local issues interfering with the progress of the National cause. I say here to-day that no part of the National Organisation is so essential as this system of conventions. Of course if a constituency is not organised, if the representative men are so apathetic that they do not care to send delegates, if the clergy think it consistent with their duty not to attend the convention, then possibly the convention in such a case might be an unrepresentative one, but even then I say such a convention is better than none at all. The conventions, after all, remember, are a purely democratic piece of organisation. What would be thought of me if to-morrow I abandoned conventions and I went back to the old system of the time before conventions were established, and if I took upon my shoulders as Leader of the Nationalist Party the responsibility which Parnell took upon his shoulders before he was able to establish conventions? What would be thought of me if under these circumstances I abandoned conventions and myself nominated candidates for the various constituencies? No, when our Parliament is in actual being the whole face of politics will be changed. The present parties will naturally and certainly disappear. The present organisation will cease to exist, having done its work, but until that day comes, I say that any attempt to undermine the authority of the National Organisation, either by flouting the National leaders or by discrediting the system of Conventions is an act of absolute political folly, and almost a treason to Ireland. Now, fellow-countrymen, I have to announce that in the course of the next few weeks special meetings will be held of every divisional executive of the United Irish League in Ireland in order to perfect its organisation for the coming year, and so as to make sure that in any conventions which may have to be held in the immediate future, these conventions will be fully representative of the people. I have further to declare that, so far from abandoning the system of conventions, we will stand by that system. We will support the decisions of the conventions, and we will support these decisions with the full strength of the National Organisation and the National Party. Now, people of Munster, Mr. Redmond continued, every day that passes makes it clearer and more certain that the attitude adopted by your leaders

WITH REFERENCE TO THE WAR

is the attitude of the Irish nation. There are three reasons why that attitude is absolutely necessary. The

first is, that it is the only attitude consistent with the National honor of Ireland. I have been accused of propounding new policies and of making new declarations and departures. I have done nothing of the kind. I have made no new departures; I have announced no new policy. The policy which I announced in the name of Ireland was the policy of O'Connell, it was the policy of Butt, it was the policy of Parnell. Each one of these men declared with the approval of Ireland, in Parliament and out of Parliament, that in the concession of Home Rule to this country Ireland was willing to close the old chapter of wrong and of hatred, and to make a treaty of peace with England. If these men were lying, then the whole Home Rule claim for a century past has been in itself a lie and a fraud, and the whole Irish nation would be proved to have been engaged in a system of lying, trickery, and dishonor. I assert here to-day that since the great National Conference in the Rotunda under Butt in 1873 down to this very moment every Irish leader in this movement has declared over and over again what I declared in the House of Commons; and what I declare here to-day is the national policy of Ireland. What did Parnell say: 'If Home Rule,' he said, 'be carried into law, the Irish people will cheerfully accept all the duties and responsibilities assigned to them and will justly value the position they have won in the Imperial system.' And what, asked Mr. Redmond, was

My Particular Mandate

at the great convention held when the Home Rule Bill was introduced? The following resolution was unanimously and enthusiastically passed—

'That we welcome the Government of Ireland Bill as an honest and generous attempt to settle the long and disastrous quarrel between the British and Irish nations; that this National Convention of the Irish people decided to accept the Bill in the spirit in which it is offered; and we hereby declare our solemn conviction that the passage of this Bill into law will bind the people of Ireland to the people of Great Britain by a union infinitely closer than that which now exists, and by so doing will add immeasurably to the strength of the Empire.'

Well, that Home Rule Bill has passed into law. It is the Bill which we said we would accept as a treaty of peace; and if now, because England is supposed to be in danger, we had seized this moment to attempt to stab her in the back, and if now, when the test for men's souls has come, we went back on our pledges and promises for the last century, then I say we would inflict a deadly blow upon the honor of Ireland in the eyes of the whole world, and I personally—I, the man who was specially and particularly charged and commissioned in the name of Ireland in the most solemn way to give that assurance and promise to England—I, who, in pursuance of that campaign, did give that pledge on scores of occasions in the House of Commons and on hundreds of platforms throughout the country, with the consent and the approval of the whole National Party in Ireland—I personally would not have remained one single hour in public life

If Ireland Had Adopted so Dishonorable an Attitude as suggested by some people to-day. My position is this, the Home Rule Bill, the Home Rule Act, the Home Rule settlement is not, to use the Kaiser's words, 'a scrap of paper' to be torn up. This is a solemn treaty made between the people of Great Britain and the people of Ireland. I say that Ireland would cover herself with dishonor if, because danger looms on the horizon in England, she went back on her promise and her pledge. Now, the second reason I have to give is this, the merits of this war, our duty towards Belgium, our duty towards the other small nations of the world. Believe me the existence of the small nations of the world is at stake in this war. It is not a question of the fate of Belgium, or Serbia, or of Poland only. If Germany wins this war it would mean the end inevitably of the independence of Holland, of Denmark, and of Switzerland, and probably of every small nation in Europe. I ask is there to-day an Irishman living on

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