

IRISH NEWS

GENERAL.

In the House of Commons Mr. Bonar Law stated that 95 acceptances had been received to the invitation to attend the Irish Convention. The Labor representatives had been increased from five to seven.

The *Irish Weekly* (Belfast) says: "Sir George Reid's ponderous hostility to the Irish cause in the British House of Commons precludes the possibility of his figuring as a representative of Australian opinion during the remainder of his career."

Mr. Will Thorne, says "Clubman" in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, tells me that not only in Petrograd and in Moscow, but everywhere in his long journey on the battle front, he was asked what England was going to do with Ireland. Even in Russia, it appears, Home Rule has become a test question.

Under the heading "The Pope may Work for Irish Freedom," an American paper has the following: "Pope Benedict may throw the weight of his influence in the Irish situation, according to information from high Vatican authorities. Official expression was unobtainable, but it was reiterated that the Holy Father 'emphatically endorses the rights of small nations.' This expression gained significance as applying to Ireland from the announcement of the impending selection of Monsignor Cerretti, long a student of Irish and American affairs, as Papal Secretary of State for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical affairs."

Speaking at Skibberene recently, the Right Rev. Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Ross, said the decision which Irishmen would come to at the Convention would be a momentous one, for on it would depend for generations to come the happiness of the Irish race in Ireland and beyond the seas, and not improbably the course of civilisation itself among the white races. There were some who would prefer to postpone or prevent settlement, but surely the universal spirit of shedding worn-out shibboleths, and the readjusting one's point of view with the changes brought by the world war, would affect them also, and they would be drawn into the great current of sane, thoughtful, and patriotic Irishmen.

CARSON'S FAILURE.

Commenting on Carsonism, and the feelings of the nation in regard to the ineptitude of politicians in a rational settlement of Irish affairs, the *Daily News* says:—

"It is tired of that elderly lawyer, Sir Edward Carson, who has been made the 'Ruler of the King's Navy' by a monstrous concatenation of ironic ineptitudes. His ruling of the navy has not delivered us from the submarines or from the fear of famine. But for the sake of his beautiful eyes and his blank refusal to settle the Irish question, we are to be asked to stop our work and fight for each other at the polls. No, Sir Edward Carson, you are not worth it. They say you have got eighty votes. Very well. If you won't let Ireland get out of her misery, we invite the House of Commons to defy you and your eighty votes. What have you done for the British Empire that we should burn it down to roast your pigs?"

THE ULSTER SITUATION.

Lord MacDonnell, who was a former Under-Secretary for Ireland, commenting in the London *Sunday Times* on the comparatively narrow issue to which the question has now been reduced, says:—

"In these circumstances, the claim to exclusion was narrowed down until it was put forward only in behalf of the six counties in the North-East of Ireland. But even of these six counties two have large Nationalist majorities. Lord MacDonnell puts the facts briefly and clearly in these words: 'The position, then, is this:

If the six counties are excluded, a thoroughly unwelcome system of government will be imposed on 430,161 Catholics and Nationalists, while if only the four truly Unionist and Orange counties are excluded, an unwelcome system of Government will be imposed on only 179,113 Unionists and Orangemen. Will any impartial man hold that it is more consistent with British constitutional maxims or with any canon of fairplay to impose an unwelcome system of government upon the majority rather than on the minority?"

THE HUNS AND THE IRISH FISHERMEN.

The sinking of a number of fishing boats on the Irish coast and the threat that all the Irish fishing craft would be at the bottom of the sea before a month, and that villages on the Irish coast would soon be shelled are not exceptional signs of Teutonic brutality. To indulge in such cruelty is nothing new in the case of the Germans. It is horrible to really civilised people, but apparently they delight in it. They have thus aroused the anger of the whole world. Even the patient people of Spain are calling on their Government to show by active measures that they resent the outrages the Germans are inflicting on them. Apparently the Teutons, instead of being ashamed of their barbarism and inhumanity, are rather proud of them. When one of the Irish fishermen said that he thought the Germans professed friendliness towards the Irish, the reply of the commander of the submarine was, "My dear fellow, you do not know the Germans yet." The Germans have doubtless been much disappointed on finding that the Irish in the United States are loyally supporting their Government. But they will not improve matters in their own interest by sinking Irish fishing boats. The indignation to which expression has been given by the Baltimore skipper who has called the Germans the worst savages on earth will be felt by the Irish in every part of the United States.

FRANCE AND IRELAND.

At this crisis in Ireland's fortunes writers in the French press have not forgotten the historic ties between their country and the Green Isle. They have given expression to their warm sympathy with the Irish people and their gratification at the wisdom of Great Britain in at last endeavoring to satisfy their claim for autonomy. In the *Paris Eclair*, M. Judet, the editor, a brilliant journalist, rejoices at the prospect in Ireland, and says: "Centuries of individual services rendered to our country by Irish sympathy and valor have consecrated our faithful friendship. The war has dominated the ardor and the interest we continue to feel in friends who have proved themselves doubly ours in the great conflict of 1914, but we do not forget that three hundred thousand of Erin's sons have fought by our side on the battlefields of Belgium, Flanders, and Picardie, and their heroism has more than once saved the Allied armies from an irreparable defeat, and that the blood we have shed together adds to our gratitude as well as to our desire to know that they are free and happy in their own country. England," adds M. Judet, "knows how to take occasion by the hand and has now opportunely yielded to the pressure of circumstances. For Ireland this is a triumph without precedent, and for England it is one of the cleverest exhibitions of her statesmanship, especially if the act be not done too late or with restrictions that will deprive it of its merit and efficacy." If Ireland secures her national rights, congratulations will pour into this country from all her allies, great and small.

LADIES!

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