

## CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

## FOR IRELAND.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—The movement originating in the West Coast to make St. Patrick's Day of this year memorable by a united appeal to Parliamentarians to fall into line with their fellows elsewhere in demanding justice for Ireland, deserves every support. Our policy of masterly inactivity in the past must now yield to a policy of straight-out action, and we have a right to know if our members sympathise with Ireland, and if not why not. As one of those who, misled by the Nationalist papers, misjudged Casement and the men of Easter week, I am taking effectual means to reverse my previous attitude and bring before Sir Joseph Ward, our Member, the unanimous desire of the majority of his constituents, that he should help in this movement. I fancy none but pachydermatous patriots will hesitate to seize the unique opportunity of helping our motherland, one of the small nations that has suffered most from evil government, to secure justice at last.—I am, etc.,

JAS. O'NEILL.

Waikiwi, March 10.

## THE AIMS OF SINN FEIN.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—I gather from the leader in your issue of February 27 that there are a few of your (casual?) readers who do not know what the policy of the *Tablet* is, in connection with the question of the future government of Ireland. I can only express astonishment that such people exist, and I should imagine they belong to that class of political Laodiceans who are never interested enough in any subject—even the subject of the freedom or slavery of their native land—to find out the facts for themselves. We all know—we have heard them—that such people are shocked at the *Tablet* for keeping the Irish question so much to the front. It is indecent, if not disloyal—an embarrassment to the Empire, and a cause of humiliation to themselves. I need scarcely tell you, Sir, that the views and actions of such men never counted for anything in any movement. They are looked at with disgust by their own countrymen and with contempt by those whom they endeavor to "smooge." The Anglo-Irish Irishman is famed in song and story.

Personally, a constant reader of the *Tablet*, I have never been in doubt as to its opinions on Irish affairs, which opinions are, indeed, always plain enough for

anyone to see. It stands for Repeal of the Union, or (what practically amounts to the same thing), full Colonial Self-Government. It stands for Sinn Fein—not the Sinn Fein of the cooked cablegrams which seek to identify it with Bolshevism and Spartacism, but for the Sinn Fein which means an ordered government in Ireland, free from all English interference—a return to Grattan's Parliament of 1782-1800, with the addition of a responsible executive. Mr. de Valera is no favorer of republican in preference to other forms of government. He has said the form of government was immaterial as long as there is no outside meddling with Irish affairs.

Of course I am aware that some of the advanced spirits in the Sinn Fein party are demanding a republic. But it should be remembered that every political party consists of three sections—the centre or main body, and the right and left wings, and of these the left is usually the most active and clamant section. Take the English Liberal Party: the right wing are practically Tories and the left Radicals and Republicans. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain is one example of a man who passed from the extreme left to the extreme right—from republicanism to toryism—in the course of his political career. Mr. Lloyd George will, undoubtedly, be another.

If the advanced section of the Sinn Fein Party demand a republic and a complete separation from England, the reasons are not far to seek. There was the bankruptcy of the constitutional movement as far as Home Rule was concerned; the faithlessness of the Parliamentary Party to the Irish ideal of a United Ireland as shown by the Buckingham Palace Conference, and their subsequent approval of the Lloyd George partition proposals, which would rend asunder the unity of the nation; the wholesale arrests and deportations before the insurrection; the executions, shootings, and murders, as well as the wholesale deportations of innocent men and women, these latter to herd with English prostitutes in English gaols; the mock Convention; the broken pledge regarding the findings of the majority; the campaign of calumny in America, and in neutral countries; the bogus German plot, resulting in the imprisonment of the chief leaders of the people without specific charge made and without any form of trial whatever. Bearing all these things in mind, what Irishman will care to say a harsh word against these young men? We may disapprove of their views, but we can account for them. They are the logical result of recent events in Ireland, and these events have produced strong effects in minds which are neither Sinn Fein nor republican. As Mr. T. M. Healy, K.C., M.P., pointed out, there can be no respect in Ireland for a law which gives a ballad singer two years' imprisonment *with hard labor* for singing a song which you, Sir (perhaps), and I certainly many times

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