

IRISH NEWS

FREEDOM FOR IRELAND.

A recent Philadelphia message states that a convention of representatives of the Irish race adopted a resolution, at the instance of Cardinal Gibbons, declaring in favor of Ireland having the right of self-determination, and protesting against the curtailment of American sovereignty, implied in the League of Nations constitution. The establishment of a fund of 1,000,000 dollars, to bring freedom to Ireland, was pledged by the convention. Another message from Philadelphia states that the Friends of Irish Freedom carried a resolution declaring that a state of war existed between England and Ireland. They voted more than a million dollars to help the Irish cause. A cable message received a week or two ago in Melbourne from Philadelphia by Archbishop Mannix stated that 5000 delegates to the Convention of the Irish Race in America, representing many millions of different religious and political beliefs, assembled in the birthplace of American independence on Washington's birthday. The delegates, the message adds, saluted the Archbishop and the men and women of the Irish race in Australia, and joined hands with them in the demand for national self-determination.

THE "ULSTER MYTH."

The *Labor Leader*, under the heading, "The Ulster Fraud," publishes an article by Mr. Patrick Thompson, in the course of which the writer says: Nowhere in Ulster is it possible to point out an area where Nationalists do not exist or are even negligibly few. On the contrary, in many areas, even in the counties of the "north-east corner" most confidently claimed by Carson, the Nationalists are in a substantial and sometimes overwhelming majority. That is the incontestable verdict of the figures. What is the consequence? Ireland as a nation claims the right of self-determination, the right to make her own free choice under which and what kind of government the Irish people shall live. The phrase "self-determination" is new, but the idea is as old as democracy. The two are, in fact, one. Carson suddenly becomes a convert to this democratic doctrine, and says: "We must have self-determination, too." But who are "they?" "They" are Irishmen and women living in the one town, and the one street, the one county, and the one townland, buying and selling in the one market, traveling along the one road, and the one railway, living, moving, and having their being as members of the one community with other Irish men and women who wish to live under an Irish Parliament, together with the rest of the Irish nation. If "they" are to have their way it can only be by denying the right of their fellow-countrymen, for there cannot be two Governments in the same area. And "they" are in a decided minority of the whole population—a minority that cannot anywhere, even in scattered patches of territory, claim that it has an incontestable case for a Government distinct from that of the surrounding people.

OVERSEAS SOLDIERS NOT ALLOWED TO VISIT IRELAND.

It is an open secret that every obstacle was placed in the way of American and Australian soldiers who desired to visit Ireland. "A Father of Soldiers" writes to the press: "Three sons of mine emigrated to America from the County of Armagh, the first ten years ago, the other two six years ago. All three joined up when President Wilson's first call was made—they were in Uncle Sam's Army before conscription was adopted in the United States, if my memory serves. One was kept at Washington doing clerical work. The two others were in England for two months, after which they went to France. One has been wounded and back in an English hospital for six weeks, and away to the front again. They joined as privates; they are now non-commissioned officers, and one at least would have

got his commission in a few weeks if the war had not happily come to an end. Both have done their best to get back for a few weeks to Ireland; and both have failed owing to some mysterious influence against the visits of Irish-American soldiers to that country, which, it appears, can only be hinted at in letters that pass through the censor's hands. This influence is mentioned in one letter I have received, and there is a reference to another letter (a previous one) in which an explanation was given, but which was never allowed to come into my hands. This is a peculiar state of affairs. It is very unjust to the boys and to their people. I put the blame on the British Government."

IRISH A PENALISED LANGUAGE.

The attempts at suppression of the Irish language continue in this country (says an Irish exchange). Padraic MacCearrait, stopped for not having a light on his bicycle at Wicklow, gave his name, and, as his name is an Irish one, it was necessarily in Irish. For this offence he was arrested, kept in prison for four days, after spending a night in a police cell. The Prime Minister attends the Welsh Eisteddfod, and urges there the use of the national Cymric language. The Scottish Highland Society holds its festivals of song and speech in the native Gaelic. But when a Gael in Ireland pronounces so much as his name in his native Gaelic speech, he is haled off to prison. Yet we are told that there are equal laws for all parts of what its champions call the United Kingdom. Austria was defeated after a bloody war, the rights of which we are told included the liberation of Poland. But under Austrian rule the Polish language was the official language of her Polish province, Galicia. Under English rule, the Irish language is banned in Ireland, and the use of it is punished by arrest and imprisonment. What the Prime Minister recommends as a patriotic duty in Wales is a crime in Ireland. A remarkable case was tried the other day at Athy Petty Sessions. A Gaelic teacher was summoned for writing his name in the Irish language on a lodging-house registration form. The prosecuting policeman admitted in cross-examination that it would be a natural thing for an Irish teacher to write his name in Irish, but added, "In this case it is wrong to write his name in Irish." The policeman was shown another form which he had received long before. It was filled in by a Chinaman, and in the Chinese language. "Was he prosecuted?" the policeman was asked, and he answered, "No." Two of the magistrates—a Removable, Mr. J. C. Ryan, and Mr. Thomas Hickey—convicted the accused, and he was sent to prison for a fortnight. The third magistrate, Mr. Thomas Plewman, dissented, saying that he believed it was no crime for the accused to write his name in Irish. A great war has been waged, amongst other objects, to liberate Poland. But in Poland under Austria the official language was Polish, and in the courts of law, as in all other official State meetings and assemblies, its use was compulsory. Removable Ryan and Mr. T. Hickey may be congratulated on having demonstrated the difference between Austrian oppression in Poland and English oppression in Ireland. They have decided as a legal measure that you may use the Chinese language with impunity in County Kildare, but that to use the Irish language—the native language of the country—is a criminal offence to be punished by imprisonment.

We look with tender eyes upon those we love, and sigh to think we may, perchance, not be on the shore when they launch their little barques, forgetting Him Who holds the winds in His hands and regards the fall of the sparrow.

LADIES!

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