

pursued the brothers, crossing the lough at Carlingford with his ships, which must have coasted in his company. From Carlingford they retreated, and he pursued to Carrickfergus, and that fortress, being unable to resist a royal fleet and navy, they fled into Man or Scotland, and thence escaped in disguise into France. With their guest de Braos, they wrought as gardeners in the grounds of the Abbey of Saint Taurin Evreux, until the abbot, having discovered by their manners the key to their real rank, negotiated successfully with John for their restoration to their estates. Walter agreed to pay a fine of 2500 marks for his lordship in Meath, and Hugh 4000 for his possessions in Ulster. Of de Braos we have no particulars; his high-spirited wife and children were thought to have been starved to death by order of the unforgiving tyrant in one of his castles.

In the next succeeding reign (that of Henry the Third), we find a like impression existing and encouraged amongst the Irish princes; the King of Connaught proceeding to England and complaining to the king of the unjust, oppressive, and rapacious conduct of the barons. And we find King Henry ordering him substantial redress, writing to his lord justice in Ireland, Maurice Fitzgerald, to "pluck up by the root" the powerful de Burgo, who lorded it over all the west. There is still in existence a letter written by the Connaught king to Henry the Third, thanking him for the many favors he had conferred upon him, but particularly for this one.

(To be continued.)

IRELAND AT THE CONFERENCE

But let us suppose (said his Grace Archbishop Mannix on St. Patrick's Night, in Melbourne) that Mr. de Valera—according to the cables, he is the President of the Irish Republic—does present himself in Paris to plead Ireland's cause, what would be the verdict of the Peace Conference? There is only one verdict possible—and that is just why England will not, if she can prevent it, allow him a hearing. Let me put a question which I have often put before. If Mr. de Valera were to present himself at the door of the Peace Conference, and plead for a hearing, and if he were asked against whom his country had a grievance, and that he could say that Germany was Ireland's enemy and oppressor, he would be at once admitted and get a place near the head of the table. (Cheers.) If he were able to say that Germany held his country in bondage by force; that, under German rule, the Irish population had fallen by half in 50 years; that, of the millions lost to Ireland, some were in exile, and others in paupers' graves; that Germany had strangled Ireland's trade, and ruined her industries; that the Irish people were normally under coercion law, and that now the country was under martial law; that her elected representatives were in German prisons; that he himself had but just escaped from prison; that each new generation within the last 100 years had its own rebellion; if he were able to urge these charges against Germany at the Peace Conference, what, think you, would happen? Why, he would not be allowed to go half-way through with the litany of his country's woes. He would be asked to point out on the map the boundaries of the new Irish State. He would reply that God had marked out its confines, and the Conference would proceed to draw up the charter of Ireland's freedom under international sanction. Then, as we are told, the members of the Conference would sign their names in alphabetical order. And when it came to Mr. Lloyd George's alphabetical turn, he would drop a big, hot, salt tear upon his signature as he thought of the German atrocities in Ireland—from Drogheda and Wexford to Bachelor's Walk and O'Connell Street; and his Welsh frame would be swept and shaken with emotion to think that he, a humble Welsh attorney, was privileged to emancipate from German slavery the gallant Irish nation, which had so long

struggled to be free. Oh, the hollowness and insincerity of it all! Unfortunately for de Valera's pleading, the enemy is not Germany, but England. That makes all the difference. That is why England thinks that his place is not at the head of the table, but outside the door.

A Domestic Question.

Of course, they urge that the Irish question is a domestic question, with which the Conference has nothing to do. Even if it were a domestic question, surely it ought to be settled; and if they have failed to settle it elsewhere, then it should be settled at the Conference. For it is truly ridiculous for England to settle the domestic questions of other nations and to refuse to settle her own or submit them to the Conference. It reminds me of the man—we all know him—who is sour, ill-tempered, morose, ungenerous with his wife and the other ladies of his own household, but is always gay and pleasant and devoted and open-handed with those ladies and others who are not of his own home. If one were to demonstrate with him, he would say, it would be his only answer, that that was a domestic question with which outsiders had nothing to do. That answer may satisfy him, but it would not satisfy his wife, nor anybody else. The truth is that the Irish question is not a domestic question. It touches every corner of the Empire. And it was Mr. Lloyd George himself who said in his recent election manifesto that there could be no peace in the Empire until Ireland was appeased. He was quite right in that statement. The Irish trouble is even of wider import, for it has its ramifications outside the Empire, in America, and wherever the Irish race is scattered. No one knows that better than Mr. Lloyd George, unless, perhaps, President Wilson. It is little use to tell Mr. Wilson that the Irish trouble is a mere local domestic issue. Even in a larger and deeper sense still the Irish question is not domestic, but world-wide. For behind Ireland, approving her claims, stand all the nations of the world. They may not be in a position to render much aid to Ireland. But not one of them has ever approved or condoned England's shameful treatment of Ireland.

Cardinal Mercier and Ireland.

However, I must not detain you. I will just give you two striking testimonies to the justice of Ireland's claims. Outside military circles, at all events, there is no man more honored than Cardinal Mercier. (Loud cheers.) His heroic figure is head and shoulders above all others. He is not a hot-headed Irish extremist. (Laughter.) He has no inborn hatred of England. He knows and he has generously acknowledged what Belgium owes to England. He has, no doubt, heard it asserted that Ireland has been false to Belgium and to civilisation. He certainly knows what Ireland has done, and what Ireland has left undone in the war. He should, therefore, be an unprejudiced and impartial judge of the question that divides Ireland and England. Now, just hear what the great Belgian Cardinal says in a message to Ireland recently:—

"It is inconceivable that Ireland's right to self-determination and nationhood be not recognised by the free nations of the world at the Peace Conference. Your country, the most faithful and venerable daughter of the Church, deserves justice from all mankind, and must surely receive it.

"The Irish people are the oldest and purest nationality in Europe, and their noble adherence to faith and nationality, the most glorious record in history."

I thank Cardinal Mercier for those noble words. Candid friends of mine have from time to time held his Eminence up to me as a model that I might copy with profit. They have sometimes been to the trouble of sending me his speeches—they did not send me this latest message. I have more veneration for Cardinal Mercier than they have. I know the depth and the sincerity of their new-found love for Cardinal Mercier and for Catholic Belgium. I know how long it is likely to last. I have long known and venerated Cardinal Mercier, and I should be proud indeed to imitate him

E. L. RICHARDS

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