

land. Consequently we hold now, as we have held firmly from the first, that Ireland's case will be heard at the Peace Conference and that every nation in Europe will be on her side when the Hunnish British atrocities dating from Henry's day to the present hour are set forth to the eternal shame of the miscreants who protested so falsely that their fight was a fight for the freedom of small nations.

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But if the President fails us—if he too proves to be a mere political trickster whose word is worth no more than Lloyd George's or Balfour's—if in spite of the summons of the American Congress, backed by monster meetings all over the United States, Mr. Wilson should leave the Congress at Paris a dishonored man whose pledges are but another of the scraps of paper so familiar to all the European politicians, well, what then? Greater pillars of strength than the American President have proved weak before now, and stars have fallen from heaven so often that it is worth while looking at the possibility of his failing us squarely and trying to forecast the possible result in such a case. Frankly, we do not like to contemplate the result. But as we have always honestly tried to put the true facts about Ireland before our readers we will not shirk doing so now in order that it may be borne very forcibly in upon us all how intensely necessary is a right settlement of the Irish question. In one word, if President Wilson fails and leaves England to work her wicked will on Ireland the one clear issue may be a huge rebellion. It will not be a rebellion like that of 1916, when 1700 men and boys fought against 40,000 armed soldiers for a whole week. It will not be a wild rising out of peasants maddened by the sexual filth of the Orangemen, as was the '98 Rising. It will not be an abortive effort like Emmet's, like Tone's, like Mitchel's, like Stephens'. It will be the desperate fight for life of a whole people who will not be conquered though they may be exterminated by the Huns—a fight in which the men will fall only to have their places taken by the women and girls who are prepared to give the English another opportunity of striking a coward's blow at a nation's womb—as General Butler tells us they did in South Africa. Press lies and propaganda have kept the truth about Ireland from us for four years. We have kept silent about many things which we could have told if we deemed it wise. There are many things that we will one day tell. There are things that our readers may learn from the returned men who saw for themselves how England governs a small nation, and as a result of what they saw became more Sinn Fein than the Irish. But we do now warn our readers that failing a settlement Ireland is on the verge of grievous trouble and bloodshed on a larger scale than she has known for years in her sad, desperate history. And therefore all who love Ireland, and no less all who love England ought to pray to God that the dear old land to which under God most of us owe the Faith may be saved in time.

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We quote here one passage from a letter written to us by one who suffered after Easter Week and who knows exactly how matters stand in Ireland to-day. There is more insight into Irish affairs in the following words than in all the lying cables issued by the Lloyd George calumny-factory for the past four years:—

"Sinn Fein has done wonderfully in a short time. But Dublin Castle would not give a match for it were it not for the military movement which we keep going strong behind it. Young men are sent to gaol every day for drilling, but we have plenty of others to take their places. Though there are several hundreds in gaol we have a magnificent standing army. Of course the work is all done on the quiet, but the authorities know it is going on, and just at present it is giving them cause for worry. Lord French came here as a military dictator—tried to provoke rebellion and ruled with a rod of iron. Now he is afraid of rebellion and is coaxing the Cabinet to release our prisoners, and

in the event of refusal he will not answer for the consequences. The result of this you will know long before this letter reaches you. Every Englishman who ever tried to rule Ireland came to the same conclusion, that coercion is of no avail. Our men refuse to recognise the court when summoned and when sent to gaol they do so much damage that their gaolers do not know what to do with them. *Our men cannot be beaten, for, as de Valera says, you cannot be beaten if you are prepared to make a sacrifice big enough, and our men are prepared for the biggest.* Pearse told his men in 1916 that the power of self-sacrifice was so great that it would break England's hold on Ireland."

We vouch for the fact that the words we have quoted give a true picture of the tense determination of Sinn Fein to fight to death rather than again submit to Prussianism and Orange domination. With full knowledge that we are asserting something contrary to the general impression we also say that Sinn Fein would even now accept a settlement on the basis of Colonial self-government. And, knowing that, we state unhesitatingly that if there is to be bloodshed in Ireland soon it will be exactly because England is so false to her pledges as to reserve for herself the right to practise Prussianism in its worst form in Ireland. That the President of the United States will not permit this we firmly believe. If he does we can only pray that God may save our poor people when, goaded beyond all patience, they take the next step. The possibilities of what a rebellion in Ireland might now mean for England do not seem to alarm the Huns; but it is clear that they have even greater reason to fear for England in such an event than we have to fear for Ireland.

NOTES

Autumn Days

A note in the evening paper says that a heavy crop of holly berries is a sign of a hard winter. By a sign we mean an indication or suggestion of something other than the sign; by an indication we mean something that makes something else known; by suggestion we mean the calling up or the presentation of an idea by mention or association; and only in the later sense can red holly berries in the woods be a sign of severe weather to come. Possibly keen observers have noted that hard winters usually follow heavy crops of berries and made known their observations so widely that the latter may be by association of ideas taken as a sign of the former. But to discover a logical sequence, as between cause and effect, is no easy matter. People who never lose sight of Providence in the world would tell us with beautiful faith that He who made the birds of the air, not one of which falls to earth without His knowledge, provides for them in His wisdom by a rich harvest against the days when frost binds the soil and snows are deep. However that may be, it is undoubtedly a fact that the hedgerows just now remind us of November days in the Old Land when leaves were burned to russet and gold by the cold nights and scarlet haws blazed like fires by the wayside. Have you remarked how splendid are the tints of the few deciduous trees? In the parks around Christchurch, here and there round Dunedin, the leaves are wonderful, ranging from olive green to ruddy gold. And bright days that make the air look blue against the hills, and sunset fires that lie low and warm on the horizon all recall to one writer the rather morbid loveliness of November days gone down for ever.

Hounds and Horn

Another memory of fine winter weather was recalled when we read the other day that the Wexford farmers were not stopping the Hunt in spite of the unpopularity of certain riders to hounds. There are sports and sports, but they that *know* will never admit that any can compare with the old sport of fox-hunting;