

Current Topics

Good News

Readers do not need a long memory to recall how our press told us a few months back that Sinn Fein represented only a few cranks in Ireland and a few seditious persons (like the Editor of the *Tablet*) outside Ireland. And when the elections made it clear, even to the editors of the Harmsworth league of liars, that Sinn Fein represented all the sane people in Ireland, as well as all those to whom the cause of small nations was not a mere hypocritical catch-cry, the press began to tell us that it was unthinkable that Sinn Fein should be heard at the Peace Congress, and that no matter how just and how right Ireland's cause was the dominant interest of England must prevail, and Ireland must still serve, for the truly Prussian reason that her servitude is useful to the champion of small nations. If Ireland had only England to deal with the press would have been right. However, there were a few other Powers to be considered. America wanted to know why her soldiers were asked to fight for self-determination if Ireland was to be denied that right. Paris, too, had something to say about the sincerity of British war aims and the rights of small nations. The result is that we have now strong reason to hold that Ireland will be heard at the Peace Congress, and that the almost indecent haste made by Lloyd George to facilitate the sending of Sinn Fein delegates to France is the consequence of his conviction that the game is up and that England must face the awkward situation created by her constant oppression of Ireland in favor of an Orange gang of outsiders who are more Prussian than Prussians.

Some Details

We have already pointed out that America was so much in earnest about securing Irish freedom that not only did Congress and the Senate urge the Peace Conference to take up the Irish problem but also special delegates were sent to Europe to see that Ireland's case was not neglected. Reading between the lines of the fablegrams that have reached us since the arrival of the American delegates, it is easy to see that their presence is already felt and that it is now a question of how much Ireland will consent to take by way of settlement. Although the first thing to be demanded in justice ought to be the hanging of Lloyd George and Carson, and although Ireland's right to complete independence is beyond argument, we have no doubt that Sinn Fein will accept a full measure of self-government on colonial lines, but nothing short of this will meet the case. Recall that a few days ago the censored cables revealed to us that one of the Tory lords was very angry on account of some step taken by Paris with regard to Ireland. What that step was we can only surmise. Very probably it was that Paris had the "impertinence" to suggest that there was no reason why John Bull should not be reminded that a champion of small nations ought to put his own house in order. At any rate, something was done in Paris, and clearly that something was the result of the activities of Sean Ua Ceallagh and of the American envoys. New light is thrown on the situation by a letter from the Bishop of Killaloe from which we are able to quote a very interesting passage now. His Lordship, writing to Father Fogarty, said that *Paris was sending a delegation to Dublin to invite De Valera to the Peace Conference and to find out what he wanted*. As the Bishop points out, this means that Lloyd George has knuckled down and that we may be certain that Ireland will get full self-government at least. Taking this letter from so authoritative a source with the hints that can be gathered from the cables, we conclude with great satisfaction that Sinn Fein has won. And from our heart we say *Deo gratias!*

Ourselves

We never had any doubts as to the final victory of Sinn Fein. When we were fighting a lone hand for the cause, and when people who thought they knew more about Ireland than we did went on telling us how far mistaken we were, we never hesitated once. Our belief, like Pearse's and like De Valera's, was based on the certainty that a united people who are ready to make the last sacrifices for their just cause can never be beaten. Ireland was Sinn Fein long before the elections made the fact clear to the world, and we knew that when priests and people, men and women, were working as one man for Ireland victory might be delayed but it was assured. Possibly we have made a few enemies because we did not allow them to dictate our Irish policy to us, but on the other hand we receive, month after month, testimonies from Ireland which make it clear to us that what little we have done for the Old Land is appreciated there by those who love Ireland best. Here is what the Bishop of Killaloe thinks of the *New Zealand Tablet* and its services to Ireland:—

"Your letter arrived with a bundle of *Tablets*, which I read with pleasure. It is a very able paper, and I rejoice to see that it is Irish of the Irish. Please remember me to the Editor, and may God bless him."

A little word like that from the man who stepped into Dr. O'Dwyer's shoes is more to us than the praise of a million Imperialists. To know that we have done our duty according to our lights is consolation enough, but still we are human enough to be pleased when a tribute comes our way from such an authority. More than once an adviser of the ordinary colonial infallible type has said to us that the *Tablet* is too Irish, and that it does no good to give so much attention to the wrongs of Ireland. Apparently the people in Ireland who are best judges are not of that opinion. Apart from their approbation, it is clear that our own people here would be sadly misinformed if we did not in season and out of season devote ourselves to the task of contradicting the reports circulated in the British press about Sinn Fein. From that point of view alone it has been a matter of simple duty to dwell at considerable length on Irish affairs during the past few stormy years. Moreover, the *Tablet* is a Catholic paper, and, although some persons do not like to be reminded of the fact, Ireland's cause is vitally connected with our Catholic interests. It is a curious psychological puzzle that the persons who owe most to Catholic Ireland are often the first to show their ingratitude. As time goes on, and when Ireland has come to her own, we will devote more space to various other topics that have had to be passed over hurriedly of late. When things settle down again and when the task of contradicting official liars is not so imperative, we hope to be able to do more than we have done in the past towards inculcating those sound Catholic social principles which lie at the root of the world problems with which Democracy must grapple in its efforts to reconstruct society on a sane and safe basis. We have now come to the dawn of a more hopeful day than any we have known in our lives. Unless we read all the omens wrong, the future is Ireland's, the long night of sorrow is drawing to an end, the crown is ready for the heroic people who so bravely bore the cross. And when an authoritative voice from overseas tells us that we may be prepared to rejoice for Ireland's victory, it is not a little thing to be told by the same voice that we too have done our part towards it.

The Catholic Mind

Just as there is a worldly mind and a business mind, there is also a Catholic mind. A person may be in the world and not of it, engaged in business with a mind far removed from it, a member of the Catholic Church and in no wise of a Catholic mind. One may subscribe to every doctrine that the Church requires her children to believe, go regularly to Mass and to the Sacraments, and at the same time be very un-Catholic in mind. The Irish people, the pious French and