

seal on his character. These men—we know who they are and how much more worth is their simple word than that of a MacPherson—saw with their own eyes the atrocities that are perpetrated in Ireland by the Lloyd George Government, and they reported faithfully what they saw. Every priest in Ireland could report exactly the same. Many of them have written to us time and again of the black and blackguardly Prussianism of the Huns in Ireland. Ireland is overrun with foreign soldiers; Ireland is goaded to rebellion; Ireland is quivering under the heel of an armed bully; Irishmen and Irishwomen are sent to gaol without a trial, and they are maltreated shockingly by the prison authorities. Humanity and decency are outraged. Lives are lost on account of the barbarity of the prison administration. Children are kidnapped. Adults are imprisoned for speaking their own tongue. The pastoral letters of the Irish bishops are clear proof of the dreadful state of Ireland under the rule of the English to-day. Now comes MacPherson, chief Hun, denying before all the world what the Irish people and their American friends are proclaiming. What else could he do? To admit the truth would be to put a rope about his own neck and that of his master. To plead guilty would put him side by side with the Kaiser in the hell of inhuman monsters. Nothing is left for him but lies, and, true to old example where Ireland is concerned, he lies boldly and badly. Herein is another proof of the foolishness of MacPherson. Does he for a moment think that any man of common sense would take the word of an Englishman in Ireland against the testimony of the priests, people, bishops, and of the American envoys who have seen for themselves that the same system that drove their fathers into exile with undying hate of England in their hearts still exists in Ireland to-day? There was nothing for MacPherson but lies, since it is inconceivable that he could rise to the nobility of telling the truth and admitting his guilt. And his lies will but further help to incense the American people, who will believe their envoys against MacPherson and his masters, Carson and George. In face of the testimony of Lord Wimborne that there was no pro-German plot in Ireland, this nincompoop repeats the old lie. In face of the revelations of the scandalous ill-treatment of prisoners in Belfast gaol, he denies there was any inhumanity. In face of the death of Thomas Ashe, of the arrests of hundreds of men and women without a trial, and of the kidnapping of boys, he has the effrontery to tell the world that what the American envoys saw with their own eyes is not true. MacPherson is a fool. But the way of the English in Ireland is to rule through fools and lunatics: MacPherson or Colthurst—it is all the same. Thank God the end of that sort of business is near!

Why Wilson Fails

Disappointment that President Wilson does not seem to be fulfilling his pledges is common among his admirers nowadays. Contrary to all that was said about diplomatic frankness and about the right of the people to know what their representatives are doing, the proceedings of the Peace Conference are as far as possible wrapped in secrecy. As far as we can read between the lines, what is taking place is a long way behind the high ideals of Mr. Wilson. To be honest to him, we must admit that the fault is not his. There are two groups in the Conference. One is frankly out for profit, for the punishment of Germany, for the destruction of her power politically and commercially, for the maintenance of a huge police force that will enable the Entente to suppress, not by the moral force of a League of Nations, but by weight of arms, any attempts made to resist the will of the victors. Almost alone stands Mr. Wilson in the other group, pleading for a reconstruction which shall be based on moral law and which will abolish secret treaties and give the people the right to know what is being done by their rulers. The Entente's idea of a League of Nations is nothing else than a strong Entente Alliance after the war. Their plan is not to make peace certain by removing the wrongs

which are at the root of war, but by maintaining such a force as would secure peace by terror. The Entente agreed to a discussion of peace on the basis of the President's fourteen points, but they have long ago put the fourteen points out of their minds. They were the first to subscribe to the policy of no annexations and no indemnities, but now they are frankly trying to grab all they can. Italy has been successful as far as we are permitted to know, and France is likely to follow in her steps. England, too, has secured her little bit as a reward for her disinterested championship of small nations! So far, the Peace Conference has been a failure. Instead of proceeding along the humane lines which would remove the causes of future wars, it goes along the old lines expressed by the words *Vae Victis*—woe to the conquered! Poland has been partitioned: the Entente has done what all the world in the past denounced as a Prussian crime. Italy, on the basis of a secret treaty about which English statesmen lied magnificently, claims her pound of flesh. Ireland suffers still under the armed heel of John Bull. Regard them all—France, Italy, and England—and find if you can one single sign that truth, justice, and humanity are inspiring them in their efforts to make the world safe for Democracy! Look at Egypt, at India, and at Ireland, and then listen to the professions of British politicians that the war was fought for the right of self-determination! Read of what is at this hour happening in Ireland, and remember the horror of our Jingoos at the reports about German corpse-factories and mutilated children. Recall all this, and also how they plotted secretly to prevent the Pope from making peace, and then estimate what opposition President Wilson and every other man who wants a peace founded on right and justice has to encounter. The wonder is that he has done so much. He has certainly mitigated the fury of those who would have destroyed Germany in spite of the terms on which the armistice was made. He has kept the German colonies out of the hands of the greedy Entente. He has blocked the gross proposal of a huge international army maintained in France. He has reminded the Entente that they agreed long ago to the formula, *No indemnities, no annexations*. He has helped to keep the demands made on Germany to some extent within the scope of that formula. And if he does not do so himself, his Government never ceases to remind John Bull that what was a crime for Prussia in Belgium is a crime of hundreds of years' standing for England in Ireland. Looking at his work impartially, we have to regret that he has been unable to do more, but we ought to be thankful that he has done so much, for his ideas alone import an element of justice and humanity into the squabblings that are taking place in Paris.

A Retraction

Dunedin, May 28, 1919.

Dear Sir,—I have just seen copies of the *Tablet* of March 27 and April 3 last, in which you state that the chairman of the meeting addressed by Father Cronin and Mr. C. Todd in South Dunedin on Sunday, March 3, was "the man who took under his no-Popery wing the escaped nun, Margaret Shepherd." I was the chairman at the meeting referred to, and, as I never had anything to do with the person called Margaret Shepherd, or any "nun," escaped or otherwise, I have to ask you to publish this letter in the *Tablet*, in your next issue, under the heading "Current Topics," with a full retraction of the untrue statement and a sufficient apology.—Yours, etc.,

PETER JOHNSON.

Upon inquiry, we found that the report which came to us with such apparent certainty cannot be substantiated. Therefore we owe it to ourselves as well as to Mr. Johnson to publish the foregoing letter and to express our satisfaction that we have this opportunity of allowing him to contradict a rumor so annoying to him. We express our regret that we were the innocent means of further circulating the report in question, and we unhesitatingly retract what we said.