

down with a single blow of his battle-axe, and continued his flight. He was, however, soon overtaken by the guard and dispatched by the most cruel death they could devise.

Thus, on the field of battle in the act of prayer and on the day of Our Lord's Crucifixion, fell the Christian King, Brian Boru, in the cause of his native land and religion.

Brian Boru found a last resting-place in Armagh, where, with his son and grandson, he was solemnly interred in a new tomb. Many elegies have been written in his honor, and some of the most beautiful have been written by his enemies.

CLEMENT SHORTER ON THE IRISH QUESTION

There is no reason why there should not be a settlement of the Irish question without delay, according to Clement K. Shorter, editor of the *London Sphere*, who, while recently in New York, granted an interview to a representative of the *Christian Science Monitor*. Those who believe the Irish question is insoluble are absolutely wrong, Mr. Shorter said. He deprecated the inaccurate propaganda on the subject, spread throughout the United States, and said that those who knew the truth of the situation knew also that a general settlement of the problem was not at all impossible. England was now tending toward a Labor Government. Within five years, Mr. Shorter thought, England would have a Labor Parliament. If it did not come meanwhile, the Irish settlement would be brought about then, and the Conservatives who were now holding back a settlement ought to be able to see that the Ulster minority would gain much more consideration in a settlement affected now than in one made by the Labor Parliament.

Mr. Shorter recognised that anyone who said a good word for Sinn Fein in the United States would very likely be suspected of being pro-German. He said that he himself was in every respect a vigorous opponent of the Germans, and had been from the first. But he was convinced that the Wilsonian theory of the self-determination of small peoples ought to apply to the Irish people as well as to any others. He went so far as to say, in reply to the assertion that the Irish question was a domestic one concerning England and Ireland alone, that England through the war had come under financial and other obligations to the United States, and that it was not improper to hope that what he called "the gentle jolt of diplomacy" might be used from American sources to assist in bringing the British Government to full realisation of the fact that a prompt settlement of the Irish problem was imperative.

Labor was sound on the Irish question. Labor men realised that further postponement of a settlement was nonsense. Asked how that settlement could be brought about, Mr. Shorter said he didn't think any newspaper in the United States would print his views on the subject. But he wished to express his admiration of Mr. Griffith and Mr. de Valera, whom he characterised as two of the ablest statesmen Ireland had produced since Daniel O'Connell. Most of the Irish leaders had been clever politicians rather than constructive statesmen. They had worked along the lines of playing one English political party against another. This was courting failure from the start, and the proof of statesmanship was success. But with Griffith and de Valera, each of whom made up for what the other lacked, Ireland was in the ablest hands for a policy of reconstruction.

Most Englishmen, Mr. Shorter said, would not consider for a moment any official negotiations with the Irish leaders; yet Mr. Shorter said he knew it was a fact that Mr. Lloyd George had tried to make an appointment to meet Mr. de Valera in Wales some time ago. And the Government must consider these leaders, and co-operate with them, seeking their counsel, if a proper settlement of the question was to be reached.

One way to save the situation was for all concerned to embrace the policy of a generous recognition of Mr. Wilson's policy of self-determination as applying to

Ireland. That would also assist in retaining American friendship for England. If the United States did the just thing, she would give all her support to the theory of the self-determination of nations. A single reading of President Wilson's various expositions of this theory, such as the "Interests of the weakest are as sacred as the interests of the strongest," would show that they all applied exactly to the Irish question. Ireland, like other small nations, must be permitted to settle her destiny in accordance with the will of the majority.

Mr. Shorter was asked whether the Irish themselves could agree on a settlement. He replied by saying that it was not true that Ireland, in effect, was two nations. If England should withdraw all her forces, the Irish people could come to an agreement. It was only because of the activities of certain lawyers in the north of Ireland, backed by the British Government, that trouble continued. It will be remembered that some time ago the *Irish World* republished a splendid letter by Mr. Shorter on the Irish question from the *Manchester Guardian*.

Mr. Shorter came to the United States with Henry W. Massingham, editor of the *London Nation*. He is spending most of his time in this city visiting various private libraries, expressing much enthusiasm over them. Mr. Shorter is best known to Irish-Americans as the biographer of the Brontës. The late Dora Sigerson was his wife.

THE COAL CONUNDRUM

In the following letter which appeared in the *Timaru Herald* Dean Tubman has something worth considering to say concerning the coal troubles. Having had to read the newspapers during the war we are not as much surprised as the Dean at their being dumb when right speech is wanted:—

Sir,—Most reluctantly do I ask for a small space in your columns to utter a protest against the shameless and inhuman way we are being treated by our servants in the Government. What company would allow its management to treat its shareholders as we are being treated at present? Our poor people are starving and shivering owing to the mismanagement of our well-paid politicians. Want of boats can be no excuse for stopping the trains and depriving us of fuel in this part of the Dominion, since we have at our doors coalfields and there are large quantities of wood rotting between here and Rakaia. If the Government cannot induce men to enter the bowels of the earth and bring us out coal at the present wage, let them give as much as will attract plenty to offer their services. (I would like to see some of our politicians at the job.) Or again let them throw open the coalmines to the public and we will help ourselves sufficiently to boil the pot and warm our hands.

As for shortage of shipping, why in the name of commonsense allow the shipping rings to control the situation in this little island of ours, and to make huge fortunes at our expense? I am told that the money it cost to send our soldiers to the war would have purchased all the ships of the U.S.S. Company. What it cost recently to take a senseless referendum, when we should have had the long-deferred general election at the same time, surely would have paid for a boat or two to bring us coal and provisions and prevent New Zealanders from being stranded in Australia and elsewhere. If we lie down with our mouths closed, without even a protest, we deserve all and more than we are getting. It seems to many (and I am of the number) that the present state of things is a political move before the elections, to discredit Labor so that our artful masters may get into power again. I am surprised that many of our newspapers are so silent. Can it be that they are controlled by the politicians?—I am, etc.,

J. TUBMAN, S.M.

The Priory, Timaru, July 2, 1919.

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