

raiders] bent on pillage. Bishops have suffered for having preached against the Bolsheviki; and the Metropolitan of Kieff, was shot dead for refusing to introduce 'the régime of communal equality' into a convent.

Just as in ancient Rome such happenings as these gained for the Christian Church the largest number of proselytes, these awful sufferings are giving new power to religion in Russia.

Bolshevist efforts to 'annihilate' religion and suffocate the Church have produced exactly the opposite effect. The Russian people have been profoundly impressed by the coincidence of national disaster with the triumph of irreligion. [They see that] this coincidence is not accidental. The attempt being made to expel religion from social life only serves to reveal, even to the unbelieving, the importance of their lost sanctuaries and of the religious bond so rudely broken. They see that hitherto the existence of social life has depended entirely on this bond. They see that religion has raised man above the savage state and made him *man* in the true sense of the word.

The Bolsheviki have given them a demonstration *ad oculos* that irreligion [erected into a principle] ends in bestiality. . . *

At the present moment the connection between the sins of the Russian people and the [ruin of Russian society] is penetrating deeper and deeper into the consciousness of the [masses]. At the Council of Moscow in 1917-18 and in [many] other religious gatherings I have heard the speeches of simple peasants, and been deeply impressed by the lucidity of their thoughts about this matter. They see clearly that all their sufferings, even the famine which is destroying their fellows by tens of thousands, has its origin in a moral source; it is not the sterility of the soil that deprives them of their daily bread, but 'iniquity walking on the earth'; it is the strife of brother with brother which has ruined the country and destroyed honest labor. 'We have forgotten God and become wild beasts. That is the sole cause of our [misery].' This is the way these simple folk sum up the present condition of [their country].

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THE IRISH SITUATION

BY SIR HORACE PLUNKETT

LONG before the war, I was convinced that the peace of the world and the orderly progress, if not the survival of western civilization, depended, more than on any other one thing, upon a right mutual understanding between the British Commonwealth of Free Nations—a term I pre-

fer, to 'the British Empire'—and the great republic of the West. When war came, being too old to fight, I strove to help in some small way toward such an understanding. I began my American investigations in the first winter of the war, and they had not gone far before

* Three sentences undecipherable.

I found that English relations with Ireland were a factor, the disregard of which would render all other work in this field futile.

In March, 1916, I had nearly an hour's conference with Lord Kitchener, at his request. He wanted to talk to me about a memorandum I had written upon the causes keeping America out of the war, into which I had from the outset been convinced she would be inevitably drawn. He gave it as his considered opinion that if America came in at once the war would be brought to a speedy end. I have not myself the least doubt, but I have no time here to give you a tithe of the proof, that, even supposing the Irish trouble had nothing to do with the beginning of the war, it was an important factor in delaying her decisive participation. To the same cause was due a great deal of political embarrassment to the war administration at Washington.

Only the splendid loyalty to America of the Irish-Americans saved the situation. Even so, notwithstanding a government control of news unprecedented in the history of the British people, Ireland has become the final proof to every enemy of England in America, that British aims in war and peace are insincere so far as they relate to the liberty of small nationalities.

Now and again some prominent politician wins cheers by telling America to mind her own business. I agree that it is undesirable — improper I suppose — for alien legislative bodies or official representatives of alien governments to indulge in official utterances or actions which are technically 'unfriendly.' But what these people or bodies, rightly or wrongly, say or do, is of infinitesimal importance compared with the popular opinion they represent.

In America I have recently found a more bitter anti-English feeling than

in all my forty years of observation. As usual, although due to many other causes, it was tangled up with the Irish trouble, and was generally expressed in what I may call Irish terms. Personally, I am glad of this, because it will make many people who hesitate to attempt the almost impossible task of understanding and helping to solve the Irish question, see that no sacrifice is too great with such an end in view. The Americans don't bother themselves with details; they want Ireland to have as large a measure of self-government as is consistent with the military safety of the British Empire, for which many Americans believe they are almost as much concerned as the British are. They would also concede to minorities, more particularly to that of Ulster, ample security from any possible, even if improbable, oppression by the majority of the Irish people.

American opinion does not want Ireland to be an independent republic; it does want Ireland to have all the independence that can be given to it subject to the two qualifications I have named. But, as between the present proposals of the government and an Irish Republic, it would certainly choose an Irish Republic. In any case, until the government ceases to break its promises to Ireland the sentiment of America will be that the Irish people are justified in asking anything they like.

I come now to the bill [now before Parliament]. Its avowed object, the better government of Ireland, presented the draftsman with an easier task than that of devising a worse government for Ireland than we now enjoy — I use the word in the Irish sense of enjoying bad health. According to one of its chief sponsors, who frankly told us that when it appeared it would be denounced by every man, woman, and

child in Ireland, an appropriate title would be, 'A bill to confer upon Ireland government with the dissent of all the governed.'

The first and fundamental principle of an Irish settlement is the recognition of Irish nationality. Do not let us be fooled by academic debates upon what is a nation. We may safely reject all the elaborate and philosophic definitions, and just say that any body of persons living together and feeling that way are a nation. We alone know whether or not we are a nation.

The second fundamental principle is the unity of Ireland. God made us one nation. The British Government, so late as September, 1914, induced Parliament to declare us again one nation. In his famous letter to the Irish Convention of February 25, 1918, Mr. Lloyd George asserted that 'a single legislature for an united Ireland' was 'an essential of a settlement.' Under what pressure does Mr. Lloyd George, in this year of grace 1920, seek to make Parliament declare, in the same Statute Book, that we are two nations? We, of course, know the answer to this question; and we know its implications. Ireland consists, on the one hand, of a backward, disorderly, thriftless, superstitious, but withal amusing, nation — unworthy of the recognition given to Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, and other pioneers of civilization; and, on the other, of a super-nation endowed with the highest civic virtues. Those are the two views of Irish nationality. Four fifths of Ireland and, I have not the smallest doubt, an immense majority of the British people, and the whole world beyond, take one view. Not more than one fifth of the Irish people — I believe a great deal less — take the other view. But this Irish minority is championed by a dominant faction in the Coalition.

The third fundamental principle is one which I will not call self-determination, because that term is as new in politics as are tanks and submarines in modern warfare, and the limitations of its use are not yet established; so I will simply call it the right of people to have the government they desire. I am not afraid of the reply that this is just what Ulster wants for itself, for that is just what I am going to propose that Ulster should have. But this government is not content to give to Ulster that measure of autonomy in its local affairs to which all such minorities are entitled; it is making Ulster a virtual mandatory over Ireland without responsibility.

A brief recital of the ways in which these three fundamental principles of statesmanship in dealing with Ireland are disregarded will suffice to expose the mad folly of attempting to ram the worst of all the four Home Rule Bills down the Irish throat. At the outset it mocks the spirit of Irish nationality, the symbol of which has always been, and always will be, an Irish Parliament.

In the first clause two Parliaments are set up: one for Southern Ireland, and one for Northern Ireland. Now let us examine the method pursued in partitioning Ireland. If Ireland were to be partitioned there were four possible 'Ulsters' that might have been created. Many Irishmen agree that something may be said for the temporary division of the country for all purposes, and a great deal for its permanent division for some purposes. In either case, if the Irish people were consulted about the partition of Ulster, their choice would be in the following order: the fairest and best plan would have been that of County Option; the second best the whole province; the third best the four counties of Antrim, Down, Londonderry, and Armagh,

which have unquestioned Protestant majorities; the fourth and worst, these four counties with Tyrone and Fermanagh, which on a plebiscite would both vote themselves under a Dublin Parliament, coerced into the new Ulster which will ever have to wear its inverted commas. This last plan the government has adopted. I will not now discuss the reasons for the government's decision in this matter, as it would only raise an angry controversy between two sections of Irishmen who, I am sanguine enough to hope, will before long be given an opportunity to meet in friendly conference and to decide the matter for themselves.

In the second clause we come to the All-Ireland Institution, which is to take the place of the National Parliament, to be legislated away. This monstrosity is to consist of a President appointed by His Majesty — that is, by the English Government — and forty persons, one half of whom must be appointed by the Parliament of the minority, the other half by the Parliament of the majority, before either Parliament can otherwise function. If the Southern Parliament took the trouble to be born it would probably christen itself a republic, and be immediately carried out by an indignant nurse from the Vice-Regal Lodge. Dropping metaphor, Ireland would then present, as a monument to British statesmanship, the spectacle of martial law over the greater part of the country and Home Rule in the northeast corner, the only part of Ireland which never asked for it.

Let us, however, assume for a moment that the apologists of this measure will tell us that it is only a temporary device for 'carrying on,' while men of good will in Ireland try to persuade their fellow countrymen to avail themselves of Clause 3, which is

adorned with the attractive title, 'Power to establish a Parliament for the whole of Ireland.' We there find that both the Southern and the Northern Parliaments may pass identical Acts — a contingency which their composition with perverse ingenuity is calculated to prevent — setting up any Parliament they like. They may endow their bantling with their own powers and gracefully disappear. This happy consummation is to be called the Irish Union.

But now comes perhaps the most amazing provision of the entire bill. When at last we get a National Parliament we find that for the first three years it is not entrusted with the police. All governments require a police to protect the lives and property of the civil population. One wonders whether sixty thousand troops with full modern equipment will still be required to protect the civil police from the civil population. But, even when we can police ourselves, we cannot transact any important national or indeed any international business. At no period shall we be allowed to levy or collect any indirect taxation nor the income tax, which we all know is the chief head of direct taxation.

It really seems a waste of time to labor over the absurdities of the bill. No man who sat through the Convention could take it seriously and ever himself deserve to be taken seriously again if he supported it. I think it worth while to make one general criticism. The feature which sharply distinguishes this measure from all former proposals of British statesmen for an Irish settlement in this: Of nearly everyone of these proposals it might with justice be said that if they had been offered in time they might have been accepted and given a fair trial by the Irish people. At no moment in Irish history, except con-

ceivably in the middle of the great famine, when laughter was drowned with tears, could such a scheme—which could never escape the derision of the outside world—have been commended to any body of sane opinion in Ireland. Not only will the bill not do, but its very foundations are so rotten that it would be impossible to build upon them any constitutional edifice to which the name of self-government could be applied.

We demand for Ireland all the self-government that is consistent with the prevailing ideas of military safety for this little group of islands. At the same time, we propose to deal with the Ulster difficulties as similar difficulties have been met elsewhere through the Empire, notably in Canada. We recognize the fact that propinquity necessitates a restriction, not applying to the distant Dominions, in the matter of military and naval defense; but on the other hand, when Anglo-Irish friendship is created, it should have enormous advantages to compensate for whatever disadvantage there may be in not having our own army and navy, or being allowed to entrust our defense to any country, or combination of countries, possibly hostile to Britain.

I see that Mr. De Valera, who has evidently been confronted with this crux, is citing Cuba as the precedent to follow in setting up an Irish Republic. He points out that, by the Treaty of 1903, Cuba voluntarily undertook not to allow herself to be used by any foreign power for military or naval purposes. He suggests that the Irish Republic would be quite willing to make a similar concession. The analogy does not carry us far, because nobody can compare the military importance of Cuba to the United States with that of Ireland to the now United Kingdom. I find, too, that the

same treaty gives the United States power to intervene 'for the preservation of Cuban independence and for the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty'; in other words, England would retain the right to occupy Ireland at any moment—a right for the exercise of which she could always plead at least as much moral justification as she can claim for her present behavior.

More essential perhaps at the moment than the details of the settlement we propose [as a substitute for the present bill] is the manner in which we suggest that it should be brought before the Irish people for their consideration, and, if approved, passed rapidly into law by the Imperial Parliament. The plan is quite simple. We tell the government that since the majority of the Irish people are not at present represented in Parliament—their principal representatives are in jail—it is quite futile to attempt to adjust there the constitutional questions now dividing Irishmen. Parliament, however, must make a firm offer to Ireland of the government that she wants, subject to the two conditions of defense and the safeguards to minorities. Therefore, let a constituent assembly of Irishmen, elected by the country on a basis of proportional representation, be immediately given statutory authority to draft the Irish constitution. It is quite certain that such a body would give to any portion of Ireland which desired it the widest measure of local autonomy, subject to national questions being within the sole competence of the national Parliament. To me it seems that this procedure would inevitably lead to the nearest approach that is possible in the circumstances to a Dominion status, and that is what we mean when we use the name.

I am quite aware that a considerable body of opinion, having no confidence whatever in the good faith of the British Parliament, holds that any Irish constitutional convention or constituent assembly should have a working connection with the League of Nations, a proposal upon which I am quite open-minded, but it is far too complicated to deal with here. I will only mention one consideration which weighs with me personally. I dislike all outside interference; I hold that the Irish question will never be settled anywhere except in Ireland. In America, no doubt, it would be disposed of in one way; in Prussia in another. At Geneva or in Paris, it would be a chance what would be done with it; but as the case would be presented anywhere outside of Ireland, there would be grave danger of partition. It is only where Irishmen can meet together, without any outside interference, that they can prove, as the Convention [held during the war] went a long way to prove, that in friendly discussion their agreements predominate over disagreements.

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GERMAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

AN INTERVIEW WITH A SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE

A MEMBER of our staff had an interview yesterday with Mr. Kopp, the newly appointed representative of Soviet Russia in Berlin. This gentleman, as is generally known, comes to negotiate an exchange of prisoners.

The number of German war prisoners for whose return from Russia we are negotiating is about thirty thousand. They are mostly German soldiers who were detained in the Siberian territories recently conquered by the Soviet army. Those who were

in territories constantly under Bolshevik control returned to Germany long ago, with the exception of a few who elected to remain in Russia.

A much larger number of Russian war prisoners is still held in Germany — the total is estimated at a quarter of a million. To this should be added the troops of the anti-Bolshevist officer, Bermond-Avalof, who are now interned in Germany. The Soviet Government will grant these prisoners amnesty, upon their parole not to engage in counter-revolutionary agitation if they return to Russia.

However, Mr. Kopp has other questions which he hopes to negotiate, in addition to arranging for the exchange of prisoners. The latter indeed is a minor matter compared with the more important subject of resuming commerce between the two countries. Russia is in urgent need of German machinery, coal, and medicines. It would like to obtain, moreover, German specialists, administrators, and skilled workers. In return for these things, it can supply us with raw materials.

In this connection, our interviewer referred to the preparations that the Entente Powers were making for a resumption of trade with Russia, speaking particularly of the report that the English were buying up all the ruble notes they could procure in order to employ them in making their Russian purchases.

Mr. Kopp replied that that would be a business blunder. Russia did not propose to exchange its property for money. Such a policy would be folly. Neither would it consent to resuming trade on the same basis as that already arranged between the Entente and Germany. Russia did not propose to squander its substance on English cigarettes. For a considerable period no articles for personal consumption