

NATIONALITY

EDITED BY ARTHUR GRIFFITH.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1918.

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WEEK BY WEEK.

Meetings in support of Sinn Féin were held on Sunday in Portlanna, where Mr. Darrell Figgis was the chief speaker; at Killesno (Carlow), Mr. Kevin O'Higgins; at Oshir (Tipperary), Count Plunkett; at Navan, Mr. Jos. Dixon; and at Cliffrina (Cavan), Mr. O'Mullane.

Offaly on Friday last unanimously elected Dr. McCartan as its representative. It could not have chosen a more patriotic Irishman, nor at the moment struck a better blow for the country. Dr. McCartan has been in the United States for months urging the case of Ireland on the American Government and the American people. His election by Offaly gives him the seal of Ireland's approval, and will materially strengthen his hand in his dealings with the Government of America. Four persons were, in turn, appealed to to stand in opposition to Dr. McCartan, and the reply of two—Mr. Bermingham and Mr. Dalton—was to range themselves on Dr. McCartan's side. So much had the enthusiasm grown that it is safe to say no opponent of the Doctor's candidature would have polled a hundred votes.

All Ireland knows now that on the issue of conscription for England's army Irish parties are at one. Ireland has pledged itself to resist by every effective means any attempt to enforce conscription upon Ireland against Ireland's will. The Catholic hierarchy of Ireland has been true to its great mission and its noblest traditions in the crisis, and its action in ranging itself in the van of the Nation ensures that between religion and patriotism no conflict will ever occur in Ireland, and it strips the mask from the face of a foreign force claiming a moral sanction to dispose of the lives and honour of Irishmen. On Tuesday Ireland, on the advice of the Irish Labour Congress, ceased all work as a mark of its determination. On the previous Sunday and on that day the bulk of the adult population of Ireland signed the solemn pledge to resist conscription to the last. Parish Committees of Defence have been formed already in most cases from the signatories to the pledge. Next Sunday these parishes which have not yet elected their committees should do so.

From the Mansion House Conference the instruction has gone forth that nothing that might in any way facilitate the English Government in attempting to enforce conscription must be done by any Irishman or Irishwoman. Each public employee and every citizen generally will obey this instruction. The Lord Mayor of Dublin will proceed from the Conference to Washington to hand to President Wilson the statement of the case of Ireland against an effort by one nation to impose conscription upon another nation. The bulk of the people of Australia and the Australian Catholic hierarchy have telegraphed their support to Ireland in the crisis, and Australia and all the world may be assured that in this hour Ireland will be true to the principle of the Right of Small Nations to Self-Determination, be the cost to Ireland what it may.

The following statement, signed by all the members, was issued by the Mansion House Conference—

Taking our stand on Ireland's separate and distinct nationhood, and affirming the principle of liberty, that the Governments of nations derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, we deny the right of the British Government or any external authority to impose compulsory military service on Ireland against the clearly expressed will of the Irish people.

The passing of the Conscription Bill by the British House of Commons must be regarded as a declaration of war on the Irish nation. The alternative to accepting it, as such, is to surrender our liberties and to acknowledge ourselves slaves. It is in direct violation of the rights of small nationalities to self-determination, which even the Prime Minister of England—now prepared to employ naked militarism to enforce this Act upon Ireland—himself officially announced as an essential condition for peace at the Peace Conference.

The attempt to enforce it will be unwarrantable aggression, which we call upon all Irishmen to resist by the most effective means at their disposal.

The pretence that Ireland's nationality is merely one of England's "domestic" concerns has disappeared. Mr. Lloyd

George threw it overboard when introducing the Conscription Bill, admitting openly that Home Rule was to be "tendered" to Ireland in order to obtain the approval of the United States. The "Observer," a paper with close social connections, now goes a step further. It frankly entreats President Wilson to intervene between England and Ireland on England's behalf. "The Irish question can only be settled by the help of a plain understanding between Britain and the United States." Accordingly the President is implored to make a statement condemning the Irish resistance to conscription if Home Rule be granted. "His incomparable power of moral appeal could be exerted with immense effect"—and England's way would then be left clear to deal with Ireland as she desires. After this prayer to America to assist her against Ireland, England is debarred from the "domestic" hypocrisy for ever.

But what answer will the prayer receive? Tyrant and tyrannised are appealing simultaneously to the great Republic across the flood. To which will it give ear? Its position is curiously like that in which Ireland stood during the American War of Independence. When Americans, reviled by the English as rebels and traitors, were fighting for their freedom they appealed to Ireland. By common consent it was the Irish response that enabled them to win—Independence. The appeal is now reversed. Irishmen, their backs to the wall, rely on memories of the past and ask Americans for aid. It is for Americans to give the only answer that would be worthy of them and of free men.

We notice that some Irish newspapers are quoting extracts from the New York "Times" and "Sun," and that "Parnell" presents opinion in the United States. We further notice that it is practically the only New York paper quoted. The chief papers in New York, in the order of their importance, are—the New York "American," "Tribune," "Sun," "Evening Post," and "World." The semi-obscure "Times" is the only New York paper whose views are permitted by its inspirer the British Government to penetrate into Ireland—with an occasional dash of the "World." Similarly, the only Continental papers whose views are telegraphed to Ireland are the Anglophil papers of the Continent. Before the war over a hundred journals published on the Continent were directly or indirectly controlled by England. How many she controls now it is hard to say. But the organs constantly quoted in her Press as reflexes of foreign opinion are organs tied to her by links of gold.

Numerous Cumann na mBan branches have written to Headquarters recently for information as to how they should act in the present crisis. Secretaries must understand the difficulties in the way of transmitting information through the post. They are recommended to send for verbal information by members coming to town. The Secretaries attend at 6 Harcourt St. every afternoon, and will give every assistance to country members. The Organiser has almost completed the time which she had planned to devote to Ulster, and the Executive hopes to arrange for a tour of Connaught next. Branches are reminded that it is impossible to send an organiser for isolated meetings; only when there is a possibility of arranging a number of meetings is it worth an organiser's time to take a journey. It is very important that the work of registration should not be neglected during the present excitement. The women's votes may be a determining factor at the General Election, and no effort should be spared in securing them.

A Member of the Church of Ireland writes:—"The Primate and Archbishop of Dublin, in issuing their manifesto with regard to conscription, speak as though they represent the voice of the Church. Such is not the case. Sinn Féin members of the Church of Ireland, through a sense of loyalty to the Church, have for long passively submitted to their Church being exploited for political ends. This loyalty has proved to be mistaken by our betrayal by the Primate and Archbishop, who have now placed the Church of Ireland in a position as is calculated may be used as a political weapon to separate us from our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, in whose national aspirations we are one. It is a mischievous proceeding, and necessitates immediate action on the part of the laity of the Church of Ireland to counteract possible evil effects resulting there-

from. Thus, while many Protestants would wish to associate themselves with their R.C. countrymen in the pledge against conscription, they consider an independent protest obligatory under the circumstances. Instant action is urgent, and Protestants of all denominations should sign the protest which is in circulation without delay. Miss Nellie O'Brien, 11 Hume Street, is receiving names, and will supply forms for signatures on application."

The following is a list of the Sinn Féin Clubs in Dublin, with Secretary's name and address, where the National Pledge may be signed:—Dublin Central (St. Stephen's Green): Miss P. Hoey, 6 Harcourt St., Dublin. "O'Rahilly," Inns Quay: R. O'Moynia, 26 Blessington St. "Famonn Ceant," Merchants' Quay Ward: W. Larkin and Miss Coventry, 105-6 James's St. "Thomas Davis," South Dock Ward: Sean McMahon, 144 Gt. Brunswick St. Blackrock Township (St. Stephen's Green): Liam Peller, 13 George's Avenue. St. Margaret's (N.): Thomas Duke, St. Margaret's, Co. Dublin. Balbriggan: James Derham, Drogheda St., Balbriggan. Donabate: D. McAlister, Staffordstown, Donabate. "Sean Connolly," North Dock Ward: Michael Ua Brinn, 33 North Summer St. Rathmines and Rathgar: T. Byrne, 53a Rathmines Road. "Peadar O'Mailefin," Trinity Ward: Thomas Cassidy, 144 Gt. Brunswick St. "Sean McDermott," Drumcondra: Peadar Mac an Ríogh, 45 St. Patrick's Road, Drumcondra. "Con Colbert," New Kilmmainham: P. S. O'Dubhghaill, 159 Emmet Road. "Bros. Pearse," Rathfarnham: Joe McDevitt, St. Enda's, Oakley Road, Rathfarnham. "MacDonagh," Ranelagh: S. S. de Burea, St. Enda's, Oakley Road, 1 de Burea, Ranelagh. "Sean O'Connell," Parnell Square: "Sean Houston," Arran Quay: Peter Healy, 44 Parnell Square. Clontarf East: J. C. Forde, 5 Marino Avenue, Clontarf. Mountjoy Ward: Thos. Slater, 10 Margaret Place. "MacBride," Dunleary: C. Somers, 111 Lower George's St., Kingstown. Fitzwilliam Ward (Camden St.): D. O'Reardon, 34 Camden St. North City Ward: Maurice Collins, 65 Parnell St. "Pearse" (Clondalkin): Fred Jacob, Clondalkin, South City Ward: L. Raul, 31 Exchequer St. and 65 South William St. "M. Malone," Wood Quay: James O'Byrne, 37 O'Keeffe's Terrace, Blackpits, Sandymount: W. Carroll, 26 Bath Avenue, Sandymount. Usher's Quay: P. C. Adams and W. Larkin, 105-6 James's St. Howth: L. P. Bowen, Melrose, Howth. Royal Exchange Ward: L. Raul, 65 South William St. Glasnevin Ward: J. V. Lawless, 25 B. Lane Avenue, Glasnevin. Finglas: G. Lawless, Little Jamestown, Finglas.

The Irish National Association of Queensland, Australia, communicates to us the fact that the Irish of Queensland are with Sinn Féin to a man. Two cablegrams sent by the Irish National Association of Queensland to Ireland were never delivered.

"What Are We Fighting For?" is a heading frequently seen in the English newspapers. The information seems to be badly needed, judging from the conflicting statements that are made daily. The Prime Minister, when bringing in the Conscription Bill, produced the "small nationalities" argument once more. For doing so he was rebuked next day by the "Morning Post," which declared that "we are long past that." The "Times," too, has pointed out at least twice that England did not go to war to save Belgium or any other small nation, but in order to preserve the balance of power in Europe. On the other hand, President Wilson has poured scorn on "the great game, now for ever discredited, of the balance of power," and Mr. Balfour only the other day, speaking of England's "ideals," declared that President Wilson "has stated them with a perfection of form and a force of language which few, if any, living public men can rival." On the other hand again, Lord Grey has admitted that England pledged herself to fight before any threat to Belgium had been so much as heard of. All this is slightly confusing. It recalls the mental state of the English soldier who, while entraining at the outbreak of the war, was overheard to say: "I am going to fight the bloody Belgians. I am going to the whole bloody lot." If Matthew Arnold were alive he would find many fresh and entertaining illustrations of his favourite thesis that the English nation was "lacking in lucidity."

The Canadian "Daily Record" says:—

"Sir Robert Borden proposed to confer on the Speaker authority to delete from official reports of the proceedings of the Canadian House of Commons any adverse statement, report, or opinion concerning the cause of the war, or the motives or purposes for which Canada, Great Britain, or the Allied Nations entered the struggle."

Mr. Arthur Griffith was unanimously selected at a Convention of Sinn Féin and the clergy of East Cavan on Sunday last as candidate for the representation of that constituency. The Very Rev. Father O'Connell, P.P., V.G., presided.

On Wednesday last the "Freeman's Journal" opened its leading article with a charge of political indecency against those priests and people who selected Mr. Griffith as their candidate for East Cavan. It charged them with having met in convention and made the selection before the late member, Mr. Young, had been buried. To support the falsehood it purported to quote from the "Daily Independent" of Saturday. The convention did not take place until Sunday night—two days after Mr. Young's funeral—and the report appeared, of course, in the "Daily Independent" of Monday. The stupid malignancy which caused the editor of the "Freeman's Journal" to falsify two dates in order to enable him to make a false and mean charge against clergymen like the Very Rev. Dr. O'Connell, P.P., V.G., is characteristic; but we thought that for the moment the "Freeman" had been wise enough to discard such methods.

The latest effort of the British Food Controller is to issue an Order which has the effect of closing down the Communal Kitchens which for the past year have supplied daily meals to three thousand of Dublin's stricken poor. These depots were conducted by the members of charitable organisations, and were managed free of any charge. A charge of two pence each was made for the meals. They were worked with less expense and a smaller loss than the corresponding National Kitchens in England. The price of meat is due to the scarcity which has arisen as a result of the Food Controller's Cattle Prices Order. The result made it impossible to carry on the depots without loss, which amounts to only one quarter, the balance of the expenses being recouped by the charges. Hitherto the loss was met by a grant of £2,000 from the National Relief Fund, but now the Food Controller has forbidden the Local Government Board to advance any more money for this charitable purpose. It appears that the Food Controller decreed that Communal Kitchens should be conducted without loss. If they were earning a profit they would no doubt have attracted the Food Controller's sympathy, and possibly he would have invested a fraction of his enormous war profits and commissions in them. But he has no use for charitable organisations. The fact that they are run at a loss is, of course, contrary to his business principles. It matters not that Dublin has been severely hit by the war and by the high cost of food and lack of employment. The city has contributed upwards of £25,000 to the National Relief Fund established to meet special emergencies arising out of distress due to the war. Apparently the citizens have no voice in the disposal of their money.

It is announced from Kilkenny that it has at last come to pass that the Castlecomer collieries are to have rail connection between the pits and the main line at Clontarf or Jenkinstown, near Ballyragget, a distance of 12 miles from the coalfields. For three hundred years these pits have been working, and it is passing strange that the railway has been so long in coming. The iron hand of circumstances has yanked off the clutching hand of British trade monopoly. The announcement is almost too good to be true, but we believe that the coal and shipping position has reached such a climax that the opening of the coalfields cannot be delayed. The Colliery Company has long demanded these elementary facilities, and the line has long ago been surveyed, planned, mapped out, and sanction obtained, but the invisible hand which keeps everything back was interposed effectually. The gradient is an easy one, there are no bridges, except culverts, to be built, and no engineering difficulties exist, so the line ought to be ready for traffic next year.

Owing to the National Cessation of Work on Tuesday, "Nationality" is published on Friday this week instead of on Thursday.

Presumption.

Sinn Fein Badges (Tricolour), 2d. each; postage extra.
Sinn Fein Badges, Enamelled in Tricolour in form of Stud, 7d., post free.
Irish Volunteer Cap Badge, officer's or private's, 1/6; mounted on strong safety pin for brooch, 2/- each.
Irish Boy Scout Shirts, 7/6 each.
Boy Scout Hats, 2/6; by post, 2/8.
Scout Belts, two swivels, 2/-, by post 2/3.
Scout Knives, 1/8 post free.
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NATIONALITY.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1918.

NO LEADING ARTICLE APPEARS IN OUR ISSUE THIS WEEK.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE.

Four years ago, before the introduction of the still-born Home Rule Bill, we wrote as follows in "Sinn Fein" on the question of Customs and Excise. To-day the facts are worth re-reading:

A great many people labour under the impression that the control of Customs by Ireland means the taxation of English goods coming into Ireland, and have gone to some trouble to argue that if Ireland levied Custom taxes against England, England could overwhelm Ireland by practically closing her markets to Irish produce. If this were the case it is obvious that Ireland would not levy Customs taxes against England. But the question of the control of Customs is not a question of whether Ireland will or will not adopt a tariff against England. It is a question of whether Ireland is to remain for ever subject to the fiscal policy which a majority of the British Parliament may at any time pursue without concern for Ireland's interests. Eighty years ago England pursued the most rigidly protective policy in Europe. Ireland was forced to pursue the same policy without regard to whether it suited her or not. Sixty years ago England reversed her fiscal policy, and Ireland was forced to do the same. Five years hence England may return to Protection, and if Ireland be still in her present political position or if she be governed by a Home Rule Executive which has no control over Customs Ireland must be forced into Protection. Ten years later, if England returned again to Free Imports, Ireland would be forced to follow suit. Control of Customs does not necessarily mean the imposition of a tariff now or hereafter against England. It means the ability of Ireland to pursue a fiscal policy suited to her needs. It means security for Irish trade and commerce. Ireland cannot have a settled fiscal policy—she cannot have security for her trade and commerce—while her Customs are in any other country's hands. The question of Customs is not—let us repeat and emphasise—a question of raising tariffs against England. It is a question of preserving Ireland from having her fiscal policy upset every time a new fiscal doctrine appeals to the English electors as good for England.

What the retention of Customs by England means to the man in the street is that tea, sugar, coffee, cocoa, and wine will continue to have their prices regulated by England. The authority of the Irish Parliament in College-Green will not extend to the grocer at the corner. The control of Excise by the British Government with a Home Rule Legislature in Ireland means the control of spirits, beer, licences and some smaller duties. It means that the authority of the Irish Parliament will be blocked at the publichouse counter. The distilleries and breweries of Ireland and the Irish tobacco-grower will be governed from London, not from Dublin. England will continue to regulate the price of our whiskey and stout and tobacco, and to grant us licence to trade in these things. At any time, with a Home Rule Legislature sitting in College Green, a foreign Parliament can raise taxation to a point which may force the Irish tobacco-grower to abandon his labour, the Irish tobacco-manufacturer to retire from business, and the Irish brewer and distiller to raise the price of these products 50 per cent. With Excise under control of the British Parliament, and a Home Rule Legislature in being in Ireland, England can at any time increase the cost of spirits, beer and tobacco on the Irish consumer, or even, if she be so minded, destroy or diminish one or all of these industries, the Irish Legislature helplessly looking on.

If all this does not make it sufficiently plain that the control of Irish Customs and Excise by England under a Home Rule scheme would mean that, to use Mr. Asquith's word, the Home Rule Government would be a mere simulacrum, this fact will make it plain—Customs and Excise yield three-fourths of the total revenue of Ireland. Customs and Excise retained to England under Home Rule means that England will control fifteen shillings in every pound of Ireland's tax-yield and keep the accounts herself. Here is what it means for all to carry in their minds:—

Q. What does the control of Irish Customs and Excise by England mean in the event of Home Rule?

A. It means that England can change, alter or vary Irish fiscal policy at any time; that England shall regulate the price of tea, sugar, coffee, cocoa, industrial spirit, dried fruits, tobacco, stout, spirits, and wine; that England shall collect fifteen shillings in every pound sterling of Irish revenue, and shall herself keep the books and take them.

THE WAR.

The German offensive has now lasted just four weeks, in the course of which it has accomplished many important successes. These are:—(1) The capture of over 100,000 prisoners, over 1,500 guns and vast quantities of war materials of all kinds. (2) The capture of much territory and many important towns and ways of communication. (3) An improvement in the morale of the armies and people as compared to the Allies. (4) A strategical situation capable of still further development in their favour. Moreover, there is no evidence of their having paid what would be considered as more than a reasonable price for these advantages.

There are also grounds for thinking that the Allied General Reserve has been heavily drawn upon. In the fighting on the Somme French and American troops intervened on the third day. In the Lys battles no French troops were in line for eight or ten days, perhaps because they had to be taken from here or there in sectors of minor importance. It seems likely that English troops unaided are not equal to a war of manoeuvre in masses against the Germans. Thus any undue calls upon the French Reserves—and such seem to have been made—appreciably favour the Germans.

It seems strange that if a great Allied Reserve is actually in being no counter-offensive has been made—as distinct from counter-attacks to recover lost ground. The situation is not one in which the Allies can afford to hold back such a counter-offensive if it is in their power to make it with a prospect of success.

But it seems that the Allies hope to fend off the German offensive until it exhausts itself. For this they are unfavourably placed, because at certain points very slight advances by the Germans would have much strategic value. Thus they are only 24 miles from Bethune, 3 1/2 from Ypres, 4 from Arras, 4 1/2 from Hazebrouck, 8 from Amiens. To discount the loss of any or all of these they are presumably working hard to increase their communications further in rear, so that the loss of such places would not be a crippling blow—though unquestionably very serious. Moreover the English masses are now on a narrow strip of territory affording little scope for retreat.

But, on the other hand, the English front is the densest ever known in men and guns—men are crowded almost breast against knapsack on the narrow strip back to the Channel. The front must average in depth close on 15 to 20 men per yard of front, so that as regards men and guns there will be at any point plenty of local reserves. Thus the physical stolidity of such masses by itself is a formidable defensive resource even though the English Command is incapable of turning to full effect.

Nor can Foch for all his great capacity wholly make good the defects of the English Command. Still he may, by insert-

ing French divisions here and there—moving English troops to quiet sectors to release them—stiffen the resistance of the whole.

It is to be remembered that the continuance of the U-boat warfare in anything like its present effectiveness will exert a steadily increasing pressure on the Allied resources.

In general the pursuance of the German initial gains must take the form of leveraging loose the extraordinarily massive English front and loosening its cohesion. Thus the two successful advances have in the course of things produced a possibility of a further important gain—quite apart from the evacuation of the English positions east of Ypres won last year at very heavy cost. Arras and Bethune are now in a blunt salient some ten miles deep by thirty across the base, which might be attacked from the Merville-La Bassée direction or from that of Albert-Bapaume as soon as the Germans had brought forward the artillery, etc., necessary to prepare a powerful attack. A successful attack on this salient would be a serious blow to the English, depriving them of important communications, of the Bethune coalfields, and of more inevitable losses in men and material, while it would also impair their morale.

Other possibilities are a continuance of the Lys offensive towards Poperinge and Ypres, which possibly would need some extra time, or a new move on Amiens. That place has by now probably had a great part of its material stores moved back to Abbeville, which is now doubtless the great link between the English and French, and the Germans already impair much of its value as a railway centre. Even still, though, its loss would be a serious blow.

The Germans have, for the further prosecution of their offensive against the English, secured a strong defensive flank against the French. In this respect their position has been considerably improved by the recent operations, in the course of which the French were forced from the region south of Chauny-Coucy over the Ailette. This also helped further to protect Laon, a possible objective for a counter-offensive. Only on the Montdidier-Noyon sector is the front comparatively weak, and even here the railways admit of the forwarding of material in adequate quantities, while some weeks have fallen to them during which to consolidate the sector.

What further forces the Germans can dispose of for the offensive is not possible to ascertain. They might conceivably bring large numbers of Austrians—especially Austrian artillery—from Italy, supposing no further offensive there were intended; and they certainly have large numbers of troops in the depots to make good wastage. Upon the whole, there is no likelihood of troops failing for a considerable time.

For defensive operations the Germans are well placed even if their attack stopped now. Numerically they are far stronger than ever, while the Allies can never hope to exceed the strength of 1917. Economically also Germany is much better off than formerly. Finally, the English line is now unfavourable for resuming the offensive from.

There is a limit to the distance the English armies can retire and remain "in being." Thus the loss of Hazebrouck would compromise them in the north, while that of St. Omer would finish them. Similarly, in the centre, to abandon Bethune or Arras would be a serious blow; to lose St. Pol or Doullens would mean disintegration. As regards the maintenance of contact with the French, Amiens is most desirable, but so long as Abbeville is retained contact of a sort is possible. From St. Omer and Doullens the nearest German lines are little more than fifteen miles away; from St. Pol about twenty-five. Thus advances similar to the two former ones would probably mean the complete overthrow of the English armies.

ENGLAND AND NORWAY.

Obliviousness of international law and practice makes a rapidly vanishing section of faint-hearted Irishmen suggest that it would be too complicated, too wearisome, a task for the Powers of Europe to devise a charter of independence for a country like Ireland, with its previous political fortunes so closely bound up with those of a stronger neighbour. Such a document, they imagine, would have to bristle with complications, guard the designs of its signatories with a thousand legal formalities, and perhaps be as deviously insidious as a British "Government of Ireland Act." The Powers could not be expected to take the trouble.

No such idea is justified. The procedure would be simplicity itself—provided only that the Powers ruling the roost have made up their minds, and that Ireland has not only made up its mind, but shown it to be made up. That is proved by the latest precedent (of independence conferred by intervention of the Powers) in the case of an overruled, out-voted nation caught in a bogus political "Union." This was a case occurring no later than 1907, the case of Norway's independence of Sweden, initiated by Norway's own unmistakably expressed wish as a nation, but actually effected without bloodshed by four Powers only indirectly concerned in the dispute. These liberating Powers were Germany,

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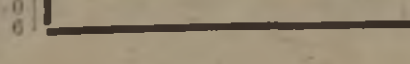
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A Few of the Boys at No. 40	15
Peadar Puirseul	5
Patrick McShane, Ballyholly	5
Michael McLaughlin, Ballyholly	10

land, Miss Duffy	0 10 0	Smaller Sums	0
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"Leander" - Works, Cork

