

NATIONALITY

EDITED BY ARTHUR GRIFFITH.

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SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1918.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

WEEK BY WEEK.

On Sunday an enthusiastic meeting in support of Sinn Fein was held in Mullinagh, Longford, where Mr. Joseph MacGuinness was the chief speaker. In Cavan some twenty meetings were held, including monster meetings at Virginia, Kilmaleck, and Bailieboro, the speakers including the Sinn Fein candidate, Mr. Arthur Griffith; Professor Eoin MacNeill, Count Plunkett, Messrs. Gavan Duffy, S. T. O'Connell, T. C. P. McKenna, V. C. General Council of County Councils; Philip Baxter, Co. C.; Jos. Campbell, John O'Mahony, J. K. O'Reilly, Michael Brady, Philip Monaghan, J. Gallagher, Wm. Sears, etc.

Among the Parliamentary orators in East Cavan last Sunday was Mr. John O'Connor, M.E.P., who declared in the English House of Commons that he opposed conscription because it was inadvisable at present. Mr. David Sheehy, who appeared the previous Sunday to oppose the Sinn Fein candidate, has had this week the gratification of learning that the Conscription Government has given his son a job in the Leeward Islands. Sir Walter Nugent, M.E.P., who refused to sign the pledge against conscription; Captain Gwynne, M.E.P., who announces himself favourable to "gradual" conscription, and Captain William Redmond, who declared in the English House of Commons that he is not opposed to conscription "in principle," and has been rewarded by the Government with a post similar to that held by Major Price, may be in the constituency next Sunday to support their candidate.

That there is no limit to English credulity, the English correspondents who come to this country and spend their time in hotel-bars and the billiard-saloons, genially admit. The palm for lying goes to that representative of the English Press at present amongst us who wrote to his paper last week that as he was driving from Dublin to the Phoenix Park "the peasant women along the road" shouted at the young men passing by "in Gaelic." He asked his javey to translate, and the javey translated the Gaelic of the peasant women who lined the road "between Dublin and the Phoenix Park" to mean that they were taunting the young men that they would have to accept conscription. Yet there are people in Ireland who still believe that "English Special Correspondents" at the "front" and elsewhere deal in truth.

Some time ago the English agencies invented a story to the effect that the American flag had been burned in Galway and carried it to the United States. The people of Dungarvan point out to us a report appearing in a local paper to the effect that on the evening of the celebrations then in connection with the victory of Dr. McCartan American motor lorries were "beached and jeered." The contrary is the fact. On that evening American sailors cheered the Sinn Fein procession and were in turn cheered by the Sinn Feiners. The name of the correspondent responsible for the invention is given to us as Bowen.

Last week Sir Edward Carson addressed a letter to the Press in which he said that the British Government had "the clearest evidence in their possession that the Sinn Fein organisation is and has been in alliance with Germany." A day later a message was put up in the English House of Lords to say the same thing. Two days later the Northcliffe Press followed up the cue. Another day and "the Press" was enabled to view a "collapsible boat" upon which a mysterious person was alleged to have landed in Ireland. Two days more and Mr. Barnes—of the English "Labour" Party—was instructed to represent Irish Nationalism as "pro-Germanism"—to be put down with a firm hand. The meaning is obvious. England is attempting to represent Ireland's opposition to her rule and our determination to resist conscription to the end as being instigated by Germany. It is her attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the United States and of France.

Sir Richard Cooper, M.P., speaking in the English House of Commons the other day of the opposition of the Irish farmers and the Irish people generally to England's attempt to conscript them, remarked: "If they resist, I say shoot!" This gallant Briton is the proprietor of "Cooper's Sheep Dip," which he solicits the Irish farmers to buy; but just at this moment he is anxious they should not be

aware of the fact that "Cooper's Sheep Dip" is his property.

The "Times of India" announces that a Royal Proclamation has been issued establishing a branch of the Mint at Bombay, India being made free in future to coin her own money. Thus one more of "the prerogatives of the Crown" has passed from England to India, and one great step on the road to economic independence has been gained by the Indians. In the so-called "Home Rule Bill" "on the Statute Book" the right now accorded to India—the right to coin its own money—is expressly forbidden to Ireland. The present monetary crisis in Ireland demonstrates what it means to a country abounding, like Ireland, in silver and with unworked stores of copper and gold, to be forbidden to have its own Mint and stamp its own money. Is Ireland to be content with less than India—which sends no members to the English Parliament—has demanded, and has now received?

Here is a paragraph from the English newspapers:—

At an inquest at Bedford on Second Lieutenant MacLachlan and Miss Gilbert, who were drowned by the capsizing of a canoe, the evidence showed that, though several boats were near, they refused assistance, and the occupants of one boat laughed and rowed away.

The beings who refused assistance, and who laughed at a hapless man and woman drowning, are of the nation which professes to be fighting for civilisation. Had such a thing occurred in Germany, how the English Press would have written of the brutality of the Hun. To insult our country for a moment by imagining it possible to have occurred in Ireland, all the agencies of English Press propaganda throughout the world would have been set at work, and the fact that the poor young fellow who was left to drown happened to be a British officer would have been emphasised to suggest an Irish malignity. But, since it happened in England, none of the English papers think it worth comment. And for such a race the Irish people are asked to fight and die.

Figures have been published by the Cork Harbour Board showing that for the nine months, August to April last, three hundred and fifty tons of silver were exported from Cork, while none was imported. We have before us the returns of the Port of Belfast, and we find no evidence of any export of silver therefrom. We do, however, discover the curious and significant entry of forty-nine boxes of "specie" imported into the Port of Belfast, when the export of silver from Cork was at its highest. The record of the movement of "specie" is very curiously omitted entirely from our trade returns. The banks do not return the amount of coin held in their vaults, though there is a Statutory duty imposed on them to do so under the Bank Act. They have received, according to their own balance-sheets, one hundred millions from their depositors.

What the Irish Press thinks of the contest in Cavan is shown by the following extracts:—

A Parliamentary contest in the accepted sense may be avoided if Mr. Griffith's suggestion that a plebiscite of the people of East Cavan should be taken as between him and his opponent is agreed on. But, whatever form is adopted for eliciting the views of the people, there is no doubt that East Cavan is clearly entitled to make its own choice. Waterford City elected a man who is now on the "Intelligence Department" of General French, and will, we suppose, be transferred to General Maxwell when that distinguished soldier takes up the duties now discharged in England by the newly-appointed Irish Lord Lieutenant. East Cavan may be anxious to endorse the verdict of Waterford City, and if she does nobody can reasonably dispute her right to do so. If, on the other hand, she elects Arthur Griffith as her representative, she will be nailing the anti-conscription flag to the mast and asserting Ireland's right to a full measure of National Freedom.—"Kilkenny People."

The issue is clear and definite. The people of East Cavan have the right to say who is to be the man they wish to represent them. The world, including England, knows what Sinn Fein candidates at all elections stand for—the complete independence of Ireland—and in this case in particular, No Conscription. If the Party persist in opposing the Sinn Fein candidate people are entitled to know in very concise terms what is their policy. Where do they

stand? When we have the answer, then we shall be in a position to consider the question of unity in its true perspective. In the meantime Sinn Fein stands for Ireland first and Ireland last.—"Southern Star."

Irishmen can, and we hope will, always remain united, and solidly united, as long as they have an English Government to face and defeat. That is all that the country needs. It does not impair, or it should not impair, and the country will see that it won't impair, that unity, when political issues are raised at home, that they are fought out to the heart's content. The policy of the Irish Party and the policy of Sinn Fein are as widely separated as the Poles. The Irish Party believe, and their belief must be simply unending, in Englishmen and concessions. Sinn Fein believes in Irishmen and in Ireland as the ultimate hope of the national regeneration.—"Westmeath Independent."

It is manifest that the adoption of the plebiscite plan would enable the people of East Cavan to make their choice, while at the same time it would obviate all friction. The rejection of the offer is a grave responsibility which the Party men have thought fit to incur at the same time that they prate of unity.—"The Kerryman."

Rev. Father O'Connell, P.P., V.G., is one of those who have enthusiastically supported Mr. Griffith's candidature, believing as he does—and he shares the opinion of the Irish people generally—that no better selection could be made at the present time. We think his election should go unopposed, as it is the smallest compliment that could be paid his abilities and his efforts in the cause of Nationality. National Unity will not, as such a result, be "manifestly impossible," but rather make for greater bonds of friendship and help at this period. There is one thing certain—that Mr. Griffith will win at the poll, and let there be no doubt about it.—"Leitrim Observer."

The Cavan election is now almost as much discussed as conscription. A number of people seem to think that a contest should not take place. We agree. We believe that the unopposed return of Mr. Griffith would be the best thing that could happen, and we are convinced of this for many reasons. In the first place, the policy of Parliamentarianism has been proved to be a complete failure. Consequently, why should it be further perpetuated by now allowing a representative to be elected who would sit at Westminster? Should any such thing happen we believe that it could only strengthen the desire of Mr. Lloyd George and the British Government with regard to the enforcement of conscription on this country.—"Midland Tribune."

Sinn Fein is a national, not a party, movement. It owes service of a very definite kind to Ireland, and if it fails in rendering that service in this great crisis history will deal severely with it. If it does not stand up for the Sovereign Independence of Ireland now there is no other political party to stand up for it. Opposition to conscription based on any other plea than that of Ireland's distinct nationhood is futile. Recognition of the validity of England's Parliament to legislate for Ireland is the giving away of the Irish case against conscription. Some people are horrified that Sinn Fein should persist in holding up the banner of Complete Freedom at a time when the assistance of all the Irish people to defeat conscription is necessary. They should realise that if that banner is hauled down conscription is inevitable. People accustomed to the old slavish formula of "follow the leader" are thunderstruck because Sinn Fein has an undisguised contempt for the statesmanship of breakfast-table conferences and back-stairs trickery and ward bossism. Sinn Fein trusts the people, and because of its democratic attitude more than anything else it is denounced.—"Ulster Herald."

The issue in East Cavan is knit. The electors have to decide whether they are still prepared to stand by the anaemic policy advocated by Mr. Dillon and to continue sending representatives to the British Parliament, or whether they will align themselves with the Nationalists of Longford, Roscommon, Clare, Kilkenny and Tullamore and declare their approval of the Sinn Fein policy and Sinn Fein methods.—"Dundalk Examiner."

Mr. Dillon is the old Parliamentary hand all the time—he was content to be "resurrected," but he would not budge an inch in Cavan. In fact, he began his old cackle again, and asked for "Unity" for two months. Dozens of times he has played that old trick. When he was supporting Lord Rosebery, supporting Asquith, and

supporting Lloyd George—it was always "Give us Unity for a year and we will free Ireland." He got "Unity" not for two months, but for dozens of years, and all he brought back from Parliament was Irish conscription and sham Home Rule that was a Dead Sea fruit, fair to the eye, but dust and ashes inside. It was the election of Mr. Dillon's nominee, Captain Redmond, as a khaki candidate in Waterford, that brought conscription upon the country.—"Roscommon Herald."

Mr. Dillon's meeting at Bailieboro' was presided over by Mr. James Conroy, described as President of the East Cavan Executive of the United Irish League. In the journal owned by Mr. Dillon's candidate in Cavan the following piece of oratory by Mr. Conroy is reported under date Nov. 14th, 1914:—

He would be glad if as many as possible of the young men of Killinkere would join the National Brigade of Mr. Redmond. He said it would be more honourable for them to die fighting against the notorious Germans than to be hauled out of their houses and butchered, as the poor Belgians were. If conscription came to pass they would have to go to the war whether they liked it or not.

It would be painting the lily to comment on the fact that Mr. Dillon's campaign against Sinn Fein in Cavan formally opened under the Chairmanship of a gentleman who thus told the people they must submit to England's conscription "if it came to pass." It has come to pass.

A special article on Pitt in the "Daily Mail" says: "His love of truth would not allow him to prevaricate even in the House of Commons." The word "even" is significant as showing the degree of veracity expected by Englishmen in their Parliament. As for Pitt's political morality, Irishmen will remember the verdict of Lecky, the English historian: "The term 'honour,' if applied to such men as Castlereagh or Pitt, ceases to have any real meaning in politics." And they may recall the confession of Lord Cornwallis in his correspondence: "I despise and hate myself for engaging in such dirty work"—i.e., the dirty work which he was set by Pitt to do in order to bring about the Union—"the blackest and foulest transaction (as Gladstone called it) in the history of man."

We are asked to state that when new branches Cumann na mBan are being formed the Secretaries are requested to mention the nearest existing branches, as this information is of great help to the Executive in organising and forming District Councils. It must be understood clearly that all members of Cumann na mBan are committed to the principle of an Irish Republic. It is necessary to emphasise this, as many people seem to think that Cumann na mBan is merely an ambulance society. In addition to those already mentioned, the following branches have contributed to the Organisation Fund:—Tisrara, Glenbeigh, Middle Chapel, Ballygar, Valencia, Banagher, Kilmorlin, Longford, Liverpool, Tarmon, Dublin District Council, and Dublin Central Branch. Badges purporting to be Cumann na mBan badges are at present on sale, so it is well for branches to know that the only official badge is to be had from the Secretaries, 6 Harcourt Street, and is supplied to Secretaries of Branches only.

At Anghnacloy on Sunday evening a new Sinn Fein Club—named the Dr. O'Dwyer Club—was established, Mr. Patk. Bailey, R.D.C., presiding. Mr. Spear, solicitor, was elected President, Mr. P. McCaughy Vice-President, and Mr. Jos. McFadden Secretary.

The North Roscommon Sinn Fein Executive is arranging for local Home Industries Competitions in parishes and half-parishes.

The June number of "Irish Fun" fairly sparkles with topical skits. "The Tin Hat" story is rare sarcasm, and the Cartoon is fine. The price has been increased to 1½d.

The work of registration is going merrily on. The column headed "British Subject" has provided scope for declarations of great variety, and many hues of political thought and diversities of allegiance. One voter wrote "Church of Ireland" in this column. Apparently another new nationality has arrived and is seeking recognition.

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NATIONALITY. SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1918. EAST CAVAN

A fortnight ago Sinn Fein offered the Parliamentary Party to decide the issue in Cavan by a plebiscite of the adult people or of the electors on the register...

and often have a deciding influence on things which are vital to the rest of the United Kingdom. The presence of the Irish Parliamentary Party in the English Commons is the sanction pleaded by the English Government to Europe and America for the imposition of conscription upon Ireland.

ESTHONIA

We are informed by Reuter this week—and anything that Reuter says must, we know, be pure official truth—that "on April 23rd Messrs. Wigo, Prip, and Pusta, representing the Estonian National Council or Diet, laid before Mr. Balfour a memorandum asking for a favourable reception of the statement of their national aspirations.

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lutely ungrateful for the benefits of Empire, too; for, although Alexander I. abolished serfdom among them in 1817, or at least their "Charter of Freedom" of the sort we know of was impuginated in the Russian Statute Book—the year 1859 was signalled in Estonia as the year of the great Revolt of the Peasants.

What made the peasants so wicked as to revolt is a matter for conjecture. It may have been "German gold"; it was more probably "German enlightenment," trickling in among them, and restoring their self-respect and self-confidence. German scientists and literary men discovered the wonderful charm of Esthonian national life and lore and language and music and poetry: the whole nineteenth century is marked by their publications on these subjects. The Esthonian Language Revival was formally inaugurated among the Esthonians themselves by the establishment in 1873 of the Esthonian Literary Society (Eesti Kirjameeste Selts); all Esthonians love poetry; they improvise verses with the facility of Andalusians, and sing everywhere like the loughs from morning till night. Then the nation advanced in earnest. By 1878 they had forced their alien rulers into Land Purchase—thirteen years before we got it (by the Act of 1891). In 1897 one-fourth of the people owned their holdings, aggregating 700 square miles (500,000 acres): on completion of the operation, if the same proportion be maintained, the 366,000 pure-blooded Esths will own 3,125 square miles of their country, while the 40,000 proprietors of mixed or foreign blood will hold 2,934 square miles. The most determined efforts of the Tsar's Government to effect the Russification of the Esths by suppression of their language and persecution of their religion have absolutely failed.

One thing is certain, and that is that, since the commencement of their historical record, the Esths have never had any "national political organisation" of their own, and have since the year 1219 been absorbed at different times in the national political organisation of four other distinct nationalities. Another thing certain is that the Esthonians are a nation now, nevertheless. And a third thing certain, and very interesting, is that at this juncture of the war England grants the Russian province of Esthonia official recognition of its independence. Does this mean that we are to expect England's allies to grant us the same recognition?

K.C.'S AND CONSCRIPTION

The meeting of King's Counsel which adopted the pledge against conscription was unique in our generation. Time was when the Bar of Ireland led the independent opinion of the Irish Nation, but that time had lapsed for a century. There was an effort made to introduce a resolution merely opposing the Act without any pledge. This was done to shield place-holders, some of whom were present in the guise of Crown Prosecutors. The old independent spirit of the Bar flickered up and one leading Counsellor who had himself held the office rose and clinched the proceedings dramatically with the expression: "To Hell with Crown Prosecutors! Give me the pen!" The pledge, however, was signed in order of Bar seniority. Among the King's Counsel who did not sign were Mr. J. J. Clancy, M.E.P. for North Dublin, and Mr. John Muldoon, M.E.P. for Cork County. Mr. Muldoon has already appeared in East Cavan in support of Mr. Dillon; but the other K.C. who did not sign the Anti-Conscription Pledge has not yet arrived there to oppose Mr. Griffith.

The question of conscription is legally a settled question so far as constitutional precedent is concerned. The question arose twice in England, we believe, in the 18th century. The Irish precedent dates from 1794. In all cases the attempt to impose conscription was abandoned. The general principle of law involved is that there is no legal process by which a man can be deprived of his liberty or life except on conviction for a crime. It was for this reason that Asquith, learned in the precedents of jurisprudence, was careful to declare that he based the conscription of Englishmen on the basis, not of State duty or compulsion, but of the universal assent of the English people. In practice there has been no compulsion in England on the part of the military authorities. The classes called up were examined by civil tribunals of the people's own choosing, and those "accepted" were handed over to the army. Conscription as practised on the Continent is, of course, entirely different. It is based on national training of youths—a very different procedure.

The question of Ireland's constitutional rights was carefully considered by the Counsellors. Their views were guided purely by legal considerations, and the document signed represents their considered verdict. Many interesting and vital questions affecting the lives and liberties of our fellow-citizens are involved. But there is also the international question arising out of the relations of Ireland with England. There is no legal or constitutional support for the alleged supremacy of the British Parliament over Ireland. No Unionist could support such a theory, because he must rest his argument on the fact that the British Parliament possesses only the powers transferred to it by the Irish Parliament, assuming for argument, of course, that the transfer was valid. The relations between the two nations is, ac-

ording to Unionist theory, based on a mutual agreement or treaty or partnership, as Lloyd George called it recently. But there can be no supremacy of one partner over another. On the contrary, one is bound to consult the other in all matters of importance and equality is presumed. Those who urge the supremacy of the British Parliament are not Unionists, but Annexationists.

But the law has yet another hold on those who want to strip us of our man-power. This point is again based on the Act of Union. The powers of the British Parliament are derived from the Irish Parliament, so far as Ireland is concerned. We assume the validity of the Union for the purpose of argument. It follows that the British Parliament cannot possess any powers in Ireland except those which were transferred to it, or purported to be transferred to it, by the Irish Parliament. But there is no mention in the Act of Union of any such power as is now claimed. It is not contained in any of the Six Articles of the alleged Treaty. Nor can it be construed nor implied, because, as we have seen, it was definitely decided in 1794 that such a measure would be unconstitutional. The Irish Parliament did not possess nor assume the power, neither was it clothed with it, consequently it could not transfer it, and the British Parliament possesses it not to-day.

The Act of Union contained six articles drawn as the heads of a proposed agreement settling the relations of Ireland and England. It was in form a treaty, and this fact should be carefully borne in mind. England's claim to rule Ireland is based on this treaty. Consequently when the question of treaties arises at the Peace Conference the consideration of our relations with England will be quite in order, and the Conference will examine all existing or alleged treaties and must of consequence hear all parties concerned.

B.L.

SINN FEIN VICTORY FUND.

Table listing donations to the Sinn Fein Victory Fund in Shillings. Includes names like Mitchelstown C.S.F., Casey, Brophy, Drumelen C.S.F., McGauran, Upper Drumreilly C.S.F., Garvagh C.S.F., Lower Drumreilly C.S.F., Ballinamore C.S.F., University College, Galway, and M. Breathnach.

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Advertisement for Whist Drive and Dance at Mansion House on Saturday, 1st June, 1918. Includes ticket prices for Whist Drive and Dance, and music by one of Dublin's leading Bands.

Advertisement for Feis Carman at Ros Mic Treoin (New Ross) on Whit Sunday and Monday (May 19th and 20th, 1918). Includes text: 'Numerous Competitions. Many New Attractions. Record Number of Entries. IRISH MUMMING COMPETITION.'

Advertisement for Ceilidh Whit Sunday Night Grand Feis Concert at Whit Monday. Includes text: 'The Best Irish-Ireland Artists are engaged, including Miss Florrie Ryan, Miss Helen Molony, Mr. Cathal O'Byrne, Mr. Gerard Crofts, Seán O Murtuille, Mr. Patrick Delaney, Mr. Joseph Halpin.'

Advertisement for Kilmallock District Feis under the patronage of Most Rev. Dr. Hallinan, Bishop of Limerick. Includes text: 'ON SUNDAY, 23rd JUNE, 1918. Competitions in Dancing, Singing, Dialogue, Recitation, and Instrumental Music. Hurling Match on day of Feis:— North Cork v. South Limerick. Syllabus of Feis to be obtained from— MICHAEL O SCANNLAIN, O.S. DIARMUID O CORCONDHA, Hon. Secretaries.'

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1917 REPORT

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