

NATIONALITY

EDITED BY ARTHUR GRIFFITH.

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WEEK BY WEEK.

On New Year's Day meetings in support of the Sinn Féin movement were addressed in Galway City by Mr. De Valera; at Belvedere, by Messrs. Griffith and Milroy; at Rathmore (Kerry), by Mr. P. Bessley. On Sunday Mr. Figgis lectured on "Back to the Land" in the Oldcastle Parochial Hall, Father Barry, P.P., presiding; and on New Year's Day Professor Eoin MacNeill lectured at Coochill (Cavan), Monsignor O'Connell presiding.

The question of food shortage is being promptly handled by Father Barry, P.P., Oldcastle. After Mr. Darrell Figgis's lecture in the Parochial Hall on Sunday last a scheme was drawn out by which a demand was to be made on the local Councils to pledge the rates for the purchase of oats flour. A benevolent co-operative society is to be formed for this purpose. Barrels of oats will be purchased from the neighbouring farmers, which will be milled and stored against the months of shortage this year. This oats flour will be sold at cost price plus a small charge for working expenses. It is worth pointing out that oats flour of this kind is infinitely more nutritious than the white flour, which is now impossible to get in any satisfactory quantities, and which will shortly be impossible to get at all.

How they do it in Ennis: On Thursday week the Ennis Sinn Féin Club supplied 150 families with a week's allowance of potatoes. Some twenty prominent men in Ennis advanced £5 each to the Club on loan. With this fund the Club purchased large quantities of potatoes from farmers at the current market price. The farmers deliver the potatoes at the Sinn Féin market, and members of the Food Committee distribute them to the workmen at cost price, cash down, on the ticket system. There is no credit, and no charity. There is no exception of persons on either religious or political grounds. Any workman who has no money to pay for his ticket or voucher, it is stated on the ticket what quantity he is entitled to. Families of four get two stones of potatoes; families of five, six, or seven get three stones of potatoes; families of eight get four stones of potatoes. Any attempt at fraud entails the removal of the offender's name from the Food Register. Buying at the market price and selling at cost price, the Club carries on from week to week at a trivial loss.

We have received a copy of the "Freeman's Journal," which, contrary to the prevalent belief, still exists—the Government "compensation money" holding out yet—with the announcement that Sinn Féin is staggering and that Ireland has ceased to be a nation. It appears that Count Czernin has performed these desirable deeds for England, which the Count, being an Austro-Hungarian statesman, will be astonished to hear. This is how it happened. In reply to Russia's suggestion that "National Groups" should be granted the right of choosing their political future, the Central Powers replied:—The question of the State allegiance of national groups which possess no State independence cannot, in the opinion of the Quadruple Alliance, be regulated as between States; but is, if required, to be solved by every State with its peoples independently in a constitutional manner.

Here, says the Compensated Journal, is the proof that Ireland's case will not be heard at the Peace Conference.

At what particular period of time Ireland ceased to be a nation and became what the Austro-Hungarians term a "Horde" or "Group of Nationals" the organ of the "Irish Parliamentary Party" does not say. Could it have been when Mr. John Dillon and Mr. Joseph Devlin took the recruiting platform at the Dublin Mansion House or on that famous occasion when Mr. John Redmond declared that the "first duty" of all young Irishmen was to join the British Army? Now that the Redmondites are assured by the "Freeman's Journal" that Ireland is not Ireland, but a group, we presume that they will alter their stock toast of "Ireland a Nation" to "Ireland a National Group" and composed a new anthem, "A Group Once Again."

Inside Austria-Hungary there exist, besides the three nations, a dozen National Groups of Slavic origin. Russia, as the traditional Slav power, sought for these groups the rights of nations, and the Central Powers reject the proposal, which would be paralleled if, because there are in America a dozen National Groups—such as Irish-American, German-American, Swedish-American—it was proposed that each of these groups should have the right to segregate itself.

The Castle Journal is also perturbed for Poland. Poland, it declared, was to be treated by the Central Powers even as Ireland. This was on Friday. On Monday we read in the "Irish Times" that the Central Powers proposed to Russia to word Article 2 of the Peace in the following form:—

The Russian Government having, in accordance with its principles, proclaimed for all peoples, without exception, lying within the Russian Empire, the right of self-determination, including complete

separation, takes cognisance of the decisions expressing the will of the people, demanding full State independence and separation from the Russian Empire for Poland, Lithuania, Courland, and portions of Estonia and Livonia. The Russian Government recognises that in the present circumstances these manifestations must be regarded as the expression of the will of the people, and is ready to draw conclusions therefrom. As in those districts to which the foregoing stipulations apply the question of evacuation is not such as is provided for in Article 1, a special commission shall discuss and fix the time and other details in conformity and in accordance with the Russian idea of the necessary ratification by plebiscite on broad lines, and without any military pressure whatever, of the already existing proclamations of separation.

To this the Russian Government replied:—Our standpoint is that only such a manifestation of will can be regarded as de facto the expression of the will of the people, as results from a free vote taken in the districts in question, with the complete absence of foreign troops. We, therefore, propose and must insist that a clearer and more precise formulation of this point be made. We, however, consent to a special committee being appointed for the examination of the technical conditions for the realisation of such a referendum, and also for the fixing of a definite time for evacuation.

From this it appears that the Central Powers, having betrayed the cause of Poland in the "Freeman's Journal" leading article on Friday agreed with the "Irish Times" on Monday that the vote of the people of Poland should determine whether Poland would become an independent State. It may be that the leader-writer of the "Freeman's Journal" is a mere ignoramus who knows no difference between a nation and a national group. It may be that when he wrote of Ireland and Poland as "groups" he was short of words.

Finland has now become an independent country in association with Russia. The Letts are to be given the opportunity of deciding their future status, and the Ukrainians re-appear as an autonomous nation. In this war, we have it on the authority of the English Press, England is fighting for the liberty of small nations; but by a curious accident it happens to be England's opponents who have restored some of the small nations to the map of the world.

Recently Professor Oldham was promoted to the Chair of National Economics in the National University. National Economics is that system which is in direct antagonism to the cosmopolitan theory of economics with which the name of Adam Smith is associated. Professor Oldham is a Southite, an upholder of the cosmopolitan theory, and therefore a disbeliever in the theory of National Economics. To appoint such a gentleman to the Chair of National Economics is equivalent to appointing a Mahomedan to teach Christianity.

We have before us the Syllabus in the Faculty of Commerce in University College, Dublin. Professor Oldham is responsible for the Syllabus for the First Year Course. The Professor recognises the existence of Ireland in the last of the twelve paragraphs in his Syllabus. He instructs his pupils that Ireland is an economic complement of Great Britain, that political misfortunes and social instability are the chief factors in the economic decadence of Ireland, and that it is a fallacy to believe in Ireland's water-power or in her splendid natural harbours. Professor Oldham once upon a time announced that the economic destiny of the Irish was to act as commercial travellers for England. Moreover, he is sufficiently serious to believe so. How the trustees of a National University discharge their duty to Irish education was never more cynically illustrated than by the appointment of Professor Oldham to his present Chair.

When England, eighty years ago, set out to conquer the world-market—when she bought up in every land men to urge the doctrine of Free Trade, and sent out hired lecturers to prove to the French, the Germans, and the other people that the infallible wisdom of economics was to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market—Frederick List saved Europe from her crafty plan. Germany, which he saved from English exploitation, honours his memory with the title of Preserver of the Fatherland—Louis Koskutt acclaimed him as the Economic Teacher of the Nations. List it was who pointed out that between the individual and humanity stands, and always must stand, a great fact—the Nation.

The Nation, with its special language and literature, with its peculiar origin and history, with its special manners and customs, laws and institutions, with the claims of all these for existence, independence, perfection, and continuance for the future, and with its separate territory, a society which,

united by a thousand ties of minds and interests, combines itself into one independent whole, which recognises the law of right for and within itself, and in its united character is still opposed to other societies of a similar kind in their national liberty, and consequently can only, under the existing conditions of the world, maintain self-existence and independence by its own power and resources. As the individual chiefly obtains by means of the nation, and in the nation, mental culture, power of production, security and prosperity, so is the civilisation of the human race only conceivable and possible by means of the civilisation and development of individual nations. But as there are amongst men infinite differences in condition and circumstances, so are there in nations—some are strong, some are weak, some are highly civilised, some are half-civilised, but in all exists as in the unit the impulse of self-preservation and the desire for improvement.

This is the language of National Economics. It is a language those who govern the destinies of the National University do not understand. When a German Professor of Economics drafts a syllabus he bases it on Germany. A Professor in a National University in Ireland not only does not base his syllabus on Ireland, but leaves Ireland at its tail. Herein lies one of the secrets of Ireland's decay.

The President of the British Board of Trade (Sir Albert Stanley) has recently outlined British Trade Policy, and the plans made for its development after the war. There is to be a re-modelling of the constitution of the Board of Trade to find new openings for British industries. There is, of course, no mention of Ireland in these plans. As we showed in "Nationality," Dec. 22nd, Ireland does not come within the activities of the Foreign Trade Bureau. England's business is to prevent Irish foreign trade. The commercial policy of the "partner" is directed towards making sure of our share

market, so that she can buy to suit herself. The only way in which she wishes our trade to expand is by sending her cattle, bacon, butter, potatoes, oats, barley, and other food products which we require largely for the sustenance of our own population. It is not a trade which requires expansion at present. In many respects it requires to be contracted until production is equal to the home demand.

The position of the export trade was quite abnormal before the war. Then it was not merely possible but profitable to export home products and import similar produce at the same time. It appeared to us to have been quite unnatural as well as non-economic that in 1915 we imported 33 millions worth of farm produce, food and drink stuffs, while we exported only 48 millions worth. Why, for instance, should we have bought bacon and hams worth 3 millions from foreign countries when we exported at the same time no less than five millions worth? Can there be any sound economic or commercial reason for it? Again, what reason can be given for our exporting wheat to the extent of 579,000 cwt. in 1915, a year of low imports below the average? Such a course of trade is contrary to our interest. It could only benefit the shipping interests, which secured a double freight on the increased carriage of the commodity. Again, we find there was an import of 276,000 cwt. of oats into Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Derry, and Sligo. It was valued at £165,000. This is not a very large sum, but it contrasts with a million's worth of oats which we exported at the same time. We know of no commercial reason why Irish oats could not be substituted for foreign. The importation of oats into Ireland is like carrying coal to Newcastle. The case of barley is quite different. We have been for many years a large importer of foreign barley, principally California, malted. The cargoes contained one million cwt. Our home production in 1916 was calculated at 2,800,000 cwt. In 1917 it is given by the Statistical Branch at 3,300,000 cwt. There is an increase of half a million cwt., but this is only half the quantity previously imported. There is therefore no room for the exportation of barley. Yet out of the excess yield of 250,000 barrels a hundred thousand barrels were recently exported, although some barley is also being imported, at least into Belfast, as we showed recently. In view of the non-importation of maize, more barley than ever is necessary, and it should be retained in this country. The real reason for stopping distilling in Ireland appears clearly to be due to the desire to strip us of our increased production of barley, enough it is insufficient by one half to make up for the amount which used to be imported. The exports of barley in 1914 amounted to only 54,000 cwt., and in 1915 to 146,000. The latter is equal to 73,000 barrels. It is clear that the whole of our home crop was required in addition to the imports. We cannot, therefore, spare any barley for export. It is significant that nearly 14,000 tons of foreign barley was imported into Belfast for the September quarter as against less than 3,000 in the same period of last year, while the imports of Indian corn were no less than 47,000 tons against 43,000 last year. As a matter of fact Ulster has received as much maize this year as last year. What, then, is the reason for the increased imports of barley into Belfast? It can hardly be for brewing or distilling. At all events

it has imported 30,000 tons already this year. If there is any available surplus of barley in the Midlands it should obviously go to Belfast, where there is evidently a demand for it.

The whole subject of the Irish corn trade requires careful investigation. It is evidently carried on in a haphazard fashion, without regard to the interest of the producer or the consumer. This is evident from the case of the barley trade, where we have the extraordinary uneconomic course of trade presented by Dublin shipping Irish barley to England and Ulster importing foreign barley overseas. The need of Ulster for barley is apparent. There are only eight acres under barley in all Fermanagh, seventeen in Tyrone, twenty-nine in Cavan. Antrim, Donegal, and Derry only sow two hundred acres apiece. In all Ulster there are only three thousand acres—two-thirds in Down. These counties apparently have to go six thousand miles for a ton of barley. As a matter of commonsense why cannot they get it in Limerick? Why should cargoes be exposed to the risk and cost of insurance overseas when there are supplies at home? Surely this is a gross and palpable misuse of tonnage when the lives of nations hang on the wake of ships. How far this misuse is going on at present we can only judge in this one case, but it was general in 1915. The failure of the Department to present returns is evidence of its lack of interest in this vital question of the corn trade. The particulars must be known to it, but it carefully keeps them hidden until it is too late. Meanwhile the British Government, which knows the facts, is putting into force a policy of partition already.

Space prevents us from dealing further with the great question of the Irish corn trade. Until it is properly regulated there can be no real or assured material progress. It is the corner-stone of the edifice of Irish prosperity to-day, as it was in the days of Foster. There can be no development of our trade or industry in a healthy direction without having regard to it. Our trade policy since as much as possible to meet our own needs, and secondly we must use our ascertained surplus for the purpose of bargaining with foreign countries. In this way we can insure our people against famine, and at the same time assure our farmers an entry into competitive foreign markets. The first step is being taken at present. The census of food production, when it is completed, will show us how we stand, what we can afford to export and what we should keep in hand. It will lead the way in putting an end to the extraordinary confusion which exists in imports and exports, much of which we believe to be unnecessary, undesirable, wasteful, and even dangerous.

Galway has done well to increase its area under wheat. It now comes third after Cork and Wexford. Relatively, it has done better than either of these counties, for it has increased its yield of wheat by no less than 70 per cent., and the small farmers have their own families at least well supplied with flour, thus setting free a considerable amount of imports for the towns. The total quantity of the wheat yield for the whole of Ireland is 2½ million cwt. The total required is only 15 millions, according to the report on Irish trade. We thus only grow one-sixth, or two months' supplies. If every farmer grew his own supplies we should have in less than nine months' home grown corn. Every county in Ireland increased its grain this year. Donegal grew 428 acres, but last year it had only 245. Its position is dangerously on the border of famine. Leitrim is the next lowest with 728 acres, as compared with 488 last year. All the other counties have upwards of a thousand acres. Kerry has done well to increase its small acreage of 2,279 to 4,893—considerably more than double in one year—which, we hear, has much relieved the scarcity of flour in the towns. As we pointed out recently, 2 cwt. of wheat costing 52s. will sow a statute acre, and yield a ton of milled flour. In addition to preventing famine, this is profitable farming, when the value of the flour and by-products is reckoned. We hear that many farmers in the West are sowing increased quantities of winter wheat.

The barterage of the oat crop runs to the very high figure of 14 millions. We believe this to be a record crop. There were nearly 11 million acres planted, and the yield weighed 184 cwt., or nearly 28 to the Irish acre. Last year there were ten million barrels. At the guaranteed minimum of 2s. 2d. per barrel the value of this year's oat crop is no less than seventeen millions. The potato crop amounted to 4,152,000 tons, worth at least sixteen millions. Over 700,000 acres were sown, an increase of over 100,000 on the previous year. The average yield of sound tubers to the statute acre is estimated at 5.9 tons. The crop was splendid in Donegal—255,000 tons from forty thousand acres—and in Mayo 291,000 tons from forty-nine thousand acres. The yield would have been considerably higher but for the relatively small results from Cork, which only gave 232,000 tons from fifty thousand acres. Contrast this with the smaller area under potatoes in Mayo or Down, which gave the very fine result of 340,000 tons on forty-five thousand acres. It was providential that we have had such a great crop of potatoes. If we had to depend on wheat we should have had a dangerous position. It is not wise to depend on potatoes to the extent we do. The exten-

sion of the area under wheat is an essential measure of national safety.

The following tables, extracted from the British Parliamentary papers of the present session, exhibit the export of food from Ireland during the "Famine years" of 1846-50.

Quantities of Grain and Flour (of Irish growth), and of Agricultural Produce imported into Great Britain from Ireland.

	1846.	1847.	1848.
Wheat	186,200	124,785	144,700
Barley	28,834	27,225	27,000
Oats	267,874	261,116	1,260,000
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
Wheatmeal or Flour	723,562	210,165	660,230
Barley Meal	—	175	—
Oatmeal	551,397	336,545	1,062,200
	Head.	Head.	Head.
Oxen, Bulls and Cows	186,483	180,000	195,042
Calves	6,363	9,162	7,790
Sheep and Lambs	200,257	324,179	232,000
Pigs	200,257	100,000	110,700

Quantities of Grain, Meal, and Flour imported into Ireland from Great Britain.

	1846.	1847.	1848.
Wheat	108,826	203,320	143,916
Barley	21,493	25,147	12,701
Oats	1,167	9,845	3,165
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
Wheatmeal and Flour	222,269	920,045	1,000,000
Barley Meal	11,659	35,097	2,000
Oatmeal	22,580	55,154	500

The Clare Executive of Sinn Féin is issuing a series of Sinn Féin pamphlets at one penny each, primarily intended for Clare, but suitable for all parts of the county.

Father Gwynn, is just published. Supplies may be had from the Secretaries of the Sinn Féin Executive, 17 Abbey St., Ennis. The second issue, "The Failure of Parliamentarism," by Father James Clancy, P.P., is in the press.

Maire de Buitlen (Bann Uí Nualláin) writes:—

I send you twenty shillings for the Shilling Fund suggested by you to defray expenses of Sinn Féin Elections. I sincerely hope the idea will be widely taken up, and that tens of thousands of shillings will be subscribed by the country.

With best wishes to you and the Cause in the New Year.

We are going to get down the shillings of the Irish people the beating of the sovereign of the British Embassy at Washington.

The defeat of Conscription in Australia has been decisive. Here, however, is a curious paragraph from the English Press:—

"The overwhelming 'No' vote in New South Wales is largely due to the anti-Conscriptionists publishing Mr. Holman's secret documents of the Cabinet in February last. The Cabinet did not accept the recommendations, but a great revulsion of feeling was caused by the revelations on the eve of the referendum. The anti-Conscriptionists are comparing Mr. Holman, who is the New South Wales Premier, with Robert Peel and Sir John Lubbock."

What these "secret documents" were which, published in Australia, caused a great revulsion of feeling, we are not permitted to know by the Government which declares it is waging war to make the world safe for democracy.

It was recently stated by a London journal, dealing with non-power, that there are 300,000 young men between the ages of 19 and 24 engaged in making munitions. Now we can understand the object of stopping conscription in Ireland. It would, in the minds of its authors, provide 600,000 imaginary warriors, and so save the continent from the munition factories.

Professor Osborn Bogan, Vice-President, presided at the meeting of the Committee of the Dublin College of Irish, 20 Kildare St., at which arrangements were made in connection with the coming term. All the classes will resume next week, the Teachers' Classes on Monday, and the Non-Teachers' Classes on Tuesday, and will be continued throughout the term from 7.30 to 10 each evening from Monday to Friday, and from 2.30 to 4.30 on Saturdays. A Social Meeting is held by the Students' Union every Saturday evening. New students intending to join the Classes are advised to do so as early as possible in the term. All the Classes are taught on the Brehon or Continental method of teaching modern languages. Advanced students as well as beginners are catered for.

The McHale Branch of the Gaelic League announced in another column re-organisation of Classes for the New Year. Conference premises have recently been secured at 22 North Frederick St., and a large influx of new members is expected for the session now commencing.

"You'll get it at Whelan's on the Quay."

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TO ADVERTISERS.

All Advertisements must reach us by mid-day on Mondays at latest.

NATIONALITY.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1918.

THE NEW YEAR

A long century after the enforced union of our country with England, another New Year breaks upon a world convulsed with war waged to maintain that hegemony of Europe England gained when she defrauded Ireland and vanquished France. At the gates of the year Ireland may pause and reflect on what the six-score years have brought to her and her oppressor.

In that space of time England rose to a degree of power and wealth unequalled since the days of the Roman Empire. One-sixth of the surface of the earth passed under her rule—three-fourths of the world came under her influence. All the seas acknowledged her dominion. Her ships carried the bulk of the world's commerce, and her bankers held in bond one-half the nations. None vied with her in riches, and her people multiplied fourfold.

What will the Gibbon of the twenty-first century write of how England used her surpassing wealth and power? Will he depict an England that stood to the world exemplar of Civilisation, Morality, and Freedom? Will he tell of an England that used arms to defend Civilisation? Will he tell of an England that honoured Treaties? Will he write of an England as an Athens?

Of Ireland he must write. Will he write that Ireland, forced into partnership with England, shared in her dazzling power and riches? Will he tell of an Ireland whose people multiplied and waxed fat, whose factories flourished, whose ships sailed every ocean, whose markets prospered, and whose strength and dignity impressed the world, or will he tell of an Ireland whose people diminished in proportion as the people of England increased, whose riches dwindled in proportion as the riches of England grew, whose industry decayed, whose ships vanished, and whose name as a Nation passed almost from the memory of the world?

If the latter be the story, he will add that a delusion long possessed the Irish and con-

tributed to their political and economic impoverishment and national effacement. That this delusion directed them to seek relief from their misfortunes by appeals to the sense of justice of that which caused them; that this delusion led them to forget that they had thought, eyes, and hands of their own, led them to think as England would have them think, see as England would have them see, and believe that when hands clutched their throats and rifled their pockets that these hands were as much their own as England's—being hands stretched forth from an institution called an Imperial Parliament, whence all the emblems under which Ireland has decayed and England has prospered emanated—whence came to Ireland in the wake of National abasement and economic destruction the evil spirit that esteemed whatever bore England's hall-mark as nobler and better than whatever bore our own—the poison that, causing us first to doubt, led us next to believe ourselves inferior; and thus, by sapping our self-respect, paralysed our energies or perverted them to the service of the poison-merchants.

The historian will tell how this England, with an Imperial Parliament to which not India, nor Australia, nor Canada, nor South Africa were admitted, decided in her sole interest the great questions of Peace and War, and, having decided them, then bewildered the brains of the peoples by crying aloud that now the die was cast and all must be "loyal to the Empire." He will tell how—when a European Nation threatened the overlordship of England—those whom Ireland in her folly trusted as leaders turned to her and told her that not the Power which enslaved her but the Nation which was but a name to her was her real enemy, and shouted in her ear that the first duty of Ireland was to offer her life for the perpetuation of the power of England.

Then he will tell how Ireland returned to reason and slowly realised that the radical vice of Irish politics was the acceptance of English Parliamentaryism. That, eradicating the vice, the Irish again came to think with their own mind and see with their own eyes. That they saw themselves as they were and realised themselves as they should be.

The people of Ireland have renounced the false prophets. They have, as Thomas Davis urged them to do, "openly and deliberately declared the disconnection of themselves, their feelings and interests, from the men, feelings and interests of England." They have "bid all whom it concerns to know that their interests are separate and their rights peculiar." It is a great step. Yet it is but the first.

We can build no enduring national edifice on a base of lies. The political system destroyed—until that false political system which gives a moral sanction to the English Government in Ireland, which turns the thoughts and hopes of the people from the national centre to a hostile foreign centre, and diverts their energies from work at home to effort abroad, be broken into fragments, and in its stead the commonsense which realises that it is not by acknowledging the right of oppression that oppression may be banished is made the basis of our defensive political system. How ridiculous now appears to men once hekl in illusion that appeal to the justice of the Power which denied our nationhood, lamed our language, destroyed our commerce, and trampled our industry. Let him who believes in the Devil's piety believe in England's sense of justice, but let no grown man or woman in Ireland henceforth believe that England will make restitution or reparation save insofar as Ireland can make it inconvenient for England to refuse.

The year of Sinn Fein propaganda has closed in success. The years of Sinn Fein work begin. What can we do to bring Ireland into the comity of Nations; what can we do to bring the language of Ireland back to the lips of its people; what can we do to put again Irish ships upon the sea, to gain new markets, to extend and protect our industries, to establish a National Bank, whose function will be to aid and stimulate Irish enterprise, to adjust the wastes, to create under our local governing bodies a National Civil Service, to use the public money for the public good of Ireland only in these and a score other matters what can we do? Individually, we can do nothing. In Sinn Fein, we can do great things. The defences of Irish Nationhood can always be manned when the people of Ireland realise that the defences exist in themselves and in Ireland, not in foreigners or in a foreign country. England is not to be fought successfully in Ireland with English ideals, English-controlled institutions, or English produce. She is not to be fought in Ireland with the loyal address, the ruined factory, the silent mill, the empty harbour, and the Parliamentary orator. She must be fought with the Irish idea, with the Irish assertion, with the Irish School. She is to be fought with all things—with coal, iron, leather, woollens, as well as with the weapons of the spirit. The one place that England can never be defeated is on the floor of the British House of Commons.

An Irish Nation speaking its own language, beneath its own flag, legislating its own affairs, and with a voice in the Councils of the Nations—this is the National Ideal. What Britain has had in England and in the reign of Ireland, but now West Britain is

dethroned in the minds of the people. Let them be steadfast and faithful to the idea of an Irish-Ireland, and 1918 will shine a year of light in the history of a country compared with whose wrongs and oppression the woes of Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, and Montenegro are as nothing, and whose title to Freedom God wrote for all time when He set this Nation distinct and apart, with the ocean for its immovable frontier.

THE PROGRESS AND WORK OF SINN FEIN

The first meeting of the Ard-Chomhairle held in the Mansion House on December 19th marks a definite and material stage in the progress of Sinn Fein. It was representative of over twelve hundred clubs. Not one county in Ireland is absent from the roll-call of Sinn Fein. Ulster runs very close to Connacht in the number of its clubs. There is, however, another and more important value than mere numerical strength disclosed in the assembly of the Ard-Chomhairle. It represents the completion of the framework of the machinery of organisation by which we may hope to give intelligent cohesion and thoroughness to the efforts of those who are endeavouring to make the Irish nation strong enough to win her freedom. It is less than twelve months since Frongoch Camp and Reading Jail discharged their contingents of "disaffected persons," but in that period work has been done which has given Ireland a new outlook and a new opportunity that seemed beyond the range of possibility a year ago.

Then the English jailer controlled the situation. To-day the English jailer is a person of small account in Ireland. And Sinn Fein stands the dominant vital force in Irish national life, conscious of its strength, its potentiality, and organised to make the demand for the restoration of the nation's rights fearlessly articulate. It draws its strength not from party exigencies or incidental convulsions of current events, but from the re-awakened consciousness of the national mind.

This is a considerable achievement for less than twelve months' work, but it is only the beginning of the task to which Sinn Fein has set itself. During the past year we have had four bye-elections, in which Sinn Fein has triumphed, but these contests, though strenuous and gratifying in their results, are really only the prelude to the fight which is to come, merely skirmishes of outposts prior to the real campaign in which the fate of the nation will be settled for a generation.

It is of primary importance that all the various units of Sinn Fein should realise the gravity and responsibility of the opportunities that are emerging from current events. The sovereign freedom of the Irish nation being our objective, that should be the standard by which to judge the utility of the forces at work, and the incidents which occur and the energies of all the elements of Sinn Fein, the individual, the club, or the National Executive should be directed solely with a view to the attainment of this objective. The only basis upon which Parliamentaryism can be based itself, viz., reliance upon England's Parliament, has become apparent. Its organisation is moribund. Bankrupt in political morality and stability of national purpose, it relies for its survival upon the intrigues of English politicians and the strength of Ireland's enemies. It has lost all potency for good, but remains capable of much evil; and Sinn Fein, in the work which lies before it, must realise the measure of those evil possibilities which its opponents possess and prepare accordingly. Parliamentaryism lacks political vitality, but it has behind it all the forces which the Irish nation has fought for generations. Ireland, on the other hand, has conceived and constructed an instrument of political and national defence which, given the support of the Irish people and the watchfulness of the national intelligence, can thwart all the schemes of her enemies and achieve all the aims upon which the heart of the nation is set. That instrument is Sinn Fein. It is now organised upon lines that take in all the vital energies within the nation. The National Executive has as its task not merely the work of dispensing discredited politicians from the representation of Irish constituencies, but also of directing all the various departments of national activity which affect the national welfare. The Comhairle Countair in every constituency, working under the direction of the National Executive, will infuse into all these various parts of the country the energy and knowledge which will make the decisions of the Ard-Chomhairle operative. Each divisional representative to the Ard-Chomhairle should feel the responsibility of having his Division thoroughly conversant with the propaganda of the movement, and see that clubs are organised in districts, where none as yet exist.

Each club will have its plan of work to carry out. It is important to bear in mind that Sinn Fein is not a resurrection of previous Parliamentary organisations under another name. It will have much more to do than contesting elections or arranging public demonstrations. These may be part of the work of a club, but they are only a part of the general programme which has been going on during the past months must be followed up by much more definite work. Wherever halls are available periodic lectures on matters affecting Ireland should be arranged. Information as to the industrial resources and possibilities of each district should be collected. The support of Irish manufactures should be encouraged and stimulated. The Irish language should be studied and spoken in the clubs. Where a branch of the Gaelic League exists it ought to have the support of the members of Sinn Fein. Where none exist an Irish class should be started in the club. It is not political supremacy which is the ultimate objective of Sinn Fein, but rather the resurrection of the national life and sovereign freedom of the nation. "Political independence," said Paul de Nagy to his countrymen, "may be recovered in twenty-four hours, but nationality once destroyed, it may take generations to recover."

Ireland realises this and acts accordingly. All the intentions of "disaffected British Ministers" will count for little. Our movement is strong in numbers today, to-morrow it may be divided into a hundred groups, but its essential strength will count nothing.

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