

PADRAIC COLUM ON TROUBLES IN IRELAND

The following letter, which appeared in the New York *Evening Post* of March 2, sheds light upon present conditions in Ireland:—

To the Editor of the *Evening Post*.

Sir,—The note of friendship to Ireland in one of your editorial paragraphs of last night tempts me to write about the matters commented upon—the sending of additional troops to Ireland and the reported attack upon American sailors in a South of Ireland port.

It is obvious to those who have read the dispatch published in the London *Times* and telegraphed here that the trouble is connected with a recent effort made by Sinn Fein to prevent the exportation of an undue amount of foodstuffs.

The Irish People Have Not Forgotten the Black '47.

The Irish people have terrible memories of the Famine of 1846-47, and they have determined not to permit an approach to the conditions that brought that famine about—the exportation of the food supply of the country. Recently they appointed a Food Supervisor. They were forced to do this because the Government was evading its own regulations on the subject. If the Government had stood by its regulations Sinn Fein would never have taken the extraordinary step of appointing a Food Supervisor. It is very significant that the *Times* dispatch declares: "The correspondent admits that exportations in defiance of the Food Controller's orders had become a national grievance, and that it was believed the authorities were taking steps to prevent them." Remedial measures, he adds, now would be interpreted as a result of Sinn Fein violence.

The Insanity of Irish Government.

The whole insanity of Irish government is in the last sentence. Remedial measures would now be interpreted as a result of Sinn Fein violence. Therefore there must be no remedial measures and a grievance that exasperates the people must be allowed to stand. The authorities make regulations. Then they decline to have them carried out. Then another authority whose only sanction is popular opinion makes an attempt to have the regulations carried out. That is enough. Remedial measures now would be interpreted as a result of Sinn Fein violence. The people will have to put up with their admitted grievance. So Ireland is governed. What more could Prussianism do in Alsace-Lorraine?

A Demoralising System of Government.

The *Times* correspondent concludes by saying that if a national government were established in Ireland to-morrow it would be compelled to begin its functions with a system of coercion. Very likely. The system of government that exists in Ireland to-day is well calculated to demoralize—to ruin the sense of citizenship in large sections of the people. This demoralization, of course, will add to the difficulties of a national government. And the longer the granting of such government is postponed and the more illiberal it is made the greater the difficulties will be before an Irish Government. Every serious-minded Nationalist is terribly aware of this.

Protecting Irish Womanhood.

So much for the sending of additional troops into Ireland (it would be a good thing for Ireland and the Allies if troops were taken out of Ireland rather than piled in). And now for the reported attack on American sailors in a South of Ireland port. When the American fleet came to Irish waters the sailors were welcomed and treated hospitably. Then came an occurrence which is not likely to be forgotten in the South of Ireland. One early morning a girl was found in a Cork park stripped. She had been drugged, and the candies given her were American. Possibly in the whole history of Cork such a thing had never happened before. It gave a shock such as people in America can have no idea of.

Young men banded themselves together to prevent a repetition of such a happening. Discrimination was

not made. Girls walking with American sailors were mobbed. Then there were street affrays. In one of these a young Cork man was killed by an American sailor named Parente. No publicity was given here to this occurrence and previous occurrences in Cork. Consequently the American people are at a loss to understand the reported attacks upon their sailors in presumably friendly ports. There should have been a government inquiry into the whole affray and a result of that inquiry should have been published on this side.

True Character of the Dublin Convention Exposed.

This letter is already long, but I crave your indulgence to add another paragraph to it. In your first editorial paragraph you comment on the German Chancellor's challenge—that England would not dream of applying the principle of self-determination to Ireland. You say "the Irish people have been assured by the British Government that if they get together and agree on a plan of self-government within the Empire they can have it." This sentence gives the British Government credit for a more liberal intention than is patent to a Nationalist observer. Are you aware that the Irish Convention does not represent the Irish public? Are you aware that responsible British Ministers have declared that a majority decision will not be binding? Are you aware that repeated assurances have been given "Ulster" that whatever objections it makes, no matter how wrecking, will be considered? What would you say if the Baltic provinces were permitted to "determine" themselves in such a way—a convention picked by the German Government, meeting secretly and on the understanding that a majority decision would not be binding and that whatever objections the Baltic barons might make would be benevolently considered? Considered, too, by Ministers who had pledged themselves in advance to support whatever outrageous attitude the said barons might care to take up? Mr. Bonar Law, who made incendiary speeches in the Ulster counties, is still member of the British Cabinet, and Sir Frederick Smith will probably be in his place when the Convention report comes before the British Cabinet.

PADRAIC COLUM.

TO A CHILD

By ALINE KILMER.

I know you are too dear to stay,
You are so exquisitely sweet;
My lonely house will thrill some day
To echoes of your eager feet.

I hold your words within my heart,
So few, so infinitely dear;
Watching your fluttering hands I start
At the corroding touch of fear.

A faint, unearthly music rings
From you to heaven—it is not far!
A mist about your beauty clings
Like a thin cloud before a star.

My heart shall keep the child I knew,
When you are really gone from me,
And spend its life remembering you
As shells remember the lost sea.

We must fortify our courage, and never give up because of obstacles, but fight valiantly, astonished neither at the number of our enemies nor the duration of the struggle.

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