

IRISH NEWS

GENERAL.

Mr. John Keane, one of the last of the Fenians associated with O'Mahony, Stephens, and Captain Mackey, died recently at Stamford Hill, London. He supported the Irish Party till the rise of Sinn Fein, of which policy he became an ardent advocate.

A meeting has been held in Dublin under the auspices of the Irish Women's Franchise League to protest against the continued imprisonment of the Countess Markievicz. It was stated that she was now the only interned lady prisoner, as Mrs. Thomas Clarke, whose husband was executed for rebellion, had been released from Holloway Gaol in a dying condition. The Countess is the only woman elected to the British Parliament. She represents St. Patrick's, Dublin.

The Boston *Pilot* of January 25 says a pamphlet, *The Irish Question*, printed by the Government, throws an interesting light on the systematic attempt to make the American people believe that England has been Ireland's protector and benefactor. According to testimony given before the Foreign Affairs Committee at Washington not only was Ireland not indebted to England, but Britain had been a consistent oppressor and plunderer of Ireland for the past century. Ireland was forced to pay in pre war times an over-tax of £3,000,000, and yet not more than £10,000,000 were expended in that country. While England tells the world that she has fought for the freedom of small nations she strangled the oldest and noblest of them all. Today England owed Ireland over £1,500,000,000, and there had been no attempt on her part to pay the debt. Even during the war Ireland gave England enormous assistance, for which she received nothing. She not only contributed more troops to the cause of freedom than any unfree nation, but she had contributed more food than any other unfree nation. For this she now received but repulse, slander, and vilification. England's propaganda was now recognised by all. This propaganda, according to Lord Northcliffe, was defrayed out of an English fund of £30,000,000.

Mr. Thomas Lough, M.P. for Islington, London, in a letter to the press says:—"In a Treasury return issued in November last the total expenditure on services in Ireland is shown as £13,002,000, and the revenue contributed by Ireland as £26,865,000 for the year ending March 31, 1918. No estimate has been furnished for the present year, but having regard to the heavy fresh taxes imposed in the last Budget, an increase of 50 per cent. on alcohol, and very large additions to the sugar and tobacco duty, etc., it is estimated that the taxation this year will realise between 35 and 40 millions without any appreciable increase in expenditure." He adds that what Ireland wants is, not a subsidy, but relief from intolerable fiscal burdens, and she would be glad to purchase it at a reasonable price.

DOUBLY A RENEGADE.

Among those present at a service in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, for those connected with journalism who died in the war, was Mr. J. L. Garvin, once well known in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and then a Catholic and a hillside Parnellite! Garvin is now a notorious Unionist and anti-Irishman.

ULSTER'S PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION.

An interesting analysis of the result of the redistribution scheme in Ulster is supplied by a correspondent to the London *Tablet*. It will be remembered that before the dissolution the province returned 16 Unionists; it now returns 22; and there are nine seats in Belfast, compared with four formerly. The writer tells us:—"One seat was always Nationalist, and the scheme was so managed as to leave it impossible for the Nationalists to return more than one. Accordingly, the Unionists have to-day eight members where they had only three—an increase of five in Belfast alone. Through the failure of the Irish Party supporters to keep the compact in regard to East Down,

the Unionists were given a seat in which they have not a majority; where, in fact, the combined Nationalist vote was 2190 more than that of the Unionist. The Queen's University representative makes the entire Unionist representation for Ulster 23. Taking all the universities together, the total official Unionist poll was 2760, while the combined Nationalist vote was 2832." It has been freely asserted of late by Ulster correspondents to the English press that the majority in favor of partition in the northern province is rapidly diminishing. This is borne out by the *Tablet* correspondent, who, in dealing with this phase of the Irish problem, has this to say:—"One result of the Irish election should be to kill partition; three Unionist members expressed their detestation of it, and if we take the voting in the Ulster counties there was a conclusive majority against it. Taking Tyrone and Fermanagh together, the majority amounted to 6898, and out of the five members returned by these counties only two are Carsonites, one of whom secured election by a very narrow majority. Even in Belfast itself, the opposition to the Carsonites mustered 40,000 votes, or one-third of the entire poll. The Partitionist Carsonites are, roughly, only one-fifth of the entire Irish representation, and in view of these results it will be quite indefensible for the English Government to proceed with a policy of partition." In the face of this interesting analysis, there is certainly ample justification for the assertion put forward that, even in Ulster, Carsonism is on the decline, and to this fact is undoubtedly due the rumored action of the Government in declining to give legislative effect to the Home Rule Act—at present on the statute books—at the conclusion of peace, as originally promised. The very good reason for its withdrawal is that the measure is not satisfactory to any section of the Irish people.

THE FUTURE OF IRELAND.

The Irish people in Ireland must never forget one thing: the future of Ireland lies neither in the Peace Conference nor in America (says a writer in *Nationality*). Here in Ireland the destiny of our race must be shaped. All the peoples in the world could not make an Independent Ireland were the people of Ireland not anxious or prepared to accept their independence. The generation of Parliamentarians was anxious and prepared to work out the destiny of Ireland under the wing of England. Our generation is anxious to shape the destiny of Ireland as a Sovereign State. Is our generation prepared to bear the responsibilities which Sovereignty brings in its train? The question may sound like one of those which have been put by the writers attached to the *Freeman's Journal*, but we put it in all seriousness. Are we prepared to bear the responsibilities which freedom will bring? We will not give a direct answer to that question. We want the Irish people to answer it for themselves. If there is anyone who thinks that the people of Ireland are not fit to govern their country, we tell him or her to prepare for that noble duty. Each man and woman in the State must be prepared to work for the State. A flag-wagger may be picturesque, but twenty million flag-waggers would not make an Independent Ireland. We often clap one another on the back and congratulate each other on the downfall of the Westminster, but do we ever think of the duty we owe ourselves and our country? The overthrow of the Westminster is no guarantee that we are prepared for freedom. It is an indication of our disgust for wastrels and incompetents, and, of course, is an admirable thing provided we make sure that we do not become wastrels and incompetents. Thank God, there is no sign of this tendency in the ranks of Irish Republicanism. But are we all as competent to carry on the work of national regeneration as we should be? Are we all prepared to do our duty as citizens of a free country? The statement that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton may cause a smile, but it is true—as true as the statement that the battle of Ireland's independence was fought and will be won in the Gaelic League, Cumann Sinn Fein, and drill halls of Ireland.

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