

you share their passionate devotion to justice and to freedom, and that your love to Ireland is as deep and true and tender as their own. (Loud cheers.)

We are not here through hate of any land or any people, no matter how deeply we and our fathers have been wronged. We are here for love of Ireland. But in pleading Ireland's cause, we claim, and we know, that we are helping to remove the blackest stain upon the Empire to which these southern lands belong, and for whose honor and existence they have fought. (Applause.) We know that this Irish question is not a mere Imperial matter, much less is it a domestic question for British politicians to temporise with and wrangle about. It is, and they know it is, a question in which America and the nations are vitally interested. It is a question with which the lasting peace of the world is very intimately bound up. We, the delegates to this great Convention, are engaged, therefore, in no petty, paltry quarrel. We do not intrude in a matter with which we have no concern. Ireland has done much for Australia and New Zealand. (Cheers.)

IRELAND LOOKS TO AUSTRALIA.

I need not dilate upon this topic, for you know the history of your country, and the presence of the Premier of Queensland—if, indeed, he still be the Premier—will recall the names of other Irishmen which have passed into Australasian history, and of the chairman himself I may say that Ireland and Irish Australia have no reason to be ashamed of him either as Premier of Queensland or as the prospective Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. Yes, Ireland has every right to look to Australia for sympathy and help, and she will not be disappointed. And England is equally bound by every obligation of honor and gratitude to listen when Australia and New Zealand demand freedom for Ireland. They fought side by side with England for the Empire. They fought for the freedom of the Belgians and the Poles and the Jugo-Slavs; but 60,000 Australians, and other thousands of New Zealanders, did not give their blood and their lives that Ireland's claims might be more firmly riveted than ever. I must not, however, pursue that topic. This is not the time or the place for words of heat or passion. Our case is strong and therefore it befits us rather to be calm, cool, and logical, if at the same time resolute and unflinching. (Applause.)

NOT HERE TO DICTATE IRELAND'S POLICY.

We are not here to dictate Ireland's policy. We are here to support her policy. It has always been the prerogative of the people of Ireland to frame and to modify their national policy, and the policy they adopted has always secured the support of Ireland's loyal sons in Australia and New Zealand. Irish Australasia, therefore, is on historic and broad traditional lines, when we gather together to support, not some line of action that might seem tactful or promising or effective to this or that individual or section, but to support the policy which the Irish people at home adopted deliberately and with striking unanimity at the last general election in Ireland. For us to attempt to revise that policy, to suggest any alternative of our own, would be an impertinence at any time; but especially now, when self-determination, which is really Sinn Feinism, is on everybody's lips. (Applause.) Ireland may from time to time find it necessary to change the immediate objective of her national policy. But we are found to-day where Australia and New Zealand have always been, that is, supporting the legitimate policy which Ireland has adopted. (Loud applause.)

IRELAND'S AIMS DEFINED.

Ireland has defined her aims—she has chosen her leaders. She claims the right to live her own life and shape her own destiny without interference from outside. She stands apart in blood and race and soul and ideals. Man, indeed, has vainly sought to join what God has put asunder, but we, I hope, in this hall are on God's side. (Applause.) It matters not to us that President Wilson has failed to apply his lofty principles to the case of Ireland, and that the Peace Conference has so far failed to give Ireland a hearing. For Ireland's right to walk her own way unfettered did not come from President Wilson or the "Big Four," and it cannot be taken away from Ireland either in Paris or Washington. It is a God-given right to Ireland as to the other nations, and that right Ireland has never surrendered. One may well doubt whether any generation of Irishmen would have the right to mortgage the country's future and part with her nationhood, but at all events Ireland never did, and, under English rule, never had any inducement to do so. Her faith was banned, her trade was stifled, her people impoverished, buried in paupers' graves, or driven as exiles to the ends of the earth. She was ruled with a rod of iron in the interests of a petted minority, alien in blood and faith and sympathy. When I was a boy I remember that one of the first things

I learned was that for almost a hundred years almost every year had brought a new Coercion Act to Ireland. Was it any wonder that in these circumstances every generation in Ireland had its own armed uprising, in which Ireland fell back bleated and exhausted, yet not subdued or repentant, but sullen and expectant of another opportunity and a better day? (Applause.) At the present moment we are told that the King's Writ does not run in Ireland, and that the Irish people are no more reconciled to English rule than they were in the days of Oliver Cromwell of pious memory. (Laughter.)

ENGLAND'S ANSWER.

At the present moment it takes 100,000 British troops, with their tanks and machine-guns, to keep up the pretence of maintaining English rule in the country, and in the face of this what is England's answer? Either more tanks and machine-guns, or else the promise—a promise from those by whom she has been many times betrayed—of some paltry concession, provided that it meets with the approval of that small minority in whose interests Ireland is held and tortured. (Applause.) How long, I ask, will the nations—will the Empire, to start with—how long will the Empire look upon that scandal, and how long will the nations stand by and see that long-drawn tragedy of the oldest nation of them all? English rule—and I say it without fear of contradiction—in Ireland is condemned by its fruits. Those who know the true significance of Easter Week and of the present military domination in Ireland, will be ready to say, although they have no special sympathy with Ireland, that the time has passed when the world should tolerate this tragedy of English rule in Ireland. (Applause.)

IRELAND—A NATION SELF-GOVERNED.

At all events, Ireland has turned her back upon beggarly concessions and halting and blundering attempts to mitigate the evils of foreign and hostile rule. Her objection is—this, too, I say deliberately—not really to bad government from outside, but to any government from outside. (Loud applause.) Her motto is, "Ireland, a nation self-governed, peaceful, reliant, progressive, friendly with all nations without exception, seeking no quarrel with any of them, but brooking no interference from them in her own national affairs." (Applause.) That was the substance of her claim at the Peace Conference, and that is the claim, I hope, we are going to make here to-day. Ireland has kept—whatever doubt other people may express—scrupulously within the four corners of the ethical principles laid down by the Pope, and after him by President Wilson. It was President Wilson himself who said there should be no peace, and there ought to be no lasting peace, that "does not accept the principle that Governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed." I wonder if he has forgotten all that now! That, at all events, is Ireland's case in a nutshell. (Applause.) On that principle Ireland bases her claim for self-determination, and bases her claim, too, for the indictment that she lays against England, and to that indictment England has yet offered no answer but the rattle of English guns. Must it be said that in spite of all our preaching to the Central Powers, in spite of all our godly posturing, that after all might still is right when might is in British arms and Ireland has no stronger weapon than a righteous cause? (Hear, hear.) It may have been that some interested people were able to raise technical difficulties about giving Ireland a hearing at the Peace Conference, but they cannot raise the same difficulties before the League of Nations. But the Powers represented at the Peace Conference made little account of points of honor or procedure or technical obstacles when they had their own interest to serve. The real obstacle was that England, knowing that she had no case, barred the door of the conference against Ireland, and once again "might was right," and that at the conference which was to end all wars as well as the martyrdom of the weak nations. (Applause.) One is tempted to speak the words of truth and give rein to one's indignation, but in the atmosphere of this assemblage it is better to leave unspoken the words that come to one's lips.

IRELAND IS A NATION.

When English politicians are in desperate straits they pretend to think that Ireland is not a nation. It is a futile pretence. For more than 700 years England has been made to feel that Ireland is a nation. (Applause.) English politicians have tried every means of extinguishing the national spirit, but on their own confession they are no nearer to success than in the days of Oliver Cromwell. (Applause.) They are so solicitous for Ireland's welfare that they fear that Ireland could not stand alone, that Ireland could not do without her fairy godmother—(laughter)—who has been squandering her own wealth to support her poor relation—so they say. Ireland has counted the