

THE GREAT IRISH-AUSTRALASIAN CONVENTION

IRELAND'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION ENDORSED

GREATEST DAY FOR IRELAND AUSTRALASIA HAS EVER SEEN

On Sunday, November 2, we found ourselves amid the thousands of delegates from all parts of Australia and New Zealand, on the green lawns of Fitzroy Gardens, where a fine band discoursed Irish airs. The fine elms afforded a grateful shade; and beneath them moved happy crowds, wearing green ribbons or tri-color badges. Soon the red tassels of Archbishop Mannix's biretta were noticed moving above the heads of a throng of admirers who flocked round him as he passed along. Later, at St. Patrick's Cathedral, 7000 people assembled to hear Father Lockington, S.J., deliver an impressive address on Irish ideals.

On Monday the real work began. Early in the morning we went to "Raheen," where we had the pleasure of being introduced to Dr. Mannix by Archbishop Redwood. It was with no small delight we heard then that New Zealand's Metropolitan was chosen to speak to the first resolution, and surely none more eloquent could be found than this venerable English prelate whose love for Ireland is a source of admiration for us all. At 10.30 a.m. 3000 delegates thronged the hall and galleries of the Auditorium, and we were privileged to find ourselves on the stage close to the speakers. Clearly and eloquently Dr. Mannix opened the Convention with a note of prayer and gratitude. He went on to explain that the time had come now for us all to declare whether we were going to stand by the Irish people and their leader or not. He explained how the elections proved that Sinn Fein was Ireland's policy, and de Valera Ireland's leader. Premier Ryan then spoke and put the resolutions before the meeting. To the first and greatest Dr. Redwood spoke amid frequent and prolonged applause that rang through the hall and galleries as he affirmed his belief in Ireland's right to self-determination and our duty to support Eamon de Valera. When the motion was put by the president the hall rose *en masse*, cheering and waving Sinn Fein flags. Every hand was uplifted in affirmation, and there was not a single dissentient voice heard.

Archbishop Kelly once more repeated his profession of faith as an Irish patriot. "We are willing to fight and die for Ireland if necessary, but now we are called on to live for Ireland." Speaking to the resolution of raising an Irish Fund, he urged that it ought to be taken up State by State and parish by parish, and again the motion was received with magnificent enthusiasm.

The following is the official report of the speeches. We add but one word. The *Tablet* was the first Australasian paper to stand fast for Sinn Fein and for the memory of the men of Easter Week. We have had our crosses and contradictions, we have had bitter opposition, in some cases amounting almost to persecution. At this Convention we thought gratefully of how Archbishops Redwood and O'Shea and the dear dead Bishop of Dunedin stood by us in our trials, and we were not a little elated to witness how striking was their vindication and our own at this hour. Let us forget all that now, and henceforth remember that we, the Irish race in Australasia, are pledged to support Sinn Fein's demand for *self-determination*, and that de Valera is our leader.

For two hours prior to the opening of the doors of the Auditorium, Collins Street, the vicinity was crowded with delegates and visitors eager to take part in the proceedings of the Convention. During the wait the St. Augustine's Orphanage Band played a programme of selections from the balcony. Within a quarter of an hour after the opening of the doors, the spacious hall was filled in every part. The entrance of his Grace the Archbishop, accompanied by the visiting prelates and the inter-State speakers, was the signal for a striking demonstration, the audience springing to their feet and giving vent to their enthusiasm by round after round of hearty cheer and waving of national flags. When the Archbishop rose to declare the Convention formally opened, he received a magnificent ovation, which was continued for several minutes.

THE RESOLUTIONS.

At the opening of his speech the Archbishop of Melbourne read the three resolutions to be proposed, as follows:

1. "We, the delegates to the Australasian Irish Race Convention, assembled in Melbourne, affirm the right of the people of Ireland to choose their own form of Government, and to govern their country without interference from any other nation; we endorse Ireland's appeal to the

nations for international recognition; and we pledge our support to Ireland's chosen leader, Eamon de Valera."

2. "That an Australasian Irish Fund be opened to help the people of Ireland to press to a successful issue their legitimate claim to complete self-determination; that the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Honorable George Meagher (Bathurst, N.S.W.), and Count O'Loughlin, K.C.S.G. (Victoria) be treasurers of the fund, and that the Dominion of New Zealand and States of Commonwealth be invited to organise local efforts in support of the central fund."

3. "That copies of the foregoing resolutions be sent to Eamon de Valera."

OPENING ADDRESS BY ARCHBISHOP MANNIX.

His Grace spoke as follows:—

Our first duty is humbly and reverently to raise our hearts to the God of Freedom and Justice, and to ask His light and guidance for this historic gathering. The prayers of Ireland's scattered children, the prayers of her living and her dead are with us, and God will not fail to hear.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONVENTION.

My lords and ladies and gentlemen, I will not, for more than a few moments, stand between you and the practical work of this great Convention. The circumstances in which I took it upon myself to call you together



HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP MANNIX,
Who Convened the Convention.

are well known, and they will be, I trust, my sufficient apology for taking the initiative in bringing about this great gathering of Ireland's loyal friends under the Southern Cross. We are here for a declared, definite purpose, to support Ireland's claim as expressed at the last general election in Ireland, and to support her chosen leader, Eamon de Valera. This is no time for halting words or balanced phrases. We are with the Irish people, or we are against them. We help them openly or we leave them to their fate. I venture to say that no more representative body has ever met in Australia. I therefore thank you all, and in Ireland's name I thank Australia and New Zealand for this striking proof of loyalty to the Old Land. It will give hope and heart to Irishmen at Home to find