



# IRISH NEWS



NEW IRISH CURRENCY PROPOSED.—THE REPUBLICAN PULPIT.—THE BOUNDARY CAMPAIGN.—  
MR. DUGGAN AND LORD BIRKENHEAD.—LORD JUSTICE O'CONNOR'S VIEW.

A startling proposal has been advanced in the Irish press, urging the discontinuance of British currency in Ireland and the adoption of a purely Irish medium of exchange. It is backed by perfect reasoning, has created a profound impression and gets widespread support.

The name of the author of this proposal has not been disclosed, but it is reliably stated that the man is a disinterested Catholic economist, with a deep knowledge of Irish financial and commercial affairs. He contends that, by rejecting British currency, Ireland could make an immediate profit of \$50,000,000, and also would be able to revive her export trade, which at present is paralysed by the high rate of British exchange with which Irish transactions are hampered. He adds that, without Irish currency and a protective tariff, Ireland can not obtain material benefit from the Anglo-Irish treaty.

Venerable Archdeacon Fallon, P.P., V.F., preaching in the Church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Castlebar, said that, as their pastor, he felt it his duty to warn the people of a danger that was threatening the Catholic Church in every country at the present day, and which was trying to sap the foundations of the Church even in their own country.

He need not, he said, refer to the public persecution to which the heads of the Church were subjected in Russia, as everybody knew how their bishops and priests were imprisoned and put to death. He need not refer to the virulent attacks made on the Church in America, Australia, and other countries, as these were also well known, but he wished to refer to the attacks made upon religion in their own country and even in their own town.

"An Organised Attempt."

As far as he himself was concerned, he had no doubt in his mind that there was an organised attempt made to belittle their Faith, to throw dirty water upon the heads of their Church, and to hold them up as the enemies of Ireland.

He was sorry to see that the leaders of the Republican Party were, more or less, wittingly or unwittingly, playing into the hands of those traducers of their Faith and turning the Republican platform into a proselytising pulpit: giving an opportunity to every loud preacher to vomit out his carefully-prepared slanders against their holy Faith.

He had no objection to the Republicans holding public meetings in the town and putting their arguments before the people. He had no objection to their making use of the weapon of abusing the Government or the Governor-General, as that was recognised as part of the political game, but he did object to have the Republican platform turned into an instrument to vilify their Catholic Faith.

The would-be wreckers of the Treaty are continuing the campaign to stampede English opinion. These partisans have never disguised their real object. With them the boundary is merely an excuse to upset the Anglo-Irish settlement. Sir James Craig protests that he has "no desire to make this a political question," but his tactics from the first have been inspired by purely political calculations. His Government declined to take any step that might lead to an agreement on economic or cultural questions with the Free State. Instead of dealing fairly with the minorities in its enclave it has systematically deprived them of rights guaranteed not only by the Treaty, but by the Act of 1920. Even if Article XII did not exist, the denial of bare justice to Nationalists would make a revision of the boundaries of the Six Counties inevitable. In his famous letter to Sir James Craig, Mr. Lloyd George insisted that the boundaries were so bad that Great Britain could not attempt to defend them. If the boundaries were bad in theory when this letter was written, they have become even worse in practice as a result of the deliberate policy of the Belfast Parliament. The Free State demands the application of Article XII, not merely because it is a

clause in a Treaty, but because it offers the only hope of modifying an intolerable evil. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald is as well aware of the facts of the boundary situation as Mr. Lloyd George. There is no reason to think that, even were he not bound by his Treaty obligations, he would be impressed by the clamor of the Diehards. In point of fact, his Government is rigidly bound to carry out its pledges in the spirit and in the letter. The argument has been put forward in some quarters that the Six Counties could be given assurances that they need fear nothing more than a rectification of the boundary line. Such assurances would be irreconcilable both with the letter and the spirit of the Treaty. British Ministers are no more at liberty to interpret in their own sense the Boundary Clause than were Irish Ministers to dictate terms about the oath of allegiance.

The Law of It.

Mr. Duggan, the signatory of the Treaty, aptly disposes of Lord Birkenhead's endeavor to give to his present reading of Article XII, a quasi-judicial authority. Lord Birkenhead referred to his speech in the House of Lords as the declaration "of the highest legal authority existing at that time in the British Government." Mr. Duggan shows that in the very speech referred to he disclaimed any right or authority whatever to be the interpreter of the Treaty. It was not for him, he admitted, or any member of the British Government to lay down for a tribunal before which they were to appear as litigants, any canons or rules of construction. "I have not," he said, "the authority to do the one, I have not the power to do the other." And so far from the personal gloss on the Treaty which he then substituted for his Birmingham reading of the document, having been accepted by General Collins or Mr. Griffith, part of the speech was actually devoted to his disagreement from General Collins's interpretation. The language of Article XII, follows in part the Article of the Treaty of Versailles that vindicated the right of the Poles of Silesia to annex themselves to the restored nation of Poland. Lord Birkenhead is even more forgetful and misleading in his claim for the Northern Parliament of the status of a Dominion Parliament. Mr. Duggan quotes the letter of Mr. Lloyd George in which he specifically rejected the claim when put forward by Sir James Craig. "Your counter-proposal that Southern and Northern Ireland should be constituted two separate Dominions is, in our judgment, indefensible." "Our judgment" was the judgment of the Coalition Government, of which Lord Birkenhead was "the highest legal authority."

Lord Justice O'Connor's View.

Lord Justice O'Connor's plain statement in his letter to the *Times* of the position as it stands defined by the laws of both Great Britain and Ireland clears away the mystification under cover of which it is being sought to breach the Treaty. He ejects the matters which it has been sought to thrust into the Treaty, and firmly fixes the meaning and the force of what alone is there. His opinion that, in the event of the Northern Parliament refusing to appoint a representative on the Boundaries Commission, the Commission can proceed to function legally and effectively without such a representative, is of prime importance. That it is the sound view is evident from the advice tendered by the *Times* to the Northern Government to obey the law in the matter; even though the advice is accompanied by the threat that unless the parties agree beforehand to do nothing to give effect to Article XII, there will be what is euphemistically called "friction." Is there no "friction" now in disfranchised Tyrone and Fermanagh? And will there be less "friction" if there is a broken Treaty, if, as Lord Justice O'Connor says, "we have the talk about the violated Treaty of Limerick transferred to the violated Treaty of Downing Street?"