

IRISH NEWS

GENERAL SHERWOOD ON IRISH FREEDOM.

General Isaac R. Sherwood, member of the U.S.A. House of Representatives from Ohio, made a notable contribution to the Irish cause by his address in Congress on January 5. He spoke in part as follows:—

There is an appealing spirit in the air voiced by all the potentials of Democracy that the commanding genius of our Republic should never be cramped to shore lines; that our mission as a nation should be to carry the benign doctrine of universal brotherhood and equality to all struggling peoples across the Atlantic. . . . As an American citizen with no single drop of Irish blood in my veins, I can make a plea for Ireland without being accused of being pro-Irish. If being born in New England of English and Scotch ancestry is a test of Americanism, then I can pass the acid test, for my ancestors came over in 1632, not in the Mayflower, because the boat was full, but on the next boat.

Ireland has been struggling for autonomy and independence for over 700 years. Ireland is a continental island surrounded on all sides by seas and oceans, and is separated from England by the wide Irish sea. Hence, there can be no dispute over boundaries. In a wide war to make the world safe for Democracy, Ireland should have serious consideration. The Irish are a homogeneous people, and no other people in either Europe or Asia or the western continent has ever made such a constant and enduring struggle for autonomy and independence as the Irish race. They hold the undisputed world record for long-continued constancy and courage. Let us not forget that Irish patriots bore an important part in all the struggles of the 13 American colonies for independence. Irish blood was shed on every battlefield of the seven years' war. The first bold utterance "Give me Liberty or give me Death!" was the Irish voice of Patrick Henry, the most inspiring, all-pervading, and potent of all the patriotic voices of the epoch.

After reciting the names and exploits of Irish patriots in America's cause since Colonial days, the speaker continued:—

Ingratitude is one of the basest of human frailties. The appeal for free Ireland is not a far cry. If we as a nation believe in our own professions, if the heroic traditions of 1776 have not been effaced, we must hearken to this appeal. We have already established a new and free Poland for the Poles. We have grateful memories of two great Polish soldiers, Kosciuszko and Pulaski, who came to us in the stress and travail in the seven years' struggle for independence. Hence every patriotic American citizen glories in this free and enlarged Poland. Let us glorify ourselves anew by a continental appeal for a free Ireland.

I am for free Ireland for the Irish; for free Poland for the Poles; for Armenia for the Armenians; for Serbia for the Serbians, and for all peoples around the world who have shown by fidelity and courage and constancy that they are entitled under God's benign Providence to live their own lives.

WHAT THE IRISH WANT.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw (says Mr. Hugh Martin in the *Daily News*) has announced his agreement with Lord Hugh Cecil, Sir Horace Plunkett, and Mr. Joseph Devlin that the only straight road out of the Irish bog lies through an Irish National Constituent Assembly charged with the task of telling the world what it is that the Irish people as a whole really want.

Count Plunkett, in a letter to the *Daily News*, states that what the Irish want is to be left alone. He writes: "Irish opinion is not a matter of conjecture: the overwhelming Irish vote for an independent republic has been followed up by the session of the Dail, the native Parliament, the formation of a Ministry, and the carrying out of a series of schemes, political and industrial, by that Government. The Dail has established law courts for the settlement of disputes, has started a system of land purchase for landless men, is working up Irish fisheries, is tackling the housing question, encouraging co-operation, arranging for direct trading with outside nations—dealing with many of the country's needs that England has ignored or traded on to Ireland's injury. Irish consuls have been appointed to several countries. England's attempt to prevent the operation of the organised national will of Ireland has failed. The Republic grows sturdier every day, and its friends increase in strength and numbers with every act of violence against it. And Ireland remains a unit that can never be divided."

MUST KNOW IRISH.

Most Rev. Dr. O'Sullivan, Bishop of Kerry, informed a deputation from the Kerry Gaeltacht Conference in Tralee, which waited on him, that he agreed to two resolutions, passed by the Conference, and was prepared to ask school managers to give them effect. The resolutions were: (1) That henceforward no primary teacher get an appointment in a Kerry school who does not hold a "bilingual" certificate for teaching; (2) that Irish be introduced immediately within school hours into all classes in all schools in Kerry, where there are teachers capable of teaching it.

His Lordship also approved of a third resolution, that teachers who had not certificates for the teaching of Irish be required to secure them within a reasonable time, but he said that only moral suasion could be used to effect that object. It would not be inequitable, however, to debar from promotion within their own parishes such teachers as failed to secure certificates. The Bishop authorised the Diocesan Inspector, who was present at the audience, to inform managers of his wishes on these points.

Regarding another resolution of the conference, his Lordship said he was but doing his duty in deciding that in future entrants to the priesthood in his diocese should have a competent knowledge of Irish, and it was a necessary corollary that the schools should teach it efficiently and that teachers and others should do their duty towards the national tongue.

IRELAND AND THE POWERS.

In the issue of *La Croix*, a widely-circulating Paris paper, which announced the arrival of MM. Lloyd George and Nitti in the French capital on Friday last (says the London *Catholic Times* of January 17), appeared under the announcement a statement headed in large letters "The Irish Problem and Ireland's Wish." This statement, which was supplied by Mr. Sean T. O'Kelly and Mr. G. Gavan Duffy, "envoys of the Government-elect of the Irish Republic in Paris," asserted that after the United States had entered the war the English Government, to gain fresh recruits in Ireland, had promised to settle the Irish question in accordance with the principle of self-determination put forward by President Wilson in his Fourteen Points, and that Mr. Lloyd George in August, 1918, had declared that before the close of the fifth year of the war the armies of America and the Allies would have conquered and would have assured by their victory, in the words of President Wilson, the rule of peoples founded on the consent of the governed and sustained by the united opinion of the human race. But at the beginning of the new year the same British Government was preparing to renew more fiercely than ever its campaign of violence against the Irish people. The statement contained a protest against the "militarist excesses in Ireland" at the moment when the world peace was about to be ratified and called attention to the probable results, "unless France and the other civilised Powers intervened." *La Croix*, in a note, says: "This intervention by the Peace Conference in the internal affairs of States is difficult and may be said to be contrary to a general rule which has been laid down. But the cause of Ireland has too many sympathisers not to find expression." The *Croix* then gives the concluding part of the statement, which declared that "in the absence of every other means of defence, Ireland was decidedly resolved to make an appeal also to force and to protect her rights with unshakable firmness to the end." It is to be hoped she will not engage in such an unequal struggle.

THE WANDERER TO HIS LOVE.

I have brought you strange gifts out of far lands,
Silks, and the plumes of birds;
I have given my life into your hands;
But how can I bring you words?

I have forged you songs out of battle-cries;
But when to your side I come,
The marvel of your soft face and magical eyes
Holds me, and I am dumb.

Perhaps when I am beaten in the fight, fallen in the race,
When my last song is sung,
And we grow old in some secret, intimate place,
Then will my love find tongue.

—VANCE PALMER, in the *New Witness*.