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Friday, February 14, 1919.

Ireland

Will Ireland be granted local self-government, if not absolute independence by the Peace Congress? Surely the fate of Ireland is of as much importance to the world as that of Armenia, Syria or even German South Africa. It has its own language, its own history, its own traditions. Ireland is not England and Irish is not English. If ever there were fully realized President Wilson's characterization of a country suffering from government imposed upon unwilling people and administered by absentee and unloved landlords, surely it is in Ireland and by the Irish people.

If Ireland's case is not taken up by the Peace Congress then there is none other of the smaller nations to be considered. Even if some of her misguided sons and daughters were ostensibly too friendly with the common enemy in the recent war, is that to condemn a whole nation to everlasting servitude and bondage or even to prevent its case to be presented before the Congress? If Sinn Feiners are traitors how about Sir Edward Carson and his sturdy Ulster "patriots" who boldly announced that they were fully armed and would resist to the death any attempt to enforce Home Rule in Ulster! Are they to be hailed as patriots one and all?

This is the fatal mistake made by men who really are sincere in their belief that the English race are superior to any other and who are so intolerant of any criticism of England or England's policy. It would be treason, had these persons their way, to find fault with England. What England does is right, even if she be unfair to Americans. Right-thinking, sane-minded persons cannot repress the opinion that if John Bull be the impartial, dispassionate, and just person these admirers would have us rate him, he cannot gloat over Edward Carson's treason and condemn the Sinn Feiners, en masse.

There is no German propaganda in much of the criticism of England. It rises spontaneously from honest Americans who care no more for the Kaiser than they do for the titled and useless nobility of England or any other European monarchy, whether that monarchy be absolute or limited.

And that feeling will not down until England treats all of Ireland equally and justly.

No matter what else the United States may stand for the people here never will sanction peace terms under which all rights and liberties of France and the French people are not jealously safeguarded.

Good reading matter is at least a very valuable adjunct if not an actual essential to a proper observance of the Lenten season.

More Taxes.

No matter how you blink the question, there can be no gainsaying the fact that the ratification of the national prohibition amendment will add to the tax burdens of every Rochester property owner this year, at least. Perhaps the removal of the liquor traffic—because total elimination of liquor is not likely for several years—may result in years to come in lowering our expenses, state and national, but at present our tax burdens support of hospitals for the insane, correctional institutions and the like will continue at present rates, as well as our police forces, our jails, our courts and our machinery to correct juvenile delinquents and mental defectives. Meanwhile, too, we will be deprived of all revenue from excise licenses.

Time will tell whether the resultant benefits from national prohibition by legislation will be greater than temperance induced by education and moral suasion. And by these "resultant benefits" we mean moral and spiritual, as well as material and financial.

But the increase in taxes is a matter for which we ourselves are at fault. If we had not wanted national prohibition we would not have it as an accomplished fact. We may say we took no part in the steps leading up to the result. That may be true but it has well been said that "silence gives consent" and a vote unrecorded is as potent sometimes as one that is recorded.

We have danced and now must pay the piper. That is a foregone conclusion. Of course we may dispute the accuracy of the bill, but in all likelihood, our argument will be decided in the negative.

Inaction often brings its penalties as well as too violent action.

Fraternal

What a remarkable showing is made by fraternal societies in the United States. Nearly every man and woman in this country belongs to at least one of these societies and some belong to three or four. Objects of these societies are varied: Insurance is featured in some, sick benefits only in others, patriotism figures in others, while purely fraternal intercourse is the avowed object of many others.

Some fraternal societies are of benefit, some are harmless, some positively harmful in their effect upon the individual and the community—where religious bigotry and sectarian narrowness are their basic principles.

But be their motive object or effect what it may, it may not be out of place to call attention that while many of their sponsors may know it, latter day fraternities have their origin and derivation from the societies instituted and fostered by the Catholic Church during the years since it was instituted.

It is perfectly plain that there are Bolsheviki in America as well as in Russia.

Perish the thought that Rochester proposes to resurrect hyphenated Americans!

Bishops Turner and Gibbons constitute a worthy dual addition to the already splendid list of 100 per cent Americans in the Catholic Hierarchy.

This is as good a time as any to hand in your subscription to a Catholic paper. The Catholic Journal is the only Catholic paper published in the Diocese of Rochester and it never has increased its price despite increase in production prices all along the line.

What good reason is there for continuing the office of ice controller? The war is over and if the fuel and coal administrators are no longer necessary there is greater reason to abolish the ice control.

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