

Hibernian Conscription Sought To Overcome Loss Since Revolt

By JOHN L. BALDERSTON.
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London, Oct. 23.—Indications abound that the foremost issue in British politics this winter will be the problem of Ireland. Coincident with the demand from the army chiefs for more soldiers, and with the stringent "combing out" of all industries in England and Scotland which harbor men capable of carrying rifles, recruiting in Ireland has almost dried up. Sinn Fein has been scotched by the execution or imprisonment of those of its leaders who survived the Dublin revolt, but its place has been taken by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a revolutionary organization fifty years old, which has been working in the dark, but feverishly and effectively, ever since Sinn Fein collapsed, and which some British authorities believe constitutes a more pronounced danger than the old Sinn Fein or Irish volunteers, who carried on most of their activities in the open.

It is the hope of the extremists in Ireland, and especially of heads of the "I. R. B.," as the Irish Republican Brotherhood is always known, that Parliament will try to enforce conscription on Ireland and precipitate a bloody revolt. In this story the elements of the recruiting crisis will be explained, and then some facts given concerning the spread of disloyalty in Ireland since the uprising.

There are in the armies of the empire sixteen battalions of Irishmen belonging to the Irish Guards and to the old regular army line regiments—the Royal Irish Regiment, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Royal Irish Rifles, Royal Irish Fusiliers, Connaught Rangers, Leinster Regiment, Royal Munster Fusiliers, and Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Before the war, there were in the British army 51,000 Irishmen. Of these men 34,822 were Catholics and 16,178 Protestants, nearly all the latter Ulstermen. During the war Ireland, in addition to keeping the battalions of her old regiments at full strength, has maintained at the front three new Irish divisions, the Tenth, Sixteenth and Thirtieth of Kitchener's new armies. These divisions, at the Dardanelles and Saloniki and in France, have more than justified the ancient martial glory of Ireland, and in so doing have suffered extremely heavy losses.

Censorship Hinders.
And the ranks must be filled and kept full, or the Irish divisions disappear. There's the rub. The military censorship will not permit the numerical strength of these divisions at the present time to be made known, or the losses they have already sustained to be announced, but the nature of the crisis can be made startlingly clear in another way. Since there are some 20,000 men in a division and 1,000 in a battalion, the sixteen Irish battalions of regulars, plus three divisions, would at full strength include 58,000 men at the front. Lord Kitchener and the war council a year ago decided to build up the British army on the assumption that reverses must be provided to repair a wastage of 100 per cent a year, and accordingly, as John Redmond announced at the time Ireland was asked to contribute 1,500 new recruits

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every week for the duration of the war. This task was undertaken by the Nationalist party. The wastage of Irish troops being assumed to be 1,400 men a week by the above percentage, a recruitment of 1,500 would keep the gaps filled up, which is all the war office asked.

Since the Dublin revolt, however, recruiting for the whole of Ireland has fallen to about 400 and 500 men a week. The dilemma of the government is therefore manifest. If they cannot get the men they must disband the Irish units, or fill them up with men who are not Irishmen. There are only two ways to get more soldiers, either to persuade them to enlist or to bring Ireland under the conscription act and "fetch" them as Englishmen and Scotchmen are "fetched." The Irish divisions, it is officially announced, "need 40,000 men before Christmas."

Bitterness Before War.
Nobody who knows the bitterness aroused before the war by the Home Rule controversy, not only between Nationalists and Ulstermen in Ireland but between Liberals and Tories in England, needs to be told how every sort of politician is hustling around these days trying to invoke political capital out of the recruiting crisis. Before conscription the reader will find the widely divergent opinions and claims of the factions, it may be useful to give the official figures regarding Irish enlistments during the war.

The number of men of military age in Ireland in 1914 as announced by Augustus Birrell, then home secretary for Ireland, was 562,000. Since that time, the military age in the United Kingdom has been reduced from nineteen to eighteen years, and this would add about 40,000 to the total, so that roughly there were when the war broke out 600,000 Irishmen, including men unfit for service, from whom the contribution of the Emerald Isle must be taken.

Including the Irishmen with the colors when war broke out who had joined in Ireland, a total of 157,594 men had entered the army up to September 15 of this year. Of this number 32,405, Lord Wimborne states, were known to be Catholics, and 22,391 known to be Protestants. From the province of Ulster 54,895 men enlisted, 40,049 of them Protestants. The religious classification is of great importance from the point of view of Irish politics in considering the moot point of the "loyalty" of Ulster men and the south. The figure just given indicates that in the province of Ulster itself only 40,000 Ulstermen had enlisted up to this autumn, although in the summer of 1914 it was claimed that 250,000 men would fly to arms to oppose the establishment of Dublin rule over the north. Most of the remaining 150,000 men who joined in Ulster were Nationalist followers of Joseph Devlin, who since the Dublin revolt has declined to assist further recruiting for the British army.

Irishmen Won't Join.
Obviously, the all-important point at present is the number of Irishmen who are fit for fighting and will not join the colors, although this is largely overlooked by Sir Edward Carson, John Redmond and their partisans in England, who spend much time wrangling about whether North or South Ireland has made the better showing. The opinion of Lord Wimborne, now back on his old job as lord lieutenant after resigning in Easter week, is that there are 150,000 men in the country available for service without crippling industry or agriculture. In making this estimate he allowed 50,000 fit men for indispensable farming, and 50,000 men engaged in munition work from which they cannot be removed. Sir Edward Carson, who is most anxious that conscription should be forced on the country, sharply challenges Lord Wimborne's figures. "There are at least 650,000 men of military age in Ireland," he says, "and of these only about 100,000 to 120,000 have, so far as I know, enlisted." On the other hand, the Nationalist leaders claim that not more than 5,000 to 100,000 men remain in Ireland who can join the army without crippling the country.

out crippling the country. Figures from political parties here, as in the United States, are mostly concocted for partisan purposes. The statement of Sir Edward Carson quoted above is shown to be wide of the mark by the official figures I have given here, which if obtained by the disposal of the Ulster leader if he asked for them.

To show Ulster's determination to convince Britain that the rest of Ireland will not follow, Sir Edward Carson by Carson will be given. Sir Edward quotes Lord Wimborne as having said: "Since mobilization, Ulster has contributed 54,000 men, of whom 40,000 were Protestants. Leinster has contributed 12,000, Connaught 4,000, Munster 16,000, and Dublin 19,000." Leinster, including Dublin, has thus given 31,000 men. "This is a splendid contribution, and nothing can detract from it," Lord Wimborne said. Carson takes these figures and proves to his own satisfaction that if the three Catholic counties of the province of Ulster be counted out, "it will be seen that the other six Ulster counties have contributed from nineteen to eighteen years of age, and are ready to be sent to the front."

Ulster's Contribution.
A liberal observer recently returned from Ireland comments as follows on Carson's statement: "Sir Edward Carson boasts of Ulster's contribution to the army. There is really very little to boast about. If you compare urban Ulster with the rest of urban Ireland the proportionate contributions are not very different. The number of Ulster Protestants who have joined the army since the outbreak of war is below 45,000. As Ulster has a Protestant population of 500,000, such a contribution works out at less than 5 per cent. Such a proportion from the province that so loudly vaunts its loyalty is decidedly disappointing. It is significant, too, that the recruiting campaign in Ulster last autumn on behalf of the Ulster division was a complete failure. Ulster cannot decently chide the other provinces, excepting Connaught."

Will Ireland resist conscription? The case for conscription has now been made clear. Ireland is not providing enough recruits to keep her units up to strength. England and Scotland are being stripped of the last available men; as a part of the United Kingdom, Ireland has no right to lag behind the others and refuse to make proportionate sacrifices. These are the arguments used by Tories in England, and by a few Liberals, it is unfair to raise the age limit in England and lower the physical standards while scores of hundreds of thousands of young and husky Irishmen stay at home, according to the common law of the land. It is not to be doubted whether Parliament will consent to make further calls upon the Englishmen and Scotchmen without passing an Irish conscription bill. The government does not regard Irish conscription as a serious matter, but it fears serious trouble in Ireland if conscription is enforced, trouble possibly so serious that the effect of Irish conscription will be to weaken and not strengthen the military system of the empire. But the feeling is growing that Irish conscription is a matter of simple justice to the men over 40 who are threatened with compulsory service here, and a constantly growing section of opinion holds that it is more than doubtful whether Parliament will consent to make further calls upon the Englishmen and Scotchmen without passing an Irish conscription bill.

Closed to Neutrals.
It is my opinion, from observations in Ireland before that country was entirely closed by the military to all neutrals, that conscription would be a deadly mistake, and would play into the hands of the revolutionists, whose strength is not understood by most Englishmen. A returned traveler from Ireland whom I have met in the last few weeks fails to share my view; and in fact there is in the press a continuous stream of warning from Irishmen and Englishmen who know conditions in Ireland. Irishmen not only feel embittered at the extensions of the rebel leaders and the continuance of martial law, but believe they have been betrayed by the English in the matter of home rule. As a result of this feeling the influence of John Redmond and the pro-British Nationalist members is steadily declining. The critical if not almost hostile attitude assumed by the Irish members when Parliament convened this week indicates that they realize their only chance of regaining their hold at home is to change their tactics. And that chance seems a slim one.

Writing from Dublin, an English correspondent recently declared: "The mere attempt at conscription would arouse in Ireland a fierce, implacable spirit that would poison the relations between the two countries for years to come. After conversations with all sorts of men, I have found only two who favor conscription. For the rest, everybody with whom I have spoken is utterly opposed to the idea—Unionists and Nationalists, muggings and detached intellects alike. An independent Nationalist expressed the opinion that Ulster's threatened resistance to the storm that would be created by the resistance of all Ireland to conscription. People are afraid that any responsible person could give serious consideration to such an idea. Ruling out conscription as impossible, is there any chance for a new recruiting campaign? The one chance is the enthusiastic cooperation of the Irish Parliamentary party. That co-operation will not be forthcoming. The Nationalist members are furious with the government. They complain that before and since the rebellion their advice has been disregarded and their efforts to help in the war have been thwarted and discouraged, and that they have been snubbed or ignored ever since the Coalition government came into being. They are in no mood to embark on a recruiting campaign. Conscription and voluntarism are thus equally impossible."

Enlistments Drop.
While enlistments for the British armies in Ireland have dropped to less than 500 men a week, the underground revolutionary organization, which has largely taken the place of Sinn Fein, is preparing, as best it can, a new outbreak. The statement sounds incredible. It would seem that the fatal madness of challenging the authority of British would have become clear to the fanatic in Easter week. But there are men in Ireland who seek martyrdom and peasants who will follow them anywhere.

The organization of the Irish Republican Brotherhood does not differ greatly from that of Sinn Fein, or of the Brotherhood itself in the old Fenian days. The most definite fact I have learned about the present movement is that the Sinn Fein party in Belfast before the recent outbreak numbered 200 men, while the "I. R. B." has enrolled in Belfast alone, since Easter week, nearly 2,000. If this proportion has been maintained throughout Ireland, the situation is serious indeed.

The country is under martial law, and instant steps would be taken to break up parades of disloyal volunteers such as used to march under the Sinn Fein colors. The whole movement, therefore, is carried on secretly. To guard against risks of betrayal, the make-up of the inner council of the I. R. B. is known only to the commanders of "centers," which correspond in the organization to colonels of regiments in the army. Each "center" picks out nine captains, known in the nomenclature of the I. R. B. as "B's." The center himself is an "A." The captains appoint nine "C's," or sergeants, who each command nine "D's," or privates. The difficulty of getting at the bottom of such a movement is obvious. The central council is known only to the men who command groups of about 1,000 men, the name of each "A" is known only to the central council and to his nine captains; while the captains, in not doing their duty, are nearly 90 men, each of whom commands nearly 90 men, do not themselves know who the heads of the organization are, and are themselves unknown excepting to their "A" and to their nine sergeants. The rank and file, of course, know only their immediate sergeant, in command of nine men only, so a betrayal at the lower end of the ladder might land one subordinate officer in jail, but could not seriously harm the "cause."

New Plotting Begins.
There is nothing new in this scheme; it has been used ever since Fenian days, but not unknown in the Irish-American groups of America, and was partly adopted by the defunct Sinn Fein army, nearly all of whose leaders were killed, executed or imprisoned last spring. Rumor has it that certain Sinn Fein chiefs who were not in Dublin at the time of the revolt and consequently escaped the dragnet are now taking a leading part in the new plotting. A small group of the "I. R. B.," as is well known, actually took part in the Dublin fighting, but the great extent and power of the old Fenian organization came only with the practical dissolution of Sinn Fein.

The principal object of the "I. R. B." in recent months, it is said, has been to gain control of the stores of arms and ammunition belonging to the Irish Volunteers and hidden all over Ireland. Various reports are current concerning the success of their efforts and the number of guns they now have in their possession, but in a matter of this kind, the extent and power of the old Fenian organization came only with the practical dissolution of Sinn Fein.

The Nationalists fear, the I. R. B.; they despised Sinn Fein, and they learned their mistake. "For every rebel in Ireland before the revolt, there are ten today," a prominent Irishman told me three months ago. What he said then probably holds true now, for the bitterness has increased rather than diminished during the interim. Conscription, if an attempt is made to carry it out by force, will give the I. R. B. their opportunity.

Even when things look most hopeless in the "most distressful isle," the saving grace of Irish humor shines like a ray through the clouds. All Ireland is laughing now at the story of the Dublin lad, wounded and captured at Mons, and recently sent home by the Germans as incapacitated for service. He had learned nothing of what had happened in his native city since he left it in 1914. As he was being driven down Sackville street he suddenly sat up on his stretcher and smiled as his eye took in the long vista of desolation and destruction. "Sure," he said, "and I hadn't heard we'd got Home Rule!"

A railway from Petrograd to Soroka on the White Sea, a distance of 320 miles, has been completed, giving Russia an outlet to the north in addition to that of Archangel.

Automobile Ousting THE DELIVERY HORSE
Maxwell Greatly Increases Its Commercial Chassis Sales.
The great increase in sales of commercial chassis by the Maxwell Motor Company is a reflection of the extent to which the automobile is invading the light delivery field. It is an indication, too, of how the merchant whose delivery service requires a light, speedy vehicle is coming to the realization that in the motor car lies the best solution of his delivery problems.

The horse as a factor in light delivery systems is a back number," said H. B. Leary, Jr., Maxwell dealer. "This is true not only in the cities, but also in the rural districts, where traffic congestion cuts no figure. Merchants realize that the motor car delivery is swift, sure and economical."

"Figures have been compiled by experts on delivery systems to show that in a period of five years the merchant effects a saving of more than \$5,000 by supplanting the horse-drawn vehicle by the motor delivery vehicle. Any progressive merchant is willing to add \$1,000 to his profits every year."

"Then, too, the merchant has the added advantage of having bodies built according to his own specifications and his own taste. The Maxwell chassis comes from the factory all wired and equipped and ready for the body to be fitted on."

"My experience has been that the light delivery field is especially profitable, because it invariably results in re-orders. The merchant who orders one delivery vehicle as an experiment soon finds how practical and economical it is and immediately he orders enough motor vehicles to take care of all his deliveries."

How to Keep Off Sharks.
It remained for a contributor to the New York Tribune to reveal the total depravity of those man-eating sharks. "You will note," he writes, "that the sharks have in every case attacked men and boys with bare legs. Their bodies covered with suits, also ladies with stockings, have not been bitten." Perhaps those males who refuse to wear socks and trousers in the surf may keep off the sharks by stenciling on their bare calves. "This is not a leg, but a limb."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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