

spirit of the Labor movement in the Australasian democracies, we do not for a moment believe that this piece of hasty and ill-considered panic legislation truly represents the views and attitude of the Party on which it has been imposed. This opinion is confirmed by the fact that already some of the largest and most influential unions have entered a vigorous and emphatic protest against the proposal.

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The object of the new move is perfectly clear: it is to drive a wedge into the Catholic body, and to coerce as many as possible of the Catholic Laborites into abandoning their allegiance to the Catholic Federation. Catholic sympathisers with Labor are bidden peremptorily to give up either their Faith or their Party. Left to themselves, they are perfectly willing to follow both. They will be true to their Faith—their most precious possession—in questions involving religious issues; and they will be absolutely loyal to their Party on what may fairly be described as party questions. The Political Labor Council claims the right to control them in both fields. The claim is a piece of unheard of and intolerable tyranny, and the attempt to enforce it is at the same time unspeakably and unpardonably stupid tactics. At the best, organised Labor, in its conflict with the immense resources of wealth, privilege, and monopoly, requires all the friends and allies it can obtain. In New Zealand, at least, this fact is now fully realised; and at the last elections in this country even the most extreme Labor wing—the violent and hot-headed 'Red Feds.'—saw the wisdom of coming to some sort of friendly understanding with other political parties, and so making an end of the insensate division of forces which has so long been a source of weakness in the Labor ranks. The result was that Labor achieved by far the greatest parliamentary success it has yet obtained in the Dominion. The wisecracks of the Victorian P.L.C. have taken the opposite course, and have deliberately started their Party on the path of disintegration and destruction. If they persist in carrying their feud to the bitter end, there will be but one result—and it will not be the Catholic Federation which will be the sufferer. But we do not believe that the present stupendous blunder will be allowed to stand. A great Catholic meeting of protest is to be held in Melbourne to-night, and the Catholic Federation is also officially considering the position; and the Catholic body, fortunate in having leaders of great sagacity and ability, can be trusted to make a wise and firm pronouncement on the matter. In the meantime, we venture to think, there is no occasion for precipitate action on the part of individual Catholics. If the new rule is insisted on, they will, of course, ultimately have to resign from the Labor Party: but for the present let them stay where they are, and use their efforts to vote it out. They are not all fools in the Victorian P.L.C.; and when the wiser heads see the impending break-up of their Party they will have the courage to face the consequences of their false step, and to take the path which has been trod by greater than they—the fateful path that leads to Canossa.

Notes

A Suggested Pledge

The following, from the 'Bulletin of the Catholic Federation of New South Wales,' is a pledge which Catholic papers everywhere will cordially endorse: 'It is the principle of the Catholic Federation that it requires no political pledge from its members. If Catholics thoroughly understand the principles for which the Federation is fighting, and the stigma placed upon them by State laws, which discriminate against civic rights, there will be no need for a pledge. But there are two voluntary pledges or promises which every Catholic Federationist ought to make:—

'1.—I hereby promise to take and read one of our weekly Catholic papers, which will enable me to learn of Catholic activities, and to reply to anti-Catholic slanders.

'2.—I hereby promise to take my opinions as to the aims and methods of the Catholic Federation from those appointed to explain them, and not from anti-Catholic newspapers.'

Catholic Schools in the Firing Line

All the great public schools of England are well represented at the front, and every Catholic school now has its Roll of Honor, but the record of the Catholic school conducted by the Oratorians at Edgbaston is surely unparalleled and unique. An 'Old Oratorian,' in a letter to the London *Times*, states that at an outside estimate there may be 430 Oratory men between the ages of 18 and 40. Of these, 250 have served or are serving in the Army or Navy. Sixteen have been killed at the front or have died of wounds, and twenty more have been wounded. 'What is, perhaps, more remarkable is that no fewer than seven Old Oratorians are in command of battalions; while one, George Morris, of the Irish Guards, was killed while in command. If you take the average number of boys at the school as fifty-six, it means that there is one colonel in command to every seven boys at school—an almost unbelievable ratio. It is also curious that in Mr. Arthur Pollen and Mr. Hilaire Belloc the Oratory has produced two of the best naval and military critics of the day.'

The 'Reckless Irish': A Scottish Tribute

The story of a fight in which Irish and Scottish combined against the enemy with deadly effect has been graphically told by Private Robert McGregor, of the Gordon Highlanders, in a letter to his father at Parkhead, England. It is interesting as being a spontaneous and generous Scottish tribute to the irresistible valor of the Irishmen. The account was crowded out of our last issue, and is now a little belated; but it is emphatically one of those items which are better late than never.

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Private McGregor writes:—'On the night of the 28th December we were informed that the Germans would make an attack on our trenches, so not an eye was closed that night. About 4 o'clock we thought it was a false alarm, and settled down to enjoy forty winks, when their artillery opened fire on us. Our trenches for two miles were a V shape, and the enemy seemed to direct all their guns on this part, but, thanks to their marksmanship, our immediate neighborhood didn't get much attention at first. We were near what I think you call the apex of the V, and howling and screaming shells passed well over us until we heard the throbbing of an aeroplane. Then we saw the Germans advancing as unconcerned as if on parade. On they came in close formation, and there must have been ten to one against us. We fired as hard as we could, but they seemed to come out of nowhere, and never halted. When they were getting too close we charged. It was our only chance. When they saw us leave the trenches they halted for a moment, but afterwards came on to meet us. I don't remember much of what took place then. It was a stab and hack, hack and stab. You could hear the smash of gun against gun, the thud, thud, but beyond this there was an uncanny silence broken sometimes by an oath and groan. We drove them back about one hundred yards. Our officers saw the Germans reinforced, and sounded the retreat, but owing to a few machine guns we couldn't get back to our trenches. The Germans, now greatly increased, came on again, and our fellows, only about 170 left, got ready to meet what seemed certain annihilation.

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'But just at that moment we heard the sound of singing, and the song was "God save Ireland." It was the Connaught Rangers coming to our relief. Well, I have seen some reckless Irishmen in my time, but nothing to match the recklessness and daring of these gallant Rangers. They took the Germans on the left flank. The Germans now would probably number about 2000 against 800 Connaughts and 70 of us, but had there been 50,000 Germans I don't believe in my soul they could have stood before the Irish. They