

Current Topics

Trade and Patriotism

A late cable tells us that in Germany the deification of Marshal von Hindenburg proceeds apace, and that not only towns and babies but even fashions and the war loan are named after him. So far as the latter aspect of it is concerned, it is the kind of deification which has been an accompaniment of most of the great wars of recent times—the keen business instinct of the manufacturer and the shopkeeper trading to the utmost upon the enthusiasm of the hour. Thus, in the Spanish American war there were Dewey cigars, Dewey hats, Dewey cocktails, and most ignoble of all, a Dewey doormat, with his picture on it. Patriotic Americans wiped their muddy boots on the face of the quiet victor of Manila! 'Twas ever thus. Commercial fame is the shadow of the other fame—or notoriety—which, as Byron says, but fills a certain portion of uncertain paper. Garibaldi jackets, like the old filibusterer of Capreria, had their day. The Franco-Italian victory of Magenta has given a word to our language. Bismarck and Moltke caps, pipes, beer, and insect-powder were the shadows that followed the fame won in the Franco-German war by the Iron Chancellor and the silent warrior whom the Germans still love to call *der Schlachtdenker*, *der Schlachtdenker*, the battle-thinker, the battle-thinker. Old Marshal 'Vorwärts' has given his name to Blucher boots, Havelock to a military cap, Napoleon to a game at cards, Wellington to boots, breeches, knife-polish, and Heaven knows what else besides. The exploiting of the Waterloo victory by enterprising tradesmen brought down upon Wellington's devoted head the mock epitaph:

Here lies the Duke of Wellington,
Once famed for battles others won;
Who after making, spending, riches,
Bequeathed a name to boots and breeches.

'Such is fame,' as the late Mr. Cummins remarked, and Hindenburg's will 'en go with the rest.

Anglicans and the After Life

A witty member of the Irish (Anglican) Church, when a heated discussion was in progress as to the desirability of framing a special prayer with reference to the deliberations of the Synod, then in session, suggested that the case might be met by employing the usual prayer *for those at sea*. It looks as if this petition might suitably form a permanent part of the supplications of our Anglican friends, for they appear to be in something like a chronic condition of not knowing exactly where they are. In England, at present, the debated question is whether women are to be allowed to preach in the Anglican churches in connection with the forthcoming 'National Mission'; in New Zealand, the point of uncertainty and dubiety is what Anglicans are to believe concerning prayers for the dead and the after life. About a year ago Bishop Julius dealt with the matter, and impressed upon his people that 'the Church of Christ had never failed in prayer for those who had passed away.' The statement, so far as the Anglican Church is concerned, is grotesquely at variance with historical fact, but it may be allowed to pass as representing a present Anglican point of view. About the same time, the Rev. A. H. Colville, M.A., Anglican minister at New Plymouth, also discussed the question, in a sermon published in the Taranaki press, and the reverend gentleman, again endeavoring to elucidate the Anglican attitude, threw the gravest doubt on the existence of hell, at least as a place or state of everlasting punishment. And now comes the Anglican Bishop of Auckland, Dr. Averill, who, in a sermon preached at the Auckland Anglican Cathedral the other day, calmly abolishes hell alto-

gether, and assigns all and sundry, without exception, to participation in what corresponds tolerably closely to the Catholic definition of purgatory. We welcome the conversion to purgatory—formerly regarded by Anglicans as a 'Popish superstition'—but it is a matter for grave concern to see the Bishop of a Christian Church playing fast and loose with the plain words of Holy Scripture on the subject of hell. And still the inquiring lay member of the Anglican Church is left guessing as to what his Church really teaches, for the present burial service of his Church—where, if anywhere, the mind of the Church might be presumed to find expression—declares that 'the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity'—the implication being that they are no longer in need of the prayers of their friends, and can be in no way assisted by their petitions. What is the unhappy layman to believe? Apparently—such is the 'glorious comprehensiveness' of the Church of England—he is at liberty to believe anything or nothing on the subject, just as pleases, and still be accounted a faithful Christian and loyal member of the Church. Assuredly, both for the clergy and laity of the Church of England, as by law established, the prayer 'for those at sea' is the perennially fitting petition.

The Russian Aim

There is no doubt that the Allies have leaned very heavily on Russia and her millions in the great contest and that the country of the Czar has made colossal sacrifices. There seems reason to believe that when the great washing up comes, her demands will be fully proportioned to the service which she may fairly claim to have rendered. She is glad enough to be hailed as the champion and liberator of the Slav peoples, but she will want something more substantial than acclamation and approval when the final settlement comes. So at least says, in effect, the famous Russian economist, Professor Migulin, who writes as follows on the subject in the *New Economist*:—Russia must secure corresponding material compensations for the losses which she has incurred. It is time to give up finally her quixotic policy. Russia has lost enough power and blood for foreign interests and for foreign freedom. There is still a great deal too much talk to-day about the liberation of suppressed nationalities as the chief object. One ought not to forget that in previous times this duty has always been fulfilled at the cost of enslaving the Russian people themselves. Nor ought we to forget that some of those liberated nationalities—Austria, Prussia, Bulgaria—are to-day conducting a war against us, and that other "liberated" people—Roumania and Greece—are observing a hostile neutrality. But where can Russia obtain corresponding compensations? Above all, not on the western frontier. Russia must have an outlet to free southern waters. She must secure the freedom of the Dardanelles, and an access to the Mediterranean, not only by sea but by land. We must come to an arrangement with Great Britain to have an outlet to the Persian Gulf. England and Russia must act together in Asia as in Europe. There must be no more talk of any "area of conflict" between the two countries. Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Northern Persia, and the neutral zone of Persia must be ceded to Russia.' It isn't much if you say it quick, as the colloquialism has it, but like most of the paper arrangements for the great cleaning up day it has only an outside chance of being realised.

Ireland and Conscription

According to the *Dublin Freeman's Journal*, the attempt to revive the agitation in favor of conscription in Ireland is a combined and organised affair, and has for some little time past been plainly foreseen in Nationalist circles. From the comments of the *Dublin paper* it seems clear that the threat that conscription

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