

Conscription of the Brothers

We have in all New Zealand a devoted little band of sixty-two Marist Brothers, and five Christian Brothers, who are oblates in the glorious cause of education, serving God and their country nobly by teaching our boys how to become good Christians and worthy citizens. We recognise that Church and State are deeply obliged to them, and it is to be regretted that we have not in every town in the Dominion a boys' school taught by the Brothers. Their life is a trying one, and their remuneration is not of this earth; humanly it is no wonder that few men, in this material age, are willing to devote themselves to a calling that entails complete self-sacrifice. Too few though the Brothers are, the Government wants to reduce them by sending them to the front. We say they are indispensable, and that we cannot let them go. We are told that we can send our boys to the State schools, and we answer that we will never do that as long as it is in our power to educate them. The State school may be anything else you claim for it, but it is not education; for education is not training children to take an intelligent interest in life, as Mr. Hanan told us it was a few days ago. The opinions of the thinkers of antiquity, and the verdict of Christianity, as well as the lessons to be learned from the failures of all the predecessors of Mr. Hanan, are enough to convince all men capable of reasoning that religion is the most important factor in the training of the young, and that there is no hope for the nation that excludes God from the schools. Our faith, and the laws of the Church oblige us to do all in our power to procure for our children a Christian education. So important is this duty that parents who send their children to a State school, where there is a Catholic school available, may be cut off from the Sacraments. Therefore it is clearly a matter of conscience for us to use every means in our power to prevent the Government from being led by their bigoted supporters to force our teachers into military service. There is no justification for such a step, and its only motives are contempt for religion and insane statesmanship. All through the present crisis let Catholics remember that they will have to fight for justice and fair play, and that they must not yield an inch, or ever again trust to the fickle faith and venal promises of politicians.

Conscription of the Clergy

The English law provides that clergymen in Holy Orders and regular ministers of all denominations shall be exempt from military service. The following order explains the position as regards students:

War Office,

January 28, 1916.

(231.) Roman Catholic priests and students not to be accepted for military service.

Roman Catholic priests, or students who have already entered on their professional studies in immediate preparation for the priesthood are on no account at any time to be accepted for service in the Army. All recruiting authorities, including military representatives, advisory committees, and local tribunals, should be informed accordingly.

By command of the Army Council,

R. W. BRADE.

The Situation in Ireland

The news cabled regarding Home Rule prospects is grave. When we remember how the cables are controlled and censored it seems almost hopeless. Mr. Redmond is a man of extraordinary self-control and prudence whom nothing short of a serious crisis could have caused to take the course of action reported last Saturday evening. Two years ago he made the initial mistake of trusting to the honor of the Government. All precedent was against him; all the lessons of Irish history, the policy of the leaders from O'Connell to Parnell, the common sense of the people should have warned him. At all times a gentleman himself, he

erred in thinking he was dealing with gentlemen. And so thousands of young Irishmen gave their lives in return for a promise worth nothing. Northcliffe, from the beginning assured his supporters that it did not matter that the Home Rule Bill was on the Statute Book; and Northcliffe knew his England well. Last Easter Lloyd George begged the Irish parties to settle their differences in view of the extreme urgency of the situation. Ulstermen and Nationalists responded loyally, agreeing to all he asked, and it availed nothing. The Government tore up the 'scrap of paper,' and even English papers denounced the proceeding as one of the most dishonorable and disgraceful incidents in political history. On that occasion those who read the report of the passage in the House between Mr. Devlin and the present Prime Minister had an opportunity of forming an opinion of the Welshman's character which should not lead them to build much on his honor. Now comes the Nationalist manifesto branding Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of England, as a political liar and hypocrite. It is directed to the President of the United States, and the Premiers of the Dominions of the Empire, and at the bar of justice and humanity it impeaches the English Government as an enemy of the rights of a small nation, and as guilty of the crimes with which they charge Germany. To every child of the Irish race, in America, in Australasia, and in Great Britain it appeals for active support in the crisis brought on Ireland by the perfidy and treachery of English statesmen, who are trafficking with truth and honor, who have made the traitor Carson one of themselves, who are ready to sell Ireland to him as they have already sold the good name of their own country, and who by their own actions give the lie to their protestations that they are in the war for the liberty of man and the rights of nations. We hope that not only those to whom it is directly addressed but the entire English people will be aroused by this indictment of the Government. England's destinies are at present in the hands of a clique composed of some remnants of the ancient nobility, combined with that new nobility whose patents of honor rest on successful jobbery and whose patriotism is inspired by Mammon. Jew, German, and effete Norman, they are dragging the name of England in the dust. It has been asked how many members of the Cabinet are shareholders in the Essen works. It has been written by neutrals that the war will not stop while capitalists profit by it. At the door of that Cabinet lie the deaths of the thousands of brave young Irishmen who gave their lives in return for a lie; and one day they will have to answer for the misgovernment of England as well as of Ireland. For the people will awaken and demand that they be governed by men who will rule the people for the people, swayed by ideals of honor and humanity and no longer by greed and hatred. Till then what hope of Justice has a small nation from the Lloyd Georges and the Carsons? We trust that Sir Joseph Ward's spinal condition may have improved sufficiently during his long rest to enable him to prove how real is that love of Ireland of which he has often told us.

The Right Rev. Monsignor Byrne, V.G. of the archdiocese of Brisbane, is at present on a well-deserved holiday in New Zealand. He arrived in Wellington from Sydney on last Tuesday week, and has been the guest of Archdeacon Devoy till last Monday, when he left for the south to visit his sister, Mrs. John Joyce, North Loburn, and other friends. Father Byrne was for many years Administrator of St. Stephen's Cathedral, Brisbane, and lately the new Archbishop, Dr. Duhig, appointed him V.G. His Holiness the Pope later conferred on Father Byrne the dignity of a Monsignor. Monsignor Byrne, who is a native of Tipperary, is an old student of Thurles College, and his many relatives and friends in New Zealand are delighted at his well merited promotion.

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