

ways of Providence, represents Christ on earth, and who by his very place in the world is by divine appointment the 'mediator of peace.' The Archbishop lays his finger on the sore. Because the nations do not yet recognise the spirit of Christ they will not hearken to the Pope. And if you think Germany stands alone in this attitude remember Carson and Viviani and all the crimes and the persecution they stand for in Ireland and in France.

### Towards Peace

From an American exchange we take the following: "The Christmas bells will be peace bells," writes John M. Stuart, International News Staff Correspondent to the New York *Call*. 'Peace negotiations will be in full swing by the New Year' is a sentiment in circles close to the White House. There is still the amazing industry of those connected with the preparations of the United States. But there is also the admission that the engine of battle which the United States is building may never be launched against Germany. 'How long will you be in Washington?' a certain official here on special duty was asked to-day. He is one of the men closest to the centre of the administration. 'I'll be here through the winter,' he replied, 'my job will keep me here a couple of months after peace is declared anyway.' If this is American opinion we ought to remember that it is precisely American opinion that matters now. How much it does matter may be gauged from a statement made recently by Bonar Law. At a banquet given by the Empire Parliamentary Association to Medill McCormack, Congressman-at-Law for Illinois, the Chancellor said: "The Germans have been lately saying that the Entente was relying on America as their last hope. I want to say to you that we do rely on the United States. As Chancellor of the Exchequer I am ready to say to you now what I should have been sorry to say to you six months ago, namely that without the United States' financial assistance the Allies would have been in disastrous straits to-day. We have not yet seen the end." Now even though we have a few papers in New Zealand that win the war once or twice a week, that statement of Bonar Law's represents the naked truth, and probably understates it. The appeal of Balfour, backed by that of Viviani, ought to have been sufficient to show any intelligent man how very far from any dogmatic belief in ultimate victory the Entente were six months ago. If things are different to-day they owe it to America. And we take it that whether or no it be pleasing to British *amour propre* America will say the decisive word when the time comes.

### Ireland

Last week we published an extract from a letter from an Irish priest who said he believed that the Government was again trying to drive Ireland into revolt, and in proof of his faith asserted that the military were breaking open the desks and even the altars in priests' houses—one altar on which the Blessed Sacrament was kept having been violated. The day of our publication the local press contained a cable to the effect that Mr. Redmond had in the House of Commons also protested against the methods of the Government, stating that there was a common opinion in Ireland that the unbearable things done were done *in the interests of the irreconcilables in England and Ireland* who as we know would rather wreck the Empire than give Ireland justice. Before the Easter Rising Sheehy-Skeffington, the murdered pacifist, did all in his power to make the Government realise that they were driving the people to rebellion. They evidently wanted to do so then, and it seems as if the game is the same now. The *Otago Daily Times* publishes a bit of our reference to the methods of which our correspondent speaks. The *Times* does not mention the breaking open of altars and the sacrileges. But everyone who knows anything of the *Times* is not astonished at that. Let the *Times* learn the ABC of Irish history before it presumes to write leaders on anything higher than the price of Irish pigs. Once and for all the English Government has

the same right in Ireland as the Germans have in Belgium, and as a Belgian is justified in trying to free his country so is an Irishman. "If I were an Irishman," said Cardinal Newman (a staunch Tory), "I would be a rebel." But Cardinal Newman was a fair man, and a man who, even where Ireland was concerned, lived and judged according to the principles of justice. Utilitarianism is of course the root of the average Tory's view of Ireland: "It would not suit us; therefore we will not discuss whether it be just or no." On the same plea Germany was justified in tearing up 'the scrap of paper'; and the *Daily Times* is a living witness that "the Castle gang" in Ireland—and the press that supports them here—live by the very principles that they condemn in others. Ireland will be content with Dominion self-Government, and thanks to the Sinn Feiners, who saw through the trickery of the British-made Convention, they will get it. Independence in the sense of complete separation is her right; but Irishmen are not going to insist on that—yet. We do not suppose half a dozen of our readers find time to read the editorials of the *Times*, but if any do they will on more than one occasion have perceived what sort of journalistic honesty is evinced in the way in which this ancient and time-worn old dame drops parts of quotations and picks and chooses fragments to suit herself when citing opponents. How the *Times* treated Bishop Moran's correspondence is an old story. Monday's issue of the *Times* contained two editorials on the Irish question, more thoroughly Prussian in spirit than anything "Granny" has yet accomplished. It is quite clear now that instead of being put among the advertisements "Civis" has been promoted to the editorial staff. Nobody else could display such ignorance or dishonesty about Irish affairs. For instance, he says the Sinn Feiners are very ungrateful for England's kindness in exempting them from conscription! For sheer unconscious humor commend us to that. Indeed the *Times* has displayed such form on Irish questions lately that the Orange *Nation* and that cultured organ of Elliott and his clique, the *Free Press*, had better look to their laurels. We suppose it is ignorance; but it is very hard to believe such ignorance is possible. The veteran lady is angry because the cables hint at German aid for Sinn Fein: of course it was all right when the Germans supplied Carson with rifles. Poor old *Times*! Blind, deaf, and stupid in her dotage, she deserves a little pity. But why don't her friends look after her?

### The Pope and Conscription

A recent American exchange gives us a summary of a communication made by Cardinal Gasparri to the Associated Press expressing the views of the Pope on the question of conscription. The Cardinal Secretary of State pointed out that Rome had always opposed conscription as a most fertile cause of wars. It was never allowed in the Papal States, and Napoleon followed the Pope in this matter. While conscription led to wars it was certain that voluntary service was quite sufficient for the maintenance of good order. If conscription were abolished big armies, enormous munition plants, and militarism itself would be automatically destroyed, and the energy and money consumed in such unproductive ways could be profitably employed in paying off the huge war expenses. "Finally," said Cardinal Gasparri, "the whole world, in addition to the suppression of compulsory military service, should proclaim the principle that *no head of a State, or Emperor or King or President should have the right to proclaim war without first consulting the people through a referendum. Conscription is a hideous burden on a free people, not only as regards finance, but also as regards liberty.* Thus we saw Australia rejecting conscription although the feeling in Australia for the mother country was most loyal." \*

The words of Cardinal Gasparri to the effect that conscription is a hideous burden on a people's freedom constitute what we have always believed to be the fundamental objection to its introduction in this

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