

Current Topics

The Campaign

The *National News* has thrown further light on the steps the Government took in order to buy up all over the English-speaking world as many editors as were satisfied to become abettors of the Lloyd George camouflage propaganda. It seems that the three principal agents sent to the United States were Harry Lauder, Sir George Reid, and the unspeakable "Tay Pay." As to the amount they get for doing their dirty work we gather from the following that they are better paid than ordinary sleuths: "So great is the store set upon the effective propagandism that one who is now engaged in addressing huge meetings in America in thrilling elucidation of war aims of the Allies is receiving from the British Treasury as much as £1000 a week for his services." Naturally the wealthy Lauder would be the one to receive the highest salary. Reid would certainly not be forgotten in allotting the taxpayers' money. And if poor "Tay Pay" comes last on the sheet we may rest assured that he did not sell himself too cheaply. He has always been able to make money out of his imagination.

The Convention that Failed

The Convention failed because the Government gave the Orangemen a pledge that if they held out they would be supported. They were encouraged to cause disunion, and they did it. No attempt was made on their part to meet the Nationalists, who were ready to give to the Unionists a representation of 50 per cent. of the members of the Irish Parliament, even though they were not entitled to 25 per cent. The Orangemen do not represent even Ulster, which elects a majority of Home Rulers. They are not Irish. Their respect for Britain is shown by their trafficking with the Kaiser and their threats to kick King George's crown into the Boyne. Yet with the support of that Government which tells the world that it is fighting for liberty, and for the right of majorities to determine their own form of government, the bigoted Orange minority is allowed to keep Ireland in trouble and to continue making a laughing stock of England in the eyes of the world. From Timon to Tobolsk the question asked when English professions of high war aims are widespread is: "What about Ireland?" That is the question that will be asked at the Peace Conference, whether Ireland be there or no, and all the water in the ocean will not cleanse England from the stain the Orangemen have put on her honor. Now that the Convention has failed the Nationalists are more determined than ever to be put off by no half-measures. Archbishop Walsh has warned them that they must not be deceived by phantom Home Rule schemes which have no farther reality than existence on a scrap of paper. The chief trouble in the Convention was the question of customs—after, of course, the Orange trouble. Now the demand for a financial control not less than that of the colonies is affirmed by Irish Nationalists, and with no less will they be contented. Colonial Home Rule gives the following rights:—

(1) The right to raise, maintain, and control an army and navy; (2) The right to absolute control of Customs and all revenue; (3) The right to decline to participate in any war waged by England; (4) The right of making trade treaties with other nations.

The bogus Home Rule schemes hitherto drawn up gave no such rights as these to Ireland. We may thank the Orangemen and the perfidious British statesmen who aid them, that Ireland will not be satisfied now by anything less than a Home Rule which will be Home Rule in fact as well as in name. What is more, we are confident that Ireland will get what she demands, and which England tells the world every nation has a right to demand. After all perhaps the enemies of Ireland have builded for her far better than they ever dreamed.

The Atheistic Tyranny

We have still, and are likely to have until we get honest politicians, a national system of education which has received its highest sanction in the public approbation of a horsewhipped ranter. There are a hundred and one reasons for exterminating the system at once, and not a sound argument in favor of retaining it. All the Churches are aware now that without religious teaching in the schools there will very shortly be nobody going to church on Sundays to hear what the preacher has to say. To men of earnest piety the consideration of the anarchy and unbelief which are the fruits of godless schools are appalling. Magistrates tell us that a little more of the present regime will mean that New Zealand will be irrevocably corrupted. The system means, in one word, the end of religion; and the end of religion means the end of honor, truth, chastity, and justice and a state of rank savagery. It is as clear as the noon-day sun to members of all Churches that this is exactly for what the system stands which Howard Elliott—good judge!—approves. The plea of the Government is that it is impartial. It is nothing of the kind. It plays straight into the hands of them that want to destroy religion, and it persecutes them who hold that the teaching of Christ is of supreme importance. The State protests that it favors none, while supporting atheism directly and openly. The State is dogmatic in its agnosticism and is moreover a bigoted dogmatist. It is not impartial nor just: it is simply ignorant and perverted. A little while ago a meeting was convened in Dunedin for the purpose of urging on the Government the necessity of reform in educational matters, but not a move was made to compel the Government to recognise that good morals and common decency could not be assured in the community without religious training in the schools. The whole question was discussed from a frankly pagan point of view, as if the accumulation of wealth was the sole object and aim in life of men endowed with immortal souls. Pagan, pagan, from beginning to end is the system; and pagan it is rapidly making the country. The immorality of the people is already a matter for national shame. Even the war does not appeal to them and recall them to God, for the system has taken very good care that most of the young people have forgotten God. People will say that the Church or the home is the proper place to teach religion. What chance has the home if the school and the influences of daily companions pull the other way? What chance, in any case, have too many of our New Zealand homes when the parents manifest in their own lives a disregard for the law of God? And what chance has the Church when neither in home nor in school are the young people trained to believe that it matters a jot whether or no they go to church on Sunday? There is one Church in New Zealand in which children and their elders go conscientiously every Sunday. That is the one Church which in defiance of the spirit of the age does not believe that man was made by God for the sole purpose of enjoying himself and making money here on earth; which maintains its religious schools in spite of State robbery and State bigotry and State lies. The Catholics go to church on Sundays because they are taught in their schools that God made man to His own image and likeness, to know and love and serve Him on earth. Others go to church if they have nothing better to do and if they cannot sleep. The law of God does not matter to them. But Howard Elliott approves, and it must be all right, of course. He is a good judge. Let Mr Hanan console himself with that thought.

The Race Suicide Campaign

To most people it would appear that the present war is depopulating the civilised, or the alleged civilised, world sufficiently rapidly to satisfy the greatest enemies of the human race. Common sense ought to dictate that wartime is a season during which all topics likely to beget contentions should be avoided. Yet owing, we suppose, to the hold the devil has on