

Current Topics

Thought Versus Matter

The Diary of Sir Algernon West contains the following aside relative to Christian Science: People were talking a great deal . . . about Christian Science, and a strong advocate of it called at a friend's house, asking for her. The maid said—"Oh, Ma'am, she's very ill." "Nonsense," said the Scientist; "she is not really ill, she only thinks she is." The next day the Scientist called again, and in answer to inquiries the maid said—"Well, Ma'am, she thinks she's dead."

An Impostor

Irish people generally will appreciate the remarks of Supreme Court Justice Tierney, of New York, on the habit blackguards have of adopting Irish names. The occasion of the judicial comment was the divorce suit in which Walter J. Scanlan, billed as an Irish singer, was divorced by his wife on the ground of adultery. It leaked out in the course of the case that Scanlan's real name is Van Brunt and that he is not Irish at all. The Judge said: "The defendant has taken the name of a very decent man who died some years ago. He might have taken some bad actor's name if that is the way he acted towards you (addressing Mrs. Van Brunt). He may sing Irish songs, but the Irish are a pretty decent people as a rule." *The Echo*, of Buffalo, expresses the sound opinion that the Irish have to suffer more than any other of the many nationalities represented in the United States from the assumption of names peculiar to their race by unworthy persons of other races, and one can hardly blame decent Irish-Americans for being impatient with imposters like Van Brunt, alias Scanlan.

Religion and Science

Writes G. K. Chesterton in the first issue of *G. K.'s Weekly*:—

"We are beginning to recognise that religion must accept the conclusions of science."

When we read this in the leading article every morning, we never seem to have sufficient scepticism or liveliness in us to ask the obvious question about it. That religion may accept the conclusions of science, it is necessary that science should conclude. To conclude means to shut up; and the very last thing the man of science is likely to do is to shut up. When we say "You must accept the conclusions of the Court of Chancery" we mean something by it. We mean that even a Chancery suit does come to an end at last. When we say that we must accept the conclusions of the Home Secretary, we mean something very practical indeed. We mean that a particular man will be hanged on a particular morning, not having sufficient social influence to get his insanity accepted as one of the conclusions of science. We mean that when he has been hanged, it becomes a delicate matter to offer him an apology. But it is the whole point of science never to be in this sense final or irrevocable. Of course, this does not mean that we shall not work more wisely if we work in the light of suggestions of science, or take note of the general ten-

dencies of science. It only means that the people who use the words ten thousand times a year have not taken note of what they are saying. As a matter of fact, if men had altered their doctrines to suit discoveries, they would often have had to alter them back again, when the discoveries were, so to speak, undiscovered again. Religion was asked to accept the conclusions of science, when science no longer accepted the conclusions of science. But the main point is not a particular one of science but a general one of reason. If science had concluded it would mean literally that science had shut up shop.

A Foul Calumny

Mr. Archdale, Minister of Agriculture in the Six-County Government, exposed a lacerated heart at an Orange pow-wow held recently in the Derrygonnelly Orange Hall. His reputation had been attacked by a foul slander; a simple, innocent act of his, executed in the ordinary administration of affairs, had been contorted by unscrupulous enemies to resemble an act of conspiracy against the British Empire and a slur upon the glorious and immortal memory of King William III. Mr. Archdale needed a secretary, and one Devlin was appointed to the post. The name smacked of Rome, and good Mrs. Grundy scattered the news abroad that Devlin was a papist. Voices were heard in the street declaring that Mr. Archdale was not as bigoted as he ought to be, since he appointed a papist to a position in his department. Needless to say, Mr. Archdale was deeply grieved at the doubt cast upon his bigotry; but although a damp eye and a broken voice betrayed the anguish he was suffering, nevertheless he defended his reputation with much courage and vigor. He pointed out that the man Devlin was not a Catholic—he was a Methodist married to a Presbyterian. "People were misled by the name," explained Mr. Archdale. A prominent clergyman and also a registration agent had accused him at Caledon with having appointed a Catholic; but both of them "got up in the meeting and *apologised for maligning me*," shouted the Minister triumphantly. Having thus vindicated his honor, Mr. Archdale proceeded to lambaste his enemies. "That," he declared, "is the way people are going about making mischief." Another man in Fintona had asked whether Mr. Archdale had "over 50 per cent. Roman Catholics in his Ministry." The statesman laughed heartily at the thought. "I think that is too funny," he said. "I have 109 officials, and so far as I know, there are four Roman Catholics; of these, three were turned over to me whom I had to take when we began." Could Mr. Archdale have vindicated his character and that of his Government more thoroughly? Critics are asking what has become of Clause V of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, which provides that Parliament shall not "make a law so as either directly or indirectly . . . give a preference, privilege, or advantages, or impose any disability or disadvantage on account of religious belief. . . ."

It is also noted that none of the Craig-Londonderry combination had the common decency to dissociate himself from the implications contained in Archdale's shameful defence.

A Contrast

The *Belfast Irish Weekly*, commenting on the above disgraceful episode, says that a speech like that of Archdale would not, and could not, have been addressed to an audience in any civilised country in the world. Orangemen had complained of "the tyranny of the Free State," "but," says our contemporary, "Lord Glenavy, Chairman of the Free State Senate, could tell a tale about that 'tyranny'; he suffers from it. A bead roll of the men who were Unionists and who are not Catholics, and who now hold positions of high honor and trust and generous emolument all over the Irish Free State as public representatives and in the public service would fill columns of a newspaper if it were compiled. We may not approve of or agree with all that is done governmentally in the Twenty-six Counties; but a parallel instance may be imagined. Let us suppose a member of the Free State Cabinet went to Ballydehob or to Ballinrobe, and was asked (another pure supposition) to explain why he had appointed a Methodist to a position in his Department; and let it be imagined further that the Minister said in reply: 'I have been malignantly caluminated; the man referred to is a Catholic and married to a Catholic; that ought to be good enough; I have 109 officials, of whom only four are non-Catholics, and three of these were imposed upon me.' What would his audience have thought? What would his colleagues have done? The audience would have hooted that Minister out of their village; his colleagues would have demanded his dismissal without a moment's delay; the people at large would have read his explanation with contempt for the man and with anxiety lest his statements should be taken by the world as an indication of their feelings. There would be no place in the country's public life for so grotesque an individual. No such Minister exists in the Free State—or anywhere outside the Six Counties; no statement of the kind could be made, because it would be unfounded in fact; but if it did occur South or West of the Boundary, would not clamorous outcries of horror and wrath ring for weeks from Stormont to Aileach in the press and from pulpits and platforms?"

A New Movement

A Catholic exchange thus comments upon a new movement which has sprung up in the Anglican Church:—"Bishop Barnes, of Birmingham, has informed the Anglican Church that a new movement—or is it a new sect, or a new church?—has sprung up within her many-vesicled bosom and multi-ventricled heart, the Liberal Evangelical movement or, as Dr. Barnes designates it, the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement. It has enrolled more than 600 clergy, and their views are expounded in no less than two volumes and over fifty pamphlets. It acknowledges no special sacerdotal powers, no rigid dogmatism, no infallible authority in teaching, but bases its faith on the Bible,

