

Presbyterians, and the Salvation Army were as much concerned as Catholics, and for once we were able to sit back and let the non-Catholics fight the Servile State of New Zealand. The letters written to the press by Canon Nevill, Rev. Bryan King, and many other gentlemen had their effect. They aroused public opinion and the politician behind the movement, being a politician, beat a hasty retreat and even expressed mild surprise that we should have understood him to say what he did say on the subject. The Minister's advising angel has also been compelled to explain his position even though his explanation is by no means satisfactory. He makes many assumptions which warrant us in still thinking that the defeated scheme had its origin in the brain of an unpractical dreamer—one of the most dangerous kinds of advisers for any Minister in any country. The following letter, which appeared in the *Otago Daily Times*, Saturday, May 21, reviews Mr. Beck's defence and effectively disposes of his arguments, which can be so readily gathered from Canon Nevill's criticism of them that it is unnecessary to set them out in detail:

#### THE STATE AND THE CHILD.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—I do not wish to trespass over-much on the patience of your readers, but Mr. Beck's memorandum deserves an answer because of its tone of studied moderation. The first point is that Mr. Beck merely reiterates Mr. Parr's facile excuse that the department did not mean all it said, which we can very easily believe. The second is really not a point at all. Although Mr. Beck tacitly assumes that the New Zealand orphanages are not up-to-date, the opposite is the fact. All the Church orphanages of to-day are directing their energies to segregating the children in separate homes instead of detaining them in institutions. This is not, as Mr. Beck hints, a novelty to our orphanages at all. The Churches are far more alive than the State to the fact that home life is what is wanted for children who are deserted or illegitimate. Where, however, the churches differ diametrically from the State is in the assumption which Mr. Beck makes that the State is able, by appointing foster parents, to create a home at all. What the Churches hold is simply this, that the Christian spirit alone is able to make a home for children. We all of us know all about Dr. Barnardo, and speaking personally, I have been through many of the Ilford Homes and can testify to the excellence of the foster fathers and mothers, but what Mr. Beck quite omits to mention is that Dr. Barnardo's work was work done in and for Christ, and not with any ideals of State control before him at all. It is true that he aimed to make his orphans good citizens, but he argued, and the Churches argue in the same way, that if you are to make a man a good citizen you must make him a good Christian first; and this spirit is noticeable in all the Barnardo children to-day. Let me say, as I said before, that the State cannot buy love and affection for 30s a week; and the Churches have proved their love by the fact that, as Mr. Beck acknowledges, their work has been given freely in many cases. The Roman Catholics, for instance, have given not only money but the services of numberless devoted men and women, the devotion of whole Orders of priests and nuns to this work, and this work alone. I wish we all did as much. It is just because we insist that the State has neither the spirit nor the capacity to find true homes for children that we are joining issue with Mr. Beck. One of Dr. Barnardo's greatest troubles was, as I was told while in England, to find suitable—that is, really devoted—foster parents for his village homes.

Mr. Beck quotes American illustrations, but they are on parallel lines; and so need no particular notice, but for the fact that Mr. Beck seems to assume that the Churches have never heard of cottage homes. Mr. Beck is quite correct in pointing out that orphanages are not filled with orphans only. What he will find will be that with the practical dissolution of sacred marriage as the churches teach it, there will be a very disastrous increase in the number of children of divorced couples. In other words, family life, for which Mr. Beck has so great a regard—and rightly—

will become a thing of the past, and the state child will become a terrible fact.

One cannot praise too highly Mr. Beck's desire to keep the children out of the hands of the police. If the Bill consisted only of such praiseworthy ideals as this we should all praise it; but no amount of sophistry can conceal the fact that behind all this benevolence lay the attempt to get control of all orphanages whatever by the simple expedient of taking their children from their custody.

We neither misinterpret Mr. Beck nor do we misunderstand him. I can point to one fact of which I am aware, and that is that before this question of orphanages arose at all, the department's proposal was known in the civil service in Dunedin, and my informant thought of asking for a transfer to the Education Department as he had been told that that department was going to take charge of all the orphanages in New Zealand. He may have been misinformed, but the coincidence is exceedingly curious all the same.—I am, etc.

E. R. NEVILL.

#### The Cause Goes On

Time is fighting for Ireland. The mills of God that have ground so slowly—ah, how slowly!—for so long are racing now. Their noise has aroused the attention of the British people. The Archbishop of Canterbury has heard them, and he stands up in his place in the House of Lords and calls for a moment's silence in order that the Lords too may hear them. Lord Cecil, Lord Denbigh, Lord Bentinck have heard them. The thinking men, the Christian men, the clean men, and the women of England have heard them too, and they are afraid, afraid for England, afraid for humanity, afraid for their own children whom the mills will crush before long if the grinding be not checked. Only they whom the gods have made mad in order to destroy them are deaf and heed not. These people are awake to the jingling of the guinea; they hear the whisper that tells when Marconis are going to rise; they catch the murmured pass-word that lets them into the "Dope" swindle; but listening for such sounds has made them incapable of hearing warnings that do not immediately concern their own pockets. Lloyd George does not hear. He has made money since the days when he could weep for the starved Boer women and denounce the British atrocities against a handful of farmers fighting for the country. He has made money, and even if it stinks, he finds music in its sound. Carson, too, has made money, and he reckes not of his broken faith and of his treasonable plotting with the Kaiser. The three Canadian ruffians have also made their money, and the cry of the wailing women and the dying children upon whom they have brought misery and hunger and sorrow does not reach them. The rabid parsons who live by preaching hatred of Rome to the weak-minded bigots who pay them for that sort of infamy have lost all sense of hearing in the thunder of the Orange drum. The journalists who were brought home to England and inoculated carefully neither hear nor see nor feel. They pursue their lonely way to the end, and, as days go by, people who can hear and see are gradually drawing apart from them in horror. We have seen, time and again, how England has spoken out against the infamy for which those people stand. Even the *London Times*, even the Tory Lords, have denounced the crimes—there is no milder word—of the gang of sharpers in Downing Street who have made the name of Great Britain a byword of reproach among the nations of the earth to-day. Hear once more how the other nations are rallying to the cause of persecuted, suffering, heroic Ireland. *L'Humanité* of Paris says:—"England evacuates Northern Persia and withdraws a part of her troops from Mesopotamia, where the Arab revolt was becoming more dangerous. She is trying in India, in Egypt, by negotiations more or less false to appease the native agitation. But she attempts nothing to put an end to the growing civil war which is raging in Ireland, or, at least, she continues to believe that by proceedings worthy of Cromwell, or the Duke of Alba

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