

## Current Topics

### New Zealand First

Do not forget that while Bonar Law and Lord Grey have recognised the true dignity of the Dominions there are people in this country who try to convert New Zealand into a kitchen-garden for a few British secret diplomatists. If you have to conform to Mr. Parr's statolatry see to it that you honor your own land by insisting that the flag you salute is the New Zealand flag.

### Our Parliament

A correspondent who recently made the mistake of going to pass an idle hour in the House of Parliament, instead of at the Pictures, tells us that a more stupid, somnolent, and hopeless body of men than our politicians he never saw in his life. The one intelligent speech of the evening was made by Mr. Holland. The Prime Minister contributed a few grunts. Certain other stars interjected a few boorish remarks while Mr. Holland was on the floor. And that was all. A Wellington gentleman to whom the visitor unburdened his mind afterwards told him that for many years past the House seems to have become incapable of debating an abstract question. No wonder Lord Bryce told the world that many of our representatives are beneath the standard both in intelligence and in manners.

### Massey's Murderland

It is beginning to dawn on the public of New Zealand that life in the Dominion is almost as precarious as it was in Ireland under the Black-and-Tans. Week after week the press announces brutal murders. Often no arrest is made. Nothing seems to be done to prevent a recurrence of the crimes. Old and young, civilians and policemen are killed, and the gruesome record of our little population becomes blacker and blacker. And be it said that the murders are only trifling when compared to the rottenness of morals at the present time. Confidence in the administration of justice has disappeared. Family life is almost a memory of the past. Home is becoming a foreign word. The evil example of their elders is having its baneful effects on even children, and the standard of morality is as low as that of the stockyard. And Mr. Parr flaps his flag and Mr. Massey sends out his army of officials to board incoming boats and administer the oath of allegiance. The day is coming when no man who has any respect for his life will visit this unfortunate land of murders, divorces, assaults, and general corruption. The Muddlement has brought us to the dust indeed, and its only remedy is silly flag-flapping. The Government which is driving religion out of the homes and out of the hearts of the young people ought to be put in the dock.

### Oaths

Many people received a mild shock recently when they read that the Hon. Mr. McGregor, of the Old Man's Home, has also joined the campaign for forcing all and sundry to take unnecessary oaths. In this connection it might be profitable to explain to our readers a little of the ethical doctrine concerning oaths, though we are aware it is not our people but the politicians who require elementary instruction on this and many other heads. The following extracts from *A Hand-Book of Moral Theology* are well worth remembering:

"By justice in swearing is meant the moral permissibility or becomingness of the matter concerning which an oath is taken. Justice requires that the matter of an oath should be in conformity with the moral law and Christian duty.

"Since an oath can be taken only with due care and deliberation, a man who wishes to swear or is compelled to do so, is strictly obliged to consider the

matter and the circumstances of the case, and must not allow himself to be moved by love, hatred, or any other emotion, but solely by the importance and necessity of the oath he is taking, for without careful consideration an oath will nearly always be hasty or indiscreet.

"It is entirely just and consistent to debar persons who are notoriously unreliable . . . from taking oaths. But it would be unjust, on the other hand, to demand an oath of the members of religious sects who in good faith reject swearing as immoral.

"It goes without saying that atheists are incapable of taking an oath; to admit, or, a fortiori, to compel them to take an oath would be contrary to the very nature of the oath as a religious act.

"The alarming increase of perjury in our time is no doubt largely attributable to the decline of religious faith and the growing carelessness in matters of morals. Another, a minor cause, is the unnecessary multiplication of oaths and the frivolous manner in which they are often administered by public officials."

Consequently, it is both absurd and immoral for a Government, like Mr. Massey's, which fosters unbelief and persecutes schools that teach children to honor God, to impose oaths on all sorts of people in the community.

We have the testimony of ministers of religion and of magistrates on the bench that through want of religious instruction the young people of New Zealand are growing up devoid of moral sense and careless of the honor of God.

The Massey Government is doing all in its power to further the godless schools and to hinder those that put the cause of religion in its right place in the curriculum; therefore the same Government is responsible for the spread of atheism and immorality, and is now taking measures to make perjury fairly common throughout the Dominion.

By his bargaining with bigots Mr. Massey has undermined all respect for himself and his Cabinet; by his measures against private schools he has played the part of a religious persecutor in this country; the logical and natural consequence of his administration is that New Zealand will be a land in which unbelief predominates and in which the majority of the people should become—through very ignorance of its value and through lack of reverence of the name of God—incapable of taking a binding oath.

Hence, it is hardly too much to say that apart from the few true Christians outside the Catholic Church, an oath means nothing, and that it has but one result, namely, to offer still more insult to Almighty God whom the New Zealand Government has banished from its schools. Indeed, considering all things, it might be said that Catholics are the only body to whom an oath means what it should mean. Mr. Massey may be well aware of that, and if he is it would not be the first time that he has aimed insulting legislation at us. At present, he would do well to look after the loyalty of his own Orange friends.

### Letting the Cat out of the Bag

There are many British men and women who refuse to believe that a Briton is capable of being anything but a perfect gentleman at all times. If you tell them that British soldiers (fifteen in number) murdered an old defenceless Irish priest, they will shake their heads and say: "Nonsense, Britons don't do these things." If you tell them that British soldiers have ill-treated girls and made war on women, they will smile patronisingly and tell you you are making a mistake. They have been so bull-dosed and bamboozled by the awful British daily press that they are the most ignorant and silly creatures on earth at the present time, and have no more reasoning power than so many chimpanzees. For the benefit of such good simpletons it is well to refer to a letter published by a British officer, in that most worshipful Tory and Protestant paper which a certain forger invokes so frequently, as an omniscient authority. Writing to that organ, Brigadier-General Decie, who recently held supreme command over the R.I.C.