

Mr. Bonar Law presents, the experiment seems less dangerous to Mr. de Valera.

A POOR GESTURE.

He is perhaps justified in thinking that if the Treaty were violated he and Mr. Lynch, becoming at once the most influential men in the country, would have no difficulty in co-operating. That is beyond dispute, but most independent observers of the situation agree in thinking that so long as the Treaty is honored in London as faithfully as it has been honored by Irish Ministers the psychological effect of the Republicans' new move will be small. Ireland is still a country which is extraordinarily susceptible to dramatic gestures, but this gesture fails even to be dramatic. It was only belated, and the names of those composing the Council of State are—with one or two exceptions—uninspiring in the general view. It is a Council brought into existence in readiness for an emergency which is extremely unlikely to arise—a betrayal by British Ministers of the spirit of the settlement concluded last year.

Mr. Lynch gives other reasons for the setting up of a new Republican Ministry. He recalls the Collins-de Valera pact and argues that it has been violated. He recalls Ministerial undertakings to maintain the Republic, and holds that they have been violated.

"In these circumstances" (he says) "in order to preserve the continuity of independent Irish government, and the better to organise the resources of the Republic in its defence, we, on behalf of the soldiers of the Republic, acting in the spirit of our oath as the final custodians of the Republic, and interpreting the desire of all true citizens of the Republic, have called upon the former President, Eamon de Valera, and the faithful members of Dail Eireann to form a Government, which they have done."

As regards the authorities of the Catholic Church, the Republican attitude is thus described:

When the bishops urge upon young Irishmen the sacred duty of obedience to the Government set up by the people, the Irregulars now retort that their Lordships are not competent to decide between the Provisional Government and the Republican Government. What is interesting in this retort is that it is framed with much less diplomatic care than has usually characterised the dealings of Sinn Fein with the Hierarchy. When its leaders were challenged in 1918 either to repudiate the political philosophy of Connolly or to declare itself opposed to the authoritative teaching of the Church, it very wisely did neither.

Later it was always able to ignore the Church's protests against violence or reply to them in such a way as served to increase the hold of the bishops over the congregation. To-day the tone is careless, almost contemptuous. The recent declaration of the bishops, the pamphlet declares, might have been issued from the Provisional Government, and one might have looked for the Most Reverend Richard Mulcahy among the signatories.

The pamphlet continues:

Their Lordships condemn what they call unauthorised murder. Are we to interpret this condemnation as implying that there are such things as authorised murders? If Fianna boys are done to death, are we to suppose the Hierarchy to applaud this method of getting rid of the opponents of the Provisional Government? The times look dark, indeed, for religion in our country. If allegiance to usurping warmakers is to be a condition for receiving the sacraments of our Church it is high time to look for redress at the source whence the bishops derive their authority, and to ask the Father of the Faithful to send an unprejudiced delegate to inquire into the unhappy relations that exist between his Irish flock and its pastors.

Who Caused the War?

During the infamous Boer War it was scditionous to protest against the tyranny that rushed men from every part of the Empire to exterminate a handful of Boer men and women, and only "disloyalists" dared protest against the massacre of innocents in the hor-

rible concentration camps which struck, not at the manhood of the little nation, but at its womb. Again, during the war with Ireland, we risked imprisonment and prosecution every time we told our readers how Kevin Barry was tortured, how fifteen brave English soldiers stood by while their officer murdered in cold blood a helpless old priest of seventy-seven years, or how Father Griffith was decoyed out at night on a bogus sick-call and foully done to death to prevent him from going to give evidence before the American Commission. During the Great War the people here were in nine cases out of ten completely insane—if insanity means loss of reason. In spite of evidence, in spite of frequent and humiliating exposures, the public accepted the word of politicians and journalists and went on believing what such unreliable persons told them about the origin of the conflict. Then it was treason to denounce calumny, and it was pro-German to use your reason and common sense. The Kaiser was cursed by idolaters who adored his cousin, and everything German was denounced by people who almost said prayers to a family that sprang from a German sire. Only a mad people could have elected Lloyd George when he promised to hang the Kaiser; and only a shameless people could have refrained from imitating the gadarene swine when it was found out that Lloyd George never believed that the Kaiser was guilty at all. It was a war for economic domination, said Billy Hughes in a lucid interval. Germany was not responsible at all, said Lloyd George in a spasm of truthfulness. The truth broke out in spite of them, for it is only for a time that it can be suppressed. To-day we all know that what was treason three years ago is plain common sense, as we know that our greatest enemies during the war were the politicians who pulled the strings and the journalists who encouraged men to go to their deaths for the cause of a huge lie. Little by little the tissue of forgery and falsehood is being exposed and in a short time not even in a New Zealand School Journal will the old falsehoods be found any longer. From the *Nation and Athenaeum* we take the following significant extract:

There has been during the last year a perfect flood of documents throwing light upon the responsibility of the various Governments for the war. None of them are worthy of more attention than the recently published dossier giving the complete exchange of telegrams between the Russian Foreign Office and its representatives in Paris between July 24 and August 2, 1914. An examination of these documents shows clearly why their publication has already led to excited and embittered controversy between the present German Chancellor and the French statesman who was at the head of the French Government when war broke out. The complete text now published proves that the official "Orange Book" published by the Russian Government during the war in order to prove the sole responsibility of the German Government, was simply a forgery. Everything was eliminated from the telegrams which showed the German Government attempting to prevent war, or an Allied Government adopting an intransigent attitude. Thus, passage after passage has been eliminated in which the Russian representative in Paris reported to his Government the efforts of the German Government to "localize the conflict." The same process has been applied to the still more important question of the intransigent attitude of Russia and the Russian mobilisation.

The documents provide a case which is absolutely damning against the Tsar's Government, for innocent people do not require elaborate forgeries to prove their innocence. But they also raise questions which the statesmen who were at the head of the British and French Government will have to answer. Here is the evidence: On July 27, at one of the most critical moments of the negotiations, the Russian Foreign Minister sent a telegram to the Russian Ambassadors in London and Paris with regard to the British proposal for a conference in London of representatives of Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. This telegram ended with the ominous statement that "if there should be a question of exerting any moderating influence in Petersburg, we reject such from the first, since from the be-