

exhibition of mephiticology under the aegis of King Billy!

### The Censorship of Picture Films

In reply to a deputation which awaited on him recently, the censor admitted that there was indeed good reason for the protests made against the general tone of picture films on exhibition in the Dominion. In matter of fact he said that he considered that only a very small percentage of the pictures submitted to him were fit to be shown. It is a deplorable state of affairs that he allowed to pass and be produced very many films which in his opinion deserved condemnation. There can be no question whatever as to the fact that the censor did not do his duty. He said that the pictures were allowed to pass on account of the financial loss prohibiting them would have entailed for the managers and promoters of the shows. In other words, he allowed temptations of a gross kind to be placed in the way of the young for the sake of the purses of the men who were responsible for introducing such filth into the country. A more shocking proof of the lack of true Christian principles in the bureaucracy of New Zealand would be difficult to imagine. If the pictures were not fit to be shown—and the censor said they were not—no reason could justify their exhibition. Christian parents are well aware of their obligation to safeguard their children from temptations which might lead them into vice. No good parent would be justified in allowing books of an immoral nature to lie within reach of the children for whose souls he is responsible. It is attested unmistakably by serious men of all classes and creeds that many of the pictures shown are positively scandalous. It is also certain that such productions have been numerous attended by young people of both sexes; and we have known instances in which respectable men left the hall in disgust, while girls and boys remained to applaud. It is as sinful for a boy or girl to be present at such spectacles as it would be to read an immoral book. It is also as sinful for the parents to permit them in the one case as it is in the other. Whatever the censor does or does not—and we have seen that his view of his duty is not by any means that of a Christian—parents will do well to examine their consciences as to how they have been doing their duty in this matter. Apart altogether from the moral aspect of the question, it is worth while mentioning that grave objections to picture-shows exist in the minds of many people for purely physical reasons: it is said by persons in a position to judge that the eyes and nerves of children who have acquired the picture habit are as a rule impaired. However one looks at it, the matter is one that demands the serious consideration of parents who love their children.

### Pétain

According to the French papers Pétain differs from most other generals in that he is a master of strategy while they rely on tactics only. Pétain never concealed his opinion that the Allies made a terrible blunder in the beginning of the war when they failed to profit by Moltke's astounding mistake. Moltke did not occupy the coast of Belgium, thus leaving his flank unguarded before his drive into France. "Moltke will be dismissed for this," said Pétain at the time. The Allies won the battle at Ypres as a result of this blunder of Moltke's, to which, according to Pétain, may be traced the German failure. Then came the blunder of the Allies in not saving Antwerp. Moltke gave every opportunity to the Allies to keep Antwerp: Pétain is said to have shed tears because they were too stupid to do so. French should have hurled his whole force into Belgium, but he did not do so because there was no head or tail to Allied generalship, and independence of commands and of commanders resulted in failure. It was about this time that, according to French papers, Joffre had something to say anent the conduct of military affairs by English generals. Brilliant and meaningless victories were won, but there was no strategy. And there, according to Pétain, lay the

root of much disaster and failure. Every serious mistake that was made might have been avoided if Pétain's views had obtained the hearing they deserved. But as in England a group of bureaucrats once plunged the country into unnecessary debt and slaughter by disregarding the expert advice of Butler, so in France a big price was paid for ignoring the warnings of this military genius. But he was a good Catholic.

### Ulster Bluster Again

In its editorials the *Dunedin Star* has been a consistent supporter of the claims of the Irish people for self-government. Consequently we were surprised to read in last Thursday's issue certain notes by a regular contributor in which the old, old story was repeated that the Irish people ought really be grateful for the numerous acts of tyranny, breaches of faith, extortions of revenue, and murders for which they have to thank a foreign government. "Carel Cross" sets forth the orthodox Orange views in all their original ignorance. As the devil cites Scripture he quotes Bernhardt as a text for his inanities. We know how an appeal to Bernhardt as an authority on any other subject would be received by the gentleman in question. But anything is good enough for the Irish! "Prejudice," says the Duchess d'Abrantes, "squints when it looks and lies when it talks." Therefore, when a writer speaks of 80 per cent. of the Irish people as "a section of the Irish people" we know what to expect. Listen to this display of up-to-date darkness: "It is just in the last year or two that intelligent Americans are learning to discount the mendacious charges of oppression made by a section of the Irish people against British rule, and to open their eyes to the fact that the government of Ireland to-day is one of the most free and generous in the world. . . . I sometimes think that it would be well if the British Government could get a commission of representative men from the Allies to conduct a thorough investigation into the affairs of Ireland," and so forth.

A "section of the Irish people" howls forth its inspiration. How like the bluster of the beings who talk of Ulster as if it were one juicy and homogeneous orange, and who are in terror of letting Ulster take a majority vote on self-government, knowing as they do that Ulster returns a majority of Nationalist Members of Parliament in spite of all their tactics. We are not aware what standard "Carel Cross" sets up for the intelligence of Americans, but for our part we think Mr. Wilson, Mr. Roosevelt, Cardinal Gibbons, the President of Harvard University, and Judge Parker are well qualified to speak for intelligent Americans; and lately they have spoken pretty plainly on the subject of the rights of the Irish people to govern themselves. And when a paper like *Current Opinion* speaks out as it did last month about the oppression that is going on in Ireland under British rule at present it seems to us that the intelligent Americans of whom "Carel Cross" tells us must belong to the devoted band which would be prepared to welcome the Kaiser's rule rather than give Ireland her rights. If Ireland were as free and as prosperous under English rule as we are assured she is the fact remains that she is robbed of her birthright of nationhood; and whatever "Carel Cross" knows, he knows nothing about the spirit of the Irish people if he thinks that food for their bodies will satisfy their souls. Like many others he is incapable, evidently, of realising that it is not by bread alone a people live.

A generous Government forsooth! A British Royal Commission found in 1896 that the annual over-taxation of Ireland was at the rate of TWO AND THREE-QUARTER MILLIONS of pounds sterling. Then the taxation was at £1 15s 1d per head. Now it has gone up to £4 4s. The total amount extorted from Ireland by "a generous Government" is, on the finding of that same Government, now almost £300,000,000. And instead of making any effort whatsoever to repay a penny of it the "generous Government" has

**Dodds' Piano and Organ Warehouse**

We have the Latest Music from Australia arriving each week.

PHONE 110  
**High Street**

P.O. BOX 121  
**Dannevirke**

Agents for Columbo & Sonora Gramophones.