

Current Topics

'This is Auckland'

Expectation had run high in regard to the Auckland meeting; but the result—both in money and in enthusiasm—outran the most sanguine anticipations. At the close of the Home Rule meeting in Auckland four and a-half years ago, the result of the collection was announced as £550; on this occasion it was announced as £1058—an easy record for the Dominion. It is commonly agreed that 'money talks'; and in this case it speaks eloquently of capable organisation, and of the unbounded enthusiasm and generosity of the Auckland people. In Dunedin—the city of canny Scotchmen—the hope can hardly be entertained of even distantly approaching the Auckland total; but the magnificent successes of the northern centres—Wellington, Christchurch, and Auckland—will be an inspiration to southerners to put their very best foot forward.

Apropos of the envoys' meetings, we take this opportunity of mentioning that in centres where we are not represented by regular correspondents, promoters will do us a favor by sending us at the earliest possible moment marked copies of papers containing reports of such meetings. So far it has been our fortune to receive the great mass of such material on Wednesday morning—the day on which we go to press—and this, although the meetings had taken place at some time during the previous week. We confidently depend on promoters—both in our interest and in their own—to avoid unnecessary delay in respect to future meetings.

State Aid: An Anglican Ally

The June number of our Christchurch Anglican contemporary—the *Layman*—is notable as containing an earnest, thoughtful, and comprehensive leader on the education question. Both in respect to principles and to practical proposals, there is much in the article with which we cordially agree. The following, for example, expresses a point of view which has often been emphasised in the columns of this paper. 'That education can be purely secular, that children can be trained and disciplined without the sanction of religion is purely a modern invention, and was never so much as dreamt of by our fathers. And it is interesting to observe how now in the twentieth century, leading authorities are coming back to the old simple stand-point, and are calling the attention of educationalists to the importance of remembering that the best outcome of education is not intellectual attainment, but self control, and the formation of right character. This is the characteristic, and shall we say, historic English connection, and must be borne in mind and reckoned with by those who would help to develop and reform our present education system. The great thing to recognise is that we have erred, that in the seventies, though much good was done, this fatal mistake was made that education was conceived as affecting only the mental and not the spiritual part as well of the child.'

And the following, on the practical side, is of even greater interest: 'That it is possible to include religion daily in the syllabus and not overcrowd it or detract from its general efficiency is proved from the fact that admirable Church schools exist in the city of Christchurch, and throughout the Dominion, and that pupils in these schools are not one whit behind their contemporaries in the State schools. For Church schools of this type that we have or may be led to establish we must learn to ask for State aid, and to join hands with the Roman Catholics, if need be, to obtain it. If, for instance, the Church educates in Christchurch some hundreds of pupils and satisfies the Government inspector as to proficiency in secular matters, we have a right to ask for the money we have saved the State. This we may not get without long and persistent asking, but when we are in earnest about this vital question of religious education, the Church of England can, and should, get all for which she asks. In this matter her members must make their political power felt.'

If the *Layman* can succeed in leavening the Anglican body with these sentiments and principles, and in getting its readers 'in earnest about this vital question,' it will have deserved well both of the Church which it represents, and of the whole community. With regard to the suggested joining of hands, the proposal seems to us to be a matter of elementary common sense. This is the day of deputations; and if two considerable bodies of electors both want precisely the same thing, why should they not make

a joint demand of the Government—and, in the event of refusal, afterwards make their power felt.

Home Rule Finance

Our esteemed but painfully conservative contemporary, the *Dominion*, is still harping on the fact that at the present time the amount of revenue which Ireland contributes to Imperial purposes is less than the amount of Imperial expenditure on Ireland. Admitting the fact—though by no means acknowledging the correctness of the figures adopted by our contemporary—the *Dominion* either misunderstands or grossly exaggerates its significance. It ignores, or is unaware of, the fundamental distinction between Irish expenditure and expenditure in Ireland. Perhaps the following illustration from the admirable paper by Prof. T. M. Kettle, to which we referred at length a fortnight ago, will help to clarify our contemporary's ideas. 'In the *Daily Mail* articles,' said Prof. Kettle, 'these words occurred: "But with all this said I admit that more money is spent in Ireland than is raised there." Instantly there came a clamor from "Extremists," Tories, King's Counsel, and others to the effect that now at last the mask was off. Nationalist testimony had clearly admitted the insolvency of Ireland. Persons who echo that absurdity have not grasped the fundamental distinction between Irish expenditure and expenditure in Ireland. If I have obtained possession of your property, and thereby initiated you into "disloyalty" to me, and if, with the income of your property, I hire a policeman to baton you, a soldier to suppress you, a judge to admonish you, and a jailer to lock you up, I can hardly put in a trustee account exhibiting all these charges as part of your expenditure on the ground that they were spent on you.'

As is well known to everyone familiar with Irish affairs, the Imperial expenditure in Ireland is swollen to a ridiculous extent by wasteful, extravagant, and worse than useless expenditure on a horde of Government officials. Scotland has a larger population than Ireland. Yet the number of Government officials assessed for income tax in Scotland in 1908 was 963, in Ireland, 4539. Their salaries in Scotland, £311,694; in Ireland, £1,412,520. Ireland is forced to spend £3 for every £1 spent by Scotland on law and justice, although she has less crime to deal with. The cost of the Law Courts in Scotland was, in 1907, £202,608; the cost in Ireland, £368,714. Irish police cost practically £1,500,000; Scotch police cost about £500,000. The Irish Prisons' Board, with only 2500 convicts under its charge, costs £107,000 per annum; the Scotch Prisons' Board, with 2900 convicts, cost £87,000. The excessive cost of Irish Government may be illustrated in another way. Of her national income of £1,800,000,000, a year, England spends less than one-fortieth part on her home government. Of her national income of £70,000,000, a year, Ireland is forced to spend on her home government more than one-tenth. In introducing his Home Rule Bill of 1886, Mr. Gladstone said: 'The civil charges per capita at this moment are in Great Britain 8s 2d, and in Ireland 16s.' In 1908 the civil charges in Ireland were not 16s, but 28s 6d per capita. As Prof. Kettle truly says: 'The only Government that can afford to be frugal is a Government that possesses the confidence of its people. Home Rule, and Home Rule alone, can realise those huge economies in Irish administration which men of all parties agree to be desirable.'

A Methodist 'Convert'

The Rev. Everett S. Stackpole, D.D., a New England Methodist minister, who was at one time a missionary in Italy, tells us in his *Four and One-half Years in the Italy Mission*, that the 'ex-priest' converts of the Methodist Mission in Rome are a poor lot, who work merely for the pay, and who go elsewhere as soon as they find higher wages offered them. 'Some ex-priests,' he says, 'are "ex's" necessarily. They have quarrelled with their superiors, or they have been guilty of some immorality, or they want more salary, or they desire to get married.' Men of mercenary spirit in other denominations learn that we pay our preachers "magnificently," as one of them said, and hence they seek admission into our Church and betray their own. These words were written a good many years ago; but to judge by the following cable, which appeared in last week's dailies, they are as true to-day as when they first appeared. The message is dated, Rome, June 6, and runs thus: 'The criminal tribunal has sentenced an ex-priest named Verdesi, now a Methodist, to 10 months' imprisonment, besides a fine, for libel in alleging that Father Bricarelli had violated the secrets of the confessional by revealing to the Pope the names of certain Modernists.' By the time Verdesi has 'done' his ten months, he will have learnt a salutary lesson; and will—it is safe to predict—have dropped his Methodism. 'Whoever has been in the pay of our mission,' writes Dr. Stackpole, 'as preacher, Bible-woman, organist, janitor,