

a universal suffrage aiding in consolidating order and peace, at an equal distance of the two branches of the alternative with which the political parties threaten us: anarchy or dictatorship. . .

"The day upon which the work-givers' organisations and the Christian workingmen's associations, instead of arranging themselves into classes tearing each other to pieces, will unite, in mutual confidence, to set up the economical society upon the foundation of the Gospel, the social question will be solved and peace re-established."

### The Locarno Pact

The central part of the Pact which is going to patch up the Treaty of Versailles, unless it becomes yet one more monument to the folly of the statesmen of this age, is the Treaty of Mutual Guarantees. Subsidiary to this are four treaties of arbitration between Germany and her eastern and western neighbors, two treaties of guarantee between France and Poland and France and Czechoslovakia, and a draft collective Note from the former Allies to Germany, defining their interpretation of Article 16 of the Covenant. Signature was formally affixed in London on December 1. It is anticipated that they will become part of the public law of Europe in the New Year. None of the treaties become operative until Germany enters the League of Nations, so that, in addition to formal signature, special meetings of the Council and Assembly must be held to elect her. The Pact itself is not a complete denial of the right to fight. Warfare is legitimate in four cases (which may be described as specified instances of self-defence), but in three of these cases the party which thinks itself aggrieved will be the judge of the facts and of the urgency of making war on its own account without the sanction of the League or of any other international authority. The danger implicit in this loophole is great or little according to one's belief in the loyalty of the Powers concerned in carrying out the other and guiding principles of the Pact. These provide for the submission of "all questions of every kind" (1) to normal diplomatic procedure, (2) to judicial procedure, under either an arbitral tribunal or the Hague Court, (3) to a Permanent Conciliation Commission (where (1) has failed and (2) does not apply), and, lastly (4), if all these methods fail, to the League. Warfare becomes legitimate only three months after the failure of (3) (and then only against a State which has already attacked), or in the event of some flagrant contravention of the demilitarisation of the Rhineland, sufficient to threaten an immediate breach of the peace. Great Britain and Italy undertake to support these provisions by force of arms, compulsorily, at the dictate of the League, and on their own appreciation of the facts if time does not permit the calling in of the League. Similar provisions apply in the East, except that the guarantee is supplied by France instead of by Great Britain and Italy, that it is unilateral and does not operate to the advantage of Germany, who will have to rely upon the Covenant alone.

### An Appeal Against England

Mr. O. G. Esmond, T.D., who was recently in Geneva, issued to the Irish press a statement in which he says:

"I am in a position to confirm the statement in the *Journal de Geneve* last Sunday, that the Irish Free State will soon be obliged to appeal to the League of Nations for the protection of the Irish Nationalist minorities in the area known as Northern Ireland, which is still under the authority of the British Government.

"Although since the passing of the Gilbert Murray resolutions by the Third Assembly, the League has been recognised as the general protector of minorities, it has hitherto refused to intervene when appealed to by minorities whose right to League protection is not specifically stated in some Treaty or understanding.

"Consequently, it is not possible for the Irish minorities to bring their case directly before the League themselves, which makes it necessary for the Irish Free State to intervene and appeal to the Council on their behalf, under Article XII of the Covenant.

#### Reasons for Appeal.

"The main reasons for this appeal are as follows: The Belfast authorities have organised a secret army estimated at 45,000 men, the ranks of which are open exclusively to anti-Irish elements, and the sole, and openly admitted, object of which is to terrorise and suppress the rights of the minorities.

"The existence of this army, which is openly subsidised by the Imperial Government, is in direct violation of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, in which there is the understanding that the Belfast Government shall have no power whatever to organise or control any military force.

#### Disfranchisement.

"Secondly, the Provincial Legislature has passed a series of enactments for the purpose of disfranchising the minorities and eliminating them from the local administration. They began by abolishing the system of Proportional Representation, and proceeded to re-arrange and 'gerrymander' the electoral areas with the same object. These laws have been so successful, and have been carried out so thoroughly, that the minorities—who number between 400,000 and 500,000, or just over one-third of the total population of the area—have been practically completely eliminated from the local administration, their members have been removed from public positions, and their Parliamentary franchise reduced to a farce.

#### The Treaty.

"It is the contention of the Irish Free State that these laws are in striking violation of Article XVI of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, which laid down that the Parliament of Northern Ireland should not make any law so as either directly or indirectly to give any preference or impose any disability on account of religious belief or status.

"The continued suppression of these minorities, accompanied as it is by grave violation of the Treaty which was registered at

Geneva last year, would inevitably lead to serious trouble between Ireland and Great Britain, were the matter not brought before the League.

"It is hoped by this means to obtain protection of the elementary rights of these populations, which the Irish Free State is both morally and legally bound to defend."

### The German Centre Party

According to Dr. Wirth, the time has come for a radical re-organisation of the German Centre Party, the traditional bulwark of Catholic political influence in the Fatherland. He says it is necessary that a strong leader shall arise and stake his reputation and personality on a fight against reaction. A movement to preserve the democratic spirit and to appeal to all German Democrats must start within the Party. It is expected that such a campaign would have strong support among those who opposed the steam-rolling of the tariff and tax Bills through the Reichstag. According to the *Irish Catholic* three important elements have already rallied to Dr. Wirth's aid. The first is the Catholic Youth, representing one of the strongest and most intelligent youth movements in Germany; the second is the Baden Centrist organisation, under the leadership of Monsignor Schofer; and the third is the Catholic Workers' Organisation, which is powerful in Rheinland and Westphalia. Another factor that is expected to permit Chancellor Wirth to make headway is the death of Dr. Peter Spahn, former president of the Reichstag and leader of the Centrists for many years. Dr. Spahn was a member of the Reich for thirty-three years and regarded as a mouthpiece of his party. His tendencies were known to be reactionary. In sounding his call for a new policy Chancellor Wirth is quoted as saying:—

The politics of the last weeks have been raw and primitive. If to-day there were new elections in Germany, the results of the Hindenburg elections would not be the same, I believe the political situation in Germany needs clarifying. The Catholic Centre must again throw its pivotal influence with the parties of the republic and the democracy.

[CARD.]

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