

Current Topics

Another Headline

On Monday morning the *Otago Daily Times* opened out with a headline telling its readers that de Valera had yielded—"DE VALERA YIELDS." Mindful of the fact that a short time ago the editor of the same paper told us that Sinn Fein had murdered three men in Belfast and that when we read the cable we found that they had been probably (and as was proved later they certainly were) murdered by Orangemen, we read the message, dated September 18, 11.5 p.m., only to find out that it was another case of *Daily Times* editorial genius falling over itself in its anxiety to win an O.B.E. by its determination to be in at the death of a small nation. We found a letter which reminded Lloyd George that from the beginning of the negotiations de Valera acted and spoke as the President of the Irish Republic, laying down as essential the principle of self-determination on which the Welshman recruited during the war. De Valera, like many other people, was surprised that Lloyd George should at this hour find as an obstacle to a conference facts which he was face to face with from the beginning. Without withdrawing his insistence on these facts, without failure to recognise himself for what he is, de Valera again asserts his readiness to enter into a conference for the sake of final peace, but in all his letter there is no sign of yielding where the principles enunciated from the beginning are concerned, and only a man who could tell the public that murders committed by Orangemen were Sinn Fein crimes could frame the headline, "DE VALERA YIELDS."

[The foregoing note was printed before we saw the reply of Mr. Lloyd George which reached Dunedin at noon on Monday. The British Prime Minister's first two sentences are a clean knock-out for the *Daily Times* scribe. Lloyd George writes to de Valera: "I received your telegram. I observe that it does not modify the claim that your delegates should meet us as representatives of a sovereign independent State." How anxious some people are that de Valera should yield!]

Queries

Is it because a Freemason or an Orangeman is mentally unfit that he is often treated lightly as a criminal?

Perhaps the *Otago Daily Times* editor could tell us if it was when Donegal was put in Southern Ireland that he received authority to locate Spike Island in Dublin?

Would he also inform us when the town of Mill-street became a metropolitan thoroughfare?

How long after the war for small nations did it become unpatriotic to think that pledges made by the British Government ought to be kept?

Why was a Prussian scrap of paper a disgraceful thing, while it seems that British scraps of paper arouse no editorial wrath at all?

Since when did it become usual for "British gentlemen" to describe as "fanatics" and "idealists" people who object to being told falsehoods by British Cabinet Ministers?

What is the exact word to describe an editor who attributes to one class of people the crimes committed by others?

Ratana

Merely for the sake of argument let us put a case to the Anglicans who gave Ratana their blessing. If Ratana, consulted by a person who suffered from a malignant internal cancer, told him to go away and pray and he would be all right, and if in spite of prayer the cancer that might have been cured by operation killed the patient, would the Anglicans feel easy in their conscience? Would they advise a bad case of appendicitis to pray and not to worry about a doctor?

And would they do the same themselves? There is, it seems to us, abundant warranty in Scripture for the old saying: "God helps those who help themselves." And whatever might be the effect of suggestion in nervous disorders we should certainly recommend patients to help themselves to expert medical advice. Miracles are not wrought every day, and while suggestion can cure some cases it cannot replace glass eyes and cork legs.

"The Victim"

There are pictures and pictures, just as there are good books and other books; and, like books again, the picture theatre has become a force for good or evil in the world of to-day. Too often one has to pronounce condemnation on the entertainments provided for the public by the directors of the cinematograph world, and it is a rare event when one can unreservedly recommend a picture to all comers—or rather goers. We have had a few in many years that we found deserving of such recommendation. *Fabiola* was one; personally we think *The Miracle* was another; and we have dim recollections of one or two more: so few out of all that follow one another in the merry-go-round of the weekly programmes! All things considered, we are pleased to communicate to our readers the good account we have had of a picture called *The Victim*. It has been produced in Wellington, where it met with universal approbation among the clergy and laity, and we hear it is to be in Dunedin about the end of the first week of October. The subject being the secret of the Confessional and its inviolability, the picture ought to be interesting to all—yea, even to the P.P. Asses who will have an opportunity of acquiring some knowledge without being called upon to exercise more intelligence than is possessed by the ordinary school-child. Respectable non-Catholics who desire to have the truth put before them will also find mental and moral enlightenment in the entertainment. Catholics ought to support it because it is a vindication of Catholic doctrine, as well as a testimony to the miraculous fact that the secret committed to the confessor by the penitent was, is, and for ever shall be recognised as God's secret which no priest could violate without incurring the most terrible penalties that the Church can inflict on her delinquent children. Support of a picture of this sort means encouragement to provide others equally wholesome, and goodness knows we want more of the kind.

The Australian Catholic Truth Society

The Executive of this zealous society are making a rally in order to increase its membership and to make it more efficient. One may become a member for the small sum of five shillings yearly. The object of the society is to promote the spread of Catholic doctrine and to combat by timely and useful publications the attacks against the Church. Co-operation in this campaign is most laudable, and we are sure the clergy will do all in their power to secure large numbers of new members. At a cost of a little more than one penny a week a large membership can effect great good, and nobody will ever miss the few shillings a year to help on the good work. The society has already published numerous pamphlets on religious, scientific, literary, and social subjects, and the amount of good it can do in future depends to a large extent on the co-operation of our people and on their response to the present drive. We trust that a new membership of at least five thousand will be found in New Zealand. Five times as many ought to be forthcoming in Australia with no great effort. Such support would enable the society to do in the future even ten times more good than it has done in the past. We feel that this laudable enterprise need only be mentioned to secure for it the aid it merits.

University Luminaries

It was a great French doctor who said that his faith was as simple and as strong as that of a Breton peasant, and added that if he knew more it would be even as simple and strong as that of a Breton peasant