

Current Topics

The Facts of the Case

When our Mr. Massey returns from his journey, he will tell us tall tales by way of persuading us that it was worth while sending him. Our truly reliable and never-to-be-doubted day-lie men have given us columns of piffle that assured us that in our fine, big, bluff Orange Prime Minister we had the greatest thing that ever happened in the way of statesmen. But, in anticipation of the gas-attack that is to come when "the statesman" takes up his fifty-seven portfolios once more, it is just as well to know what a man on the spot thought of the job which Mr. Massey has charged the Dominion some thousands of badly needed pounds for assisting in. Here, short and sweet, is what the London *Nation* has to say about it:

"Six weeks of secret diplomacy, varied by eloquent enunciations of nothings at public luncheons, is no very inspiring advertisement for the British Commonwealth of Nations."

Just keep that before your mind and compare it with the Munchausen-like stories that Mr. Massey will tell us about his diplomatic endeavors.

British Journalism

Countess Marciewicz was imprisoned among street walkers by the British because she was guilty of loving a small nation. She came forth from the hell of a British gaol, broken down in body but not in spirit. In the following extract the public may judge of the chivalry and gentlemanliness of the *Otago Daily Times* (edited by Mr. James Hutchison and long managed by Sir George Fenwick) which thus attacks a cultured and noble woman, in a spirit worthy of the Black-and-Tans who murdered Mrs. Quinn and her unborn babe:

"Bhoys, kape the door!—he's tuk the flure—
The Prisidint wi' jumps an' kicks!
An' see him jig—bold Day Valayry—
Wi' bewcheous Countess Markyviks!

"The printer, for reasons best known to himself—possibly because he had seen the lady's portrait in the picture papers—left out the epithet 'bewcheous,' thereby spoiling the metre. I quote the verse to suggest that if Mr. de Valera would give the Countess Markiewicz another jigging turn he might jig her into a less truculent frame of mind."

The Dublin "Leader"

On August 6, this year, the *Leader* came of age, after twenty-one years of magnificent and vital service to Irish Ireland. Twenty-one years ago the early copies of this splendid weekly used to reach us in our student-days among the olive groves of Tivoli and we can recall as if it were but yesterday with what interest we watched the rise of an organ which from the first struck a true, clear note that awakened the slumberers all over Ireland. The *Leader* pushed Irish principles to their inexorable and logical conclusions; it waged relentless war on *raineis* and sunburstry; it taught contempt for the spouting men as compared with the men of action; it poured murderous ridicule on the little clerks in Government offices and elsewhere who on a pound a week fancied themselves, as perhaps they were, the last word of West British culture. Week after week the *Leader* insisted on the necessity of encouraging Irish industries and discouraging trade in English shoddy. It instilled into the young people a proper pride in their nationality; it made them ashamed not to know something of their own language; it preached unweariedly the importance of the revival of Gaelic sports, Gaelic songs, Gaelic speech, and Gaelic ideals. From it every Irish boy and girl who had brains learned to appraise at value the posturings and the airs of the cockney-Irish "Society" people that aped the ways of London and forgot their own souls. It branded the

"sourfaces"; it threw a white light of truth upon the "garrison"; it made—actually made—the young people ashamed to be seen reading British Sunday papers and similar sewage. In all these and in other ways, the *Leader* did glorious pioneer service and made ready the minds and hearts of men and women for the lessons of freedom that were to be preached from the house-tops in a later day by Pearse and Connolly. If Irish Ireland is a reality now much credit for the achievement is due to the work of the Dublin *Leader*. May Mr. Moran long continue to direct it, and in its prime may it do still greater service for the Irish Nation.

The Public Amused

In dull Dunedin the people now and then are provided with amusement by Professor John Dickie. For a long time he has been unmindful of our claims on his charity and accomplishments. Since he and the Reverend Mr. Davies gave a real, old-fashioned, full-flavored Orange exhibition in Knox Church the cold chain of silence has hung on the Professor. We were glad to see that he has consented to give another exhibition. He was up to his best form in the *Star* last week—nearly as good as he was in a certain furtive and semi-private recital given some time ago in the Orange organ of sweetness and light. We were beginning to think he had lost his dash when to our delight he showed that he still retained his form. But was it not too cruel of those mischievous letter-writers who kept on sending in letters with no other object than that of drawing out the poor Professor? We note that in his letter he asserts that we imagine he is beneath notice. We regret that we ever conveyed such an impression. We enjoy him as much as the students do at Capping time, and whatever helps to amuse us is always worth some notice.

A Chance for Mr. Massey

New Zealand loves its Prime Minister so much that it is ready on the slightest pretext to give him a big purse in order to enable him to visit his fellow-statesmen in Europe. Of course in that we are acting as good Samaritans, knowing well and truly what infinite lessons of wisdom and statecraft the other benighted Premiers derive from our illustrious William during his periodical appearances in the chief cities of Europe. Some people love him so much that they deem it wrong of him to return so soon, and it is alleged on all sides that the country would shoulder the burden of a very prolonged absence on his part in a very kindly spirit. Others, who love sport, say they are pleased that he is coming back to New Zealand, as they will be deeply interested in seeing how his master-mind will deal with certain ethical and financial problems which are going to arise for his consideration in the near future. They are such that no common or garden person could hope to deal with them to the satisfaction of the public; and as they are also such that the public will insist on plain dealing with them Mr. Massey's future feats of statesmanship will afford keen sport to the sports. It is perhaps unfortunate for him that he will not have the field all to himself, as he has had during the late lamented war for small nations, including Ireland. Then William's word was law; now, for one reason or another, it is not quite as efficient as it used to be. Farmers who are face to face with hard times, Government employes who are listening for the scratching of the wolf at the door, and in fact all classes of people except the Members of Parliament and Ministers who have secured an increase of salary in a season of general depression, will be on the alert to see that bluff Bill as his admirers call him shall not evade a single round in the fight that is before him. As an indication of the nature of that fight the following remarks of Mr. McCombs may be read with profit:

"Finance is going to receive considerable attention this session," remarked Mr. McCombs. "The Government has not been quite frank about it. First we are told of the six million surplus, then of the empty Treasury, when the actual fact is that there was over ten and three-quarter millions sterling in the Consolidated Fund, made up of the six million surplus and the previous year's surplus of two and a-quarter millions,