

The Disarmament Conference

At last the true status, financial and otherwise, of modern nations is penetrating the exceedingly dense and stupid politicians of the world (says the *Fortnightly Review*, N.Y.). History has some illuminating examples of kings and queens who were far out of step with the people they supposedly ruled, and tradition has it that Marie Antoinette during the crisis of the pre-Revolution days, asked her Minister, who reported that the people were clamoring for bread, why they did not eat cake. Whether true or not, this story represents the popular view of the royal understanding of the people's condition. And yet it is hard to believe that modern politicians ever had an equal in their misjudgments of popular endurance. We have daily evidence all about us that the modern Minister, Premier, King, or President is wholly out of touch with the true conditions.

It is not a little surprising, then, that our own President Harding has called for November 11 a Conference on Disarmament, to be attended by the five Great Powers of the modern world. Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States are to be represented at this conclave designed to bring forth a plan which will somehow do away with the foolish race in armaments and even perhaps lead to a sane proposal regarding the Far Eastern question, which is destined to play so important a part in the future of the Western world.

Much has been made of this move on the part of Mr. Harding, who is evidently assaying a new role. The question that immediately presents itself to a much disillusioned world is the efficacy of the proposed Conference. "Will it bring forth results?" is the question on every lip.

It is almost impossible to believe that the present disillusioned generation places the slightest confidence in the proposed Conference. How could it be otherwise, if we but consider that the men who are to represent these nations at the Conference have isolated, or helped keep in a state of isolation, the greater portion of Europe and Western Asia. Is it possible that the thieves who waylaid and looted a powerful people like the Germans and who are starving the Russians, can agree among themselves that they will lay aside their weapons and cease further depredations? In other words, will those who are by tradition, education, and experience militaristically inclined, agree to disarm?

Perhaps the most striking confirmation of the attitude of those who are pessimistic about the result lies in the fact that the industrial nations of the present day, operating under the capitalistic regime, are continually at war. Strangely enough people do not seem to consider it in this light, and yet it is a fact which continually stares us in the face. Modern economic warfare has its fatalities as great as, and perhaps even greater than, modern battlefields. Why the widespread unemployment throughout America and Europe if not, in great part at least, owing to our present scheme of international trade, which has been seriously tampered with by the bungling politicians at Versailles and subsequently in their respective home offices? As long as economic warfare is essentially inherent in modern trade, so long will it be necessary for governments to keep their peoples in arms.

Disarmament means more than a gathering of politicians and the passing of some well-worded resolutions. It means, in the first place, the education of the masses to the point of their attaining an entirely different world-view. After all, the calibre of the political leaders is indicative of the intellectual and moral calibre of the people whom they represent. Disarmament means, secondly, a Christian attitude of mutual justice and charity among nations, such as the Holy Father has been pleading for of late. Disarmament means, thirdly, the throwing off of the yoke of international Capitalism with its economic wars, tariff barriers, "foreign interests," over-production, new markets, and unbridled competition.

If our readers wish to believe, after a careful consideration of the above points, that the proposed conference will bring results sufficient to justify the fares of the visiting delegates, they will be doing so at their own risk. For our part, we can see nothing but a better acquaintance among thieves.

Exposure of Anti-Irish Propaganda

IMMORAL CLERGYMAN SUBSIDISED: PATRIOTIC CHIEF CLERGYMAN IMPRISONED.

David Duncan Irvine, pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, Morris Park, was denied citizenship of the U.S.A., at Long Island City, on the grounds of shocking immorality. This clergyman, who was formerly in Bangor, has been 13 years in U.S.A., where he devoted all his energies to anti-Catholic and anti-Irish propaganda work. He was the official manager of the Cootie anti-Irish tour, and in that capacity got a great deal of prominence. Cootie is now a member of the mock parliament in Belfast.

In a letter to the *Irish News*, the Rev. Dr. J. A. H. Irwin, Dunore, Killead, and Muckamore, commenting on the "admirable exposure" of the ex-Rev. Irvine, says:

"This was the worthy gentleman who published all sorts of inaccurate cablegrams about me in America. Whenever I went he pursued me with telegrams, which sometimes the press refused to publish, in which case they were circulated in pamphlet form. He was one of the leading spirits in bringing the Cootie mission to America and their chief sponsor and organiser when there."

Mentioning that the ex-Rev. Irvine founded the Society for Promoting Good Relations between Great Britain and Ireland (this is apparently the National Patriotic Alliance), Dr. Irwin says this society was "primarily to perpetuate the salary of the Rev. D. D. Irvine and to dupe politically old women on both sides of the Atlantic, as he had already duped morally young ones in his various charges. He seemed to have an unlimited amount of funds, for he spent almost as much in cablegrams and telegrams and printing in regard to me as would have paid my fare across the Atlantic."

"Further, Irvine states that he boasted of being in communication with the leaders of our Church, and published cablegrams in regard to me purporting to come from them, and I regret to say that many members of my own congregation were misled by his brazen-faced audacity. . . . It was this sort of thing that made our Church stink in the nostrils of all right-thinking Americans of all denominations—an influence that I tried in my own humble way, and with the time and health at my disposal, to counteract, for which I have been persecuted beyond description ever since."

Meanwhile the Cooties in Ireland have been trying to ruin Dr. Irwin and to drive him out of his ministry. The charge levelled against him is the frivolous one "of having associated with Mr. de Valera while in America." It is perfectly true that he did so, and it is equally true that Mr. Cootie associated with the Rev. David Duncan Irvine. The choice lies between the ministers. Meanwhile it is remarkable that all the members of the congregation of Killead, including those who were hostile, were heartily and unanimously of the opinion that Dr. Irwin had discharged his ministerial duties with great faithfulness and marked ability.

Killead parish has indeed become famous. It is stated to be one of the oldest, if not the oldest, Presbyterian congregations in Ireland, dating since 1660. Four ministers of the congregation have suffered imprisonment at the hands of the English Government. One of these was arrested and imprisoned as a "seditious person" in 1798. Dr. Irwin was recently the victim of a plot. He was arrested and sentenced by court-martial to two years' imprisonment after the finding in his house of a farmer's gun for which there was no ammunition, and a revolver in useless condition, with ammunition which would not fit it. He was, however, released after three weeks. Such is the persecution of the worthy minister, beloved of his congregation, long an object of calumny, but now vindicated in a remarkable manner. "Blessed are they who suffer for justice' sake." Their reward will be great. Ireland is fortunate in the character of those who sustain her cause, and among those who have suffered and been vindicated, the name of Dr. J. A. H. Irwin will be held in high esteem and affection in Killead and far beyond it, in Ireland and America.

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