

Current Topics

According to Hoyle

We noticed a week ago that while South Africa, Canada, and even Mr. Hughes of Australia, wanted more information before taking down their war drums, Mr. Massey plunged headlong into militarism at a whisper from Lloyd George. How consoling it is now to read that the Orangemen of Ulster are sending their congratulations to Mr. Massey. It is in strict accordance with the premises that Craig and Massey should rush where statesmen ponder, and it is remarkable that the same two Prime Ministers are united in their opposition to the sane measure of Proportional Representation. No greater argument in its favor could be produced. In spite of the million and a half of unemployed in Britain Lloyd George's war cry was received very coldly there, and it was received even with a note of hostility in France and Italy. However, we are sure that he, Mr. Massey, and Sir James Craig will be found ready to send the last man to die fighting for a war that nobody else seems to think ought to be fought at all.

Football

While anonymous writers continue to pour out the vials of their sectarian hatred of the Brothers' Boys in our papers, we read that fresh attacks against the young players are being organised in the north by those poor examples of true sport, the State School teachers. Catholics may expect persecution as long as they live. From the beginning all the atheists and Jews and Mohamedans and Protestants have been ready to make common cause against the Church, which is of course the sure sign of its rightness. Persecution is sure to come from a country governed by a Cabinet which prosecutes a bishop for saying things he never said while it sends its policemen to safeguard an agitator whose vile calumnies are a constant breach of the law, as is proved by the fact that they have stirred up riots in many centres already. However, if persecution unites us and teaches us to hold up our heads and hit back harder than our foes hit, it is not altogether an evil thing. Coming back to the matter of football, why not unite in a movement which would hit the enemy very hard at present? If every Catholic school were to throw its weight and influence into the agitation in favor of the League game they would be doing something more telling than mere words. Why not do it, and do it unanimously and at once?

Father Bernard Vaughan

From the *Catholic Herald of India* we take the following note:

"A special cable to the *Statesman* announces that Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J., is lying seriously ill. None but will wish the great preacher another spell of life, but should he die, we hope he will not be buried with his great secret on the last hours of King Edward. Father Vaughan, who had been for many years an intimate friend of the late King, was summoned to the monarch's death-bed. What passed between them has never been revealed to the public, but the late Father Plater has stated more than once, among others to Lieut.-Col. Ranking that King Edward died a Catholic and was received into the Church by Father Vaughan at their last interview. The evidence is unsatisfactory. But the secret is with Heaven and with Father Vaughan."

Canards of this kind are too frequent. Similar was the story that used to be told about Queen Victoria. If our memory does not play us false Father Vaughan long ago denied the truth of the rumor of Edward's conversion. And then another priest (unnamed) was suggested as the medium. What reason could any one find for suggesting that such a final grace would be granted to the one or the other? Edward was no saint surely and his mother was by no means fond of Catholics, as her famous letter to the King of the Belgians proves.

G.K.C.'s Conversion

Some time ago a cable announced that Mr. Gilbert Chesterton had been received into the Catholic Church. At the time, owing to the fact that a similar announcement had been falsely made more than once, we preferred to wait for confirmation of the report. As we now read in an American exchange an account of the quiet ceremony, with the name of the priest (Father O'Connor) who officiated, there seems no reason for doubting any longer that the report is true. All Catholics will extend to Mr. Chesterton a warm welcome into the fold. Indeed, so vigorously has he always stood for the sane and rational principles of which the Catholic Church is the only fearless exponent to-day that it was often taken for granted by Protestant writers that he was a Catholic. In this was conveyed a double compliment—to the Church and to Mr. Chesterton. Unfortunately it is true that Protestant Churches allow expediency and State dictation to destroy their Christian traditions more and more as time goes on, until we have civil law imposing on some of them without protest obligations which are contrary to their beliefs, while others are prepared to give to Caesar the things that are God's. Hence the astonishment at seeing a non-Catholic boldly fighting for the old and sound principles which meant everything to all before the Reformation and State-dictated religion. Hence, too, the complimentary inference that a man who did have the courage and consistency to stand for such things must be a Catholic. Well, he has now "come over" and followed the example of his brother Cecil, who was killed during the war.

Prussianism in Education

The enemies of Christianity in America are, as in New Zealand, attacking private schools, but, unlike New Zealand, America finds among all creeds and classes strenuous defenders of the rights of the private institutions, because, again unlike New Zealand, America has a large number of citizens who are capable of thinking for themselves instead of rushing headlong after a Lloyd George, as Mr. Massey does, or after a P.P.A. liar as the mob does. Not only Catholic, but Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopalian, and Adventist organisations in the United States have boldly taken up the challenge and defended the rights of the schools attacked. The arguments against the proposed despotic legislation ought to be studied in New Zealand, where, too, we have a Government, trying by Prussian methods to ruin the country. An American exchange says:

A vigorous argument against the measure was made recently in a statement signed by a group of thirteen prominent business men of Portland. They describe the measure as imitating "the method of public education which brought Prussia to her deserved destruction" and contended that the title of the Bill is deceptive since compulsory education, which this measure purports to provide, is already required by law in Oregon.

"In present-day Russia, the Bolshevik government treats the child as the ward of the State," the argument reads. "This measure proposes to adopt this method and to substitute State control for the authority and guidance of the parents and is destructive of American independence."

"It represents an anti-American effort to standardise the individual and strike a blow at democracy's long struggle to protect the individual in his right to direct his own life," is the way the proposed measure is described by representatives of four private non-denominational schools in Portland.

From representatives of the Lutheran Church a strong protest has been made on the ground that prohibition of private schools would violate the rights guaranteed to the individual by the Federal constitution. "Under the Constitution of the United States and the State of Oregon," their argument reads, "you enjoy religious liberty; that is, the liberty to worship God according to the dictates of your conscience, and to rear your child according to your religion. If you see fit to send your child to a school in which the religion of your choice is taught, not one day in the week,

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