

A LESSON TO THE WORLD.

THE wisdom of British Liberal Statesmanship has been demonstrated in many ways and on many occasions, but it is doubtful if it has ever received more remarkable vindication than in the whole-hearted support of the Empire at war by the people of South Africa. When the British Government, within a few short years of the time the conquered Boers had laid down their arms, conferred upon the South African colonies the gift of free government, there were those, and not a few of them, who did not hesitate to warn the British statesmen responsible for this grant that they were simply laying up for the Empire trouble at some future day. As a matter of fact and record, some of the Opposition in Parliament went so far as to denounce the Government's measure as a rash and dangerous experiment.

The Liberal Government took little notice of this criticism. The wisdom of their course in applying in South Africa a fundamental doctrine of Liberal statesmanship has been demonstrated in South Africa from year to year, but it remained for the crucial test of War to prove finally and completely that it was the course of wisdom. It has been shown that instead of breeding disloyalty and fostering a spirit of revolt among a newly conquered people, it has had just the opposite effect. It has stimulated loyalty and has cemented forever the union of South Africa to the Empire.

British Liberal statesmen were ready to trust the people of South Africa, just as they have trusted the people of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. When war has come, South Africa has rallied to the call of the Mother Land just as readily as her elder sisters, and we have the inspiring picture of Premier Louis Botha, one of the most noted of the Boer generals who led his countrymen against the British armies so brilliantly less than fifteen years ago, pledging the whole-hearted support of the South African people to Great Britain in the present war. General Botha has himself taken supreme command of the British operations against German Southwest Africa and the whole Empire is ready to leave affairs there in his hands.

The spectacle of South Africa, lined up with Canada, Australia, New Zealand and India, to fight the battles of the Empire side by side with the soldiers of the Mother Land is one that has drawn the admiring gaze of the whole world, excepting, of course, Germany and Austria. A leading United States journal has voiced the sentiments of observers the world over when it made the statement "Never was there stronger proof of the excellence of British Administration in our times than the winning of Botha, DeWet and De La Rey to the new order in South Africa. The Empire has known no more loyal citizens".

General Botha, Premier of the Union of South Africa, has given the answer of the people of the Union to German sneers and taunts of British injustice toward the South African States, and can be counted upon to deal quickly and effectively with any evidences of more direct, if more insidious, German activities within the Union.

Canada's first Expeditionary force is in England; India's first contingent of turbaned warriors is at the front in France, and in Belgium; Australian and New Zealand contingents are on their way, if not already in England (the censors deny us definite particulars.) Australian and New Zealand forces are conducting most successful operations against German possessions in the South seas, and the Australian navy is protecting British commerce and British possessions, while what there is of Canada's navy is performing similar duty on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. South African forces are caring capably and with enthusiasm with the situation in that far-off part of the Empire. The Empire is united, "there is but one mind and one heart", and in this inspiring spectacle is to be seen so that all the world may read, the lesson of the sagacity and wisdom on which British principles of freedom and justice are founded.

THE IRISH HOME RULE BILL.

THE Irish Home Rule Bill is at last law, although it will not come into actual force for a year. On September 18, the assent of King George was given to the bill, which thus became law. On September 15, the House of Commons passed through all its stages a bill providing that the Irish Home Rule Bill and the Welsh Disestablishment Bill should not come into force for a year, the intention undoubtedly being to defer the actual application of these bills until after the war. At the same time Premier Asquith promised that before the Bill came into operation, the Government would introduce an amending bill under the terms of which there would be no coercion of Ulster.

The result of the Government's action in redeeming its pledges to carry the Home Rule Bill through was instantaneous throughout Ireland. Mr. John Redmond, the Nationalist Leader, immediately issued a manifesto calling upon all Irishmen to bear their share in the great and just war in which the Empire was engaged. He also appealed to the men of Ulster to accept the friendship of the Nationalist party. A wave of patriotic enthusiasm was engendered which has resulted in unprecedented recruiting for Lord Kitchener's army.

There now appears to be a growing belief that when normal conditions are restored in Great Britain there will be little if any difficulty in regard to self-government in Ireland.

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