

a less-barbarous degree. It was in the wild days when the Knownothing spirit was rampant in Boston. The event made history in Massachusetts, and led directly to the formation of the great boys' school that later on developed into the present Boston College.

But the Whall incident had other results. It led to the modifications of 1862, and these in turn to the statutory changes of 1880, which left the Massachusetts schools nominally secular; but, in a real and oppressive sense, they remain sectarian institutions to this very hour. In one of 'the old Eastern States'—we think it is New Hampshire—it was, till a few years ago, illegal to give any Catholic an appointment as teacher in a public school. The law permits of their employment now, but the systematic discrimination against Catholic teachers is one of the crying scandals of public life in those very States which our Bible-in-schools leaders have had the hardihood to set before the public as bright examples of the sort of 'educational peace' that they hope to see in New Zealand. In May of the present year the 'Republic,' a leading paper of Boston, collected from a number of Teachers' Agencies a mass of information which records, with outspoken unanimity, the sordid story of the boycott of Catholic instructors that is practised openly and shamelessly by those in control of public schools in those model 'old Eastern States.' Let one average sample report suffice. It is from the Bridge Teachers' Agency, and runs as follows:—

'It is quite true that discrimination is shown because of prejudice against Catholics. We have many cases where school superintendents, when writing us to secure teachers, specify that they will not accept Catholics. Especially is this true in western Massachusetts, and in Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire. In many instances the Catholic applicants impress us as superior to some who are engaged because the latter may be of another religious faith. We have secured positions for Catholic young women, but not to any great extent. It is really very difficult to secure places for Catholics. We cannot eradicate the prejudices. We act as agents and do as requested. When we find an opportunity to place a Catholic teacher, we do so gladly. We explain to all Catholic applicants the difficulty of securing employment, because we do not wish them to misunderstand the true conditions.'

Only a few months ago the New Orleans 'Picayune' published in its 'Wanted' columns the following advertisement from the Louisiana Teachers' Agency of Covington: 'A male Protestant teacher for public school in a small but hustling town in Louisiana.'

Did space permit we might enlarge upon this and other great and petty tyrannies that are practised upon minority creeds—sometimes beside the law, sometimes in the very teeth of the law—in the States of the Union that are set up as grand exemplars for New Zealand's imitation. One might almost as well look to the Galerie des Batailles at Versailles for an account of French defeats as to 'State reports' for details of administrative scandals that have become ossified by long and criminal toleration. Is this the sort of 'educational peace' the Bible-in-schools party are trying to introduce into New Zealand? There are not wanting indications that it is. The Dunedin 'Evening Star,' for instance, of April 5, 1905, reports that a cleric of some prominence in the sectarianising movement 'made a statement which was received with applause, to the effect that the schools did not exist for the teachers, but for the people's children, and if the Government prescribed the Bible in schools, and teachers were not willing to teach it, then they should be treated as they would be in other Departments.' This candid declaration makes an interesting commentary on the sham 'conscience clause for pupils and teachers.' A word to the wise ought to be sufficient.

Notes

That Plebiscite Bill

We take the following interesting item from the columns of our local evening contemporary:

'Regarding the Plebiscite Bill now before the House, the executive of the Bible-in-schools Referendum League have decided that it would be very much more desirable that the Bill should be withdrawn than that any modification of the question to be submitted to the electors should be accepted in committee.'

We had expected this. And those who heard us will readily recall our words now that our prophecy has come to pass. The sectarianising party will be satisfied with no form of reference but a mystification that will conceal as far as possible from the view of the electors the radical character of the proposed alteration in the Education Act, and the real source, nature, and conditions of the 'religious instruction' which it is sought to force upon our public schools. 'The Council of the Churches,' said the Minister of Justice, 'may be acquainted with these Bible lessons, but I will undertake to say the public of New Zealand are not. And therefore,' he added, 'they would not be competent to vote at the suggested referendum.' 'We have been treated,' says the Rev. P. B. Fraser (Presbyterian), 'to the cant about "trusting the people." 'It is not,' he adds, 'a question of trusting the people, but of distrusting religious agitators, who are prone to put false issues before the people, who themselves are not competent to decide because they have not the data to enable them intelligently to do so. The appeal is not to representatives chosen of the people and intelligently informed with the data before them, but it is to the ignorance and religious prejudices, not to say passions, of the people that the appeal by referendum is made.' In the official pronouncements of the Bible-in-schools Conference, in the speeches and sermons of some of its sympathisers, and, quite recently, in the editorial columns of the League's chief advocate in the religious press, we have sufficient and melancholy indication of the spirit of religious passion with which the sectarianising party would, in all human probability, endeavor to get their following to approach the ballot-boxes at the proposed plebiscite.

Mr. George Reid

In one of his great speeches Disraeli said that there is a 'superior person' in almost every circle. These 'superior persons' are know-alls that decide everything, lecture everybody, and

'Know more of any trade b' a hint
Than those that have been brought up in it.'

Mr. George Reid is the 'superior person' of Australia just now. His knowledge of Catholic theology and ecclesiastical polity has been mostly acquired from the yappings of the Yellow Pup. But this does not prevent him knowing the Pope's mind better than the Pope, and setting up to teach Church history and ecclesiastical law and the interpretation of papal documents to a Churchman of Cardinal Moran's calibre. It is the latest variant of Millais' 'Dignity and Impudence' over again. But Pope Reid the First seems to take himself quite seriously. The Catholic Church and her leaders are more likely to know her mind on themes affecting the working classes than the members of other creeds. For she seems to be the only Church that seriously troubles her head with the problems of labor. So much was granted by the anti-Catholic 'Reynolds's Newspaper' (London) in a recent editorial article. 'The working classes,' it says, 'look with suspicion upon all Churches. We except the Roman Catholics, the priests having so thoroughly identified themselves with the lives and interests of the individual members of their particular faith. But in all other of the great organised Church

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