

ers, and, at the very time Europe was serving her apprenticeship in modern methods, we were barred out of the school of experience? How could we have trade when our chief asset, agriculture—which from the nature of things must be always our great reliance—was sacrificed by alien laws to the needs of the English manufacturing towns? If men want to see the truth about Ireland's decadence, they can find abundant reason in historical and political causes, and will not be driven to explain the facts that the Catholic religion of Belgium does not prevent that country from being one of the most prosperous and one of the most progressive on the face of the earth, and that Catholic Irishmen appear to share with honor the burden of the greatest political offices and to manage with success the most extensive business enterprises in every country of the world except their own.

'Yellow' Oratory's Inspiration

Once a year—or oftener, if they are so 'disposed'—the Brethren of the Yellow Agony beseech their Patron Saint, William of Orange, to 'look down' upon them and cram their souls with the sort of 'spiritual' graces that are to their liking. And it seemeth that St. William heareth them and giveth abundantly of the things that lie nearest to their hearts. For does not Sir Jonah Barrington—himself an Orangeman—bear testimony in his 'Personal Sketches' that the little Boer monarch 'has been the cause of more broken heads and drunken men since his departure than all his predecessors'? And so, too, saith the voice of history since 1795. An ancient Ulster custom requires that participants in the festivities of the Glorious Twelfth shall tune their feelings up to concert pitch—somewhat after the manner of the musical glasses—by pouring in liquid libations in honor of their Patron. Thirteen inches per man is, perhaps, a fair average allowance, while some, like Artemus Ward's organ-grinder, seem capable of holding 'a churnful of beer.' The custom has spotted the lodge-ridden districts of Ulster with blood and flame. A case brought by the police a few weeks ago against one John Patterson, before the Belfast Summons Court, goes to show that strong drink is still as much a part of an Ulster Orange celebration as are rowdiness, torrential declamation against 'Rome,' and the familiar cry, 'To hell with the Pope.' One or two lodges, on pleasure bent, had, according to the evidence adduced and in no way denied, laid in a stock of ale, whisky, mineral waters, and 2212 full bottles of stout—not counting the 'dead marines' (or empties) that the police dropped across in the course of their search on the eve of the patronal festival of the brethren.

We have often wondered whether, and to what extent, the same liquid source of energy is responsible for the manner in which sundry epileptic clerical orators—like the 'ornet-player in 'Mrs. Brown at the Play'—'bust themselves to bits' on the July platform in Australia, and, to a lesser extent in New Zealand? Take, for instance, the silly oaf that poured out such a flood of No-Popery Munchausen tales to the gobe-mouches in Southland some time ago; or the frenzied enthusiast who recently screeched in Victoria against the 'blasting, cursing, blighting influence of Rome'; or the reverend ruffian who on the same occasion whooped against convents as 'slave-traps,' 'hell-holes,' and other pretty titles that the printers declined to reproduce, or the white-chokered firebrand who, in South Australia in July, 1904 (as reported in the Melbourne 'Age'), shrieked for 'bloodshed' and exhorted his hearers to 'boycott Roman Catholic schools, nunneries, teaching places,' Roman Catholic tradesmen, and 'Roman Catholic candidates for public positions.' These are by no means exceptional cases. They are strictly typical. And to them apply the following words of the Protestant author of 'Ireland and the Empire':—

'They preach a gospel of hate and of hatred that would disgrace a race of savages, a gospel of which the

Christian religion knows nothing. This is the spirit which disfigures the great northern capital (Belfast) and discredits the entire province. Its grosser exhibitions are almost entirely confined to Belfast, Portadown, and one or two similar centres; but the spirit of the thing is everywhere throughout the province. It takes innumerable shapes, but hatred of "Popery," and even of "Papists" is everywhere. I remember, in one of my election campaigns, being called upon to discuss the Catholic University question with a more than ordinarily intelligent (Protestant) farmer. We argued the question in and out, and after I had driven him from every stronghold of prejudice, he exclaimed: "You know, sir, what them Papists are. They must be kept down, or we cannot live in the country." This is the whole sum and substance of the matter. The spirit of ascendancy is at the bottom of it all. Equality of rights and of citizenship cannot be endured.'

That is just what's the matter.

Wools Rutledge's Plight

At the celebration of the last feast of the Glorious, Pious, and Immortal Boer in Melbourne, the Rev. Wools Rutledge spoke in haste. He is now repenting at leisure. He smote his Saffron Brethren in Melbourne with pangs of delicious pain by informing them that 'a certain public official' in Sydney could not, while a Methodist, secure re-employment in the civil service of New South Wales; and that the forlorn candidate thereupon became a 'Papist,' and was at once landed into a nice little velvet-pile appointment at a salary of a thousand pounds a year. In an unguarded moment, the flamboyant orator let slip a statement that located the supposedly lucky convert in the person of Mr. Hall, Acting-Statistician for New South Wales. A Select Committee, composed entirely of Protestants, was set up to investigate the charge. Here was the chance of a lifetime for the glib accuser! Bre'r Rabbit once sang:—

'De place wharabouts you spill de grease,
Right dar you're boun' ter slide.'

And so it happened to Bre'r Rutledge. He came a nasty 'cropper' right where he had 'spilled de grease' on which he meant another to lose his footing; he fell into the pit which he himself had dugged. And—assuming that his Reverence is corrigible—we may piously hope that, like Bre'r Fox (when he tried, and failed, to bag Bre'r Rabbit), Bre'r Rutledge has 'cotch a handful of hard sense' that will put a spancel upon his tongue when next the dog-star shines, and the annual No-Popery fever gets into the blood of the 'yellow' men in the merry month of July.

We have before us detailed reports of the meetings of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Rev. Wools Rutledge's declamatory charges. A most perjured summary of one of these reports has appeared in at least one prominent New Zealand daily paper. No hint was given that the reverend accuser halted, struggled, delayed, threw up the inquiry, returned to it again, whined for 'protection' against libel, and, in general, acted the part of a man who felt that facts had the purchase on him. On the Orange platform he volleyed words that would split a rail. Like Dick Deadeye in 'Pinalore,' he had exclusive and 'important information' of a startling kind. But before the committee he showed not the smallest inclination to sustain his case, and, so far as it was directly concerned, he 'roared as gently as a sucking dove.' The evidence, official and otherwise, proved that Mr. Hall's conversion to the Catholic faith took place long after his re-appointment, that he never had a salary of £1000 a year, and that his engagement was due to his commanding ability, and not, as alleged, to creedal considerations. After endless delays, protests, and bickerings, the Committee managed to extract all the 'evidence' that the Rev. Wools Rutledge had to give. It turned out that he had not a scrap of evidence to offer—nothing but alleged hearsay. It was (says a Sydney contemporary) 'hardly worth the trouble involved in extracting it. All that bore even indirectly on the case was embodied in seven announcements:—