

of self-government, the principle of an elective element that shall be the governing element in Irish affairs, that still remains.'

Reassuring

The 'Irish humor' of the newspaper consists mainly of bags of chestnuts. It is in the main melancholy stuff, but it probably passes off well enough with the beef-witted who like that elephantine sort of thing. But one rarely meets in it so much as one specimen of the true Irish wit—like that, for instance, of the days before 'Black Forty-seven'—that sparkles like Clicquot and flashes like the ripple of sunlight on the waters. A writer who recently spent a holiday in the Green Isle unloaded some samples of jarvey-wit into the columns of 'Reynolds's Newspaper.' One story at least seems to have the merit of originality. The writer, moreover, has had the saving grace to avoid inlaying his narrative with the customary impossible 'brogue' of the foreign tourist—such as 'belave' for 'believe,' 'indade' for 'indeed,' 'bhoy' for 'boy,' etc. His story gives a good idea of the cool nerve and happy-go-lucky character of the driver of the Irish jaunting-car. 'In a break-neck race down a hill,' says the writer, 'the driver suddenly realised that the spirited little Irish mare was running away. "Pull her up!" the tourist shouted excitedly. "Hold tight, your honor," returned the jarvey easily. "Pull her up!" again commanded the traveller, making a grab for the reins. "For your life don't touch the reins," the jarvey answered, without tightening his grip. "Sure, they're as rotten as pears." The traveller made ready to jump, but the jarvey laid a soothing hand on his shoulder. "Sit aisy," he said reassuringly. "I'll turn her into the river at the bridge below here. Sure that'll stop her."'

Rifts in the Lute

Once upon a time Chesterfield was—for his political sins—sent as British Ambassador to Holland. He remained there (says the chronicler) 'gambling, and watching events.' And there it was that he wrote this sarcastic note: 'I find treating with two hundred sovereigns of different tempers and professions is as laborious as treating with one fine woman, who is at least of two hundred minds in one day.' On both sides of the Tasman Sea the Bible-in-schools movement has exercised the precious right of changing its mind with almost as generous prodigality as the shifting sovereigns or the fine women whom Chesterfield met by the sluggish waters that crawl through the canals of Amsterdam. But there is a difference: the 'donna mobile' of the 'polished pagan's' letter knew her mind occasionally for as much as five minutes at a time. And this is more than has yet been accomplished by the diverging human forces that are held together by a rope of sand in the strange agglomerate of naturally repellent views and conflicting schemes that constitute what is known as the Bible-in-schools movement.

Across the water, the latest of the many rifts within the League's cracked lute is manifested in the following resolution by the Baptist Union of Victoria: 'That in view of the widely divergent feelings of Christian people on the question of religious instruction in our primary schools, this assembly of the Baptist Union of Victoria very respectfully and strongly urges the Scripture Instruction Election Campaign Council to be content with Bible reading only. They recognise the strenuous efforts made by the council in the past, and suggest that the words religious instruction should be for ever dropped, both in speech and print.'

Some sections of the Bible-in-schools League in New Zealand have travelled fast and far from the ideals of a few years ago. Here is an extract from a leading article that appeared in November, 1898, in the

'Outlook,' which is now the chief organ of the movement in this country. The 'Outlook' was having a tilt with the 'Evening Star' on the education difficulty. 'There can be no middle course,' it contended, 'between pure Secularism and denominationalism. Will the "Star" tell us where there is, or ever has been (with the exception, perhaps, of France) a system of pure Secularism? Do the people of this Colony desire a system of pure Secularism, a system from which the name of God and every reference to an unseen world and a spiritual order have been carefully erased? For that is what pure Secularism really means. Does the "Star" suppose that our present is such a system? It either is, or it is not. If it is, then it is as much a denominational system as is a Roman Catholic or a Presbyterian. The only difference is that in that case the Christian people of this colony, who form a large majority, are either forced or fooled into supporting a system whose cardinal principles they repudiate, and which is satisfactory only to a handful of nondescripts who call themselves secularists. But if the system is not pure Secularism, then what is it? It is a hybrid. It is a compromise that can never be regarded as any real solution of the difficulty.' The only bases of an absolute morality 'are' (continued the 'Outlook') 'only permitted surreptitious shelter' in the public schools, 'because no one has yet had courage to follow his logic to its last conclusion, and demand, in the name of pure secularism, their expulsion. That is not a position which those who believe in God, and the honor due to His Name and Word, can ever be content to tolerate.'

Yet this is precisely what the Bible-in-schools party have been doing for a generation. They acquiesced in it originally by active approval, or by guilty silence, or by merely damning it with faint blame, and they have been 'tolerating' it ever since rather than part with the necessary bawbees to provide, in this matter, for 'the honor due to God's name and Word.' 'There can be no middle course,' said the 'Outlook' in 1898, 'between pure Secularism and pure denominationalism.' But 'pure Secularism' is as 'denominational' as pure Presbyterianism. It takes up as definite an attitude towards God as the Auld Kirk does. True, the attitude it takes up is of a very different kind—that of serenely ignoring Him and the obligation of any duty towards Him. But that in no way affects the issue. It is as great a mistake to suppose that Secularism is unsectarian as to suppose that Agnosticism or Atheism or Buddhism is unsectarian. In 1898 the 'Outlook' protested against endowed Secularist sectarianism. It now advocates endowed sectarianism of another kind. That is all. The sort of substitute it offers for the present hard Secularism of our public school system was aptly described in the following terms by a member of the London School Board in the 'Fortnightly Review': 'The result of unsectarian teaching is to establish a new form of religion which has nothing in common with Historical Christianity or any other form of Christian teaching. By taking away everything to which any one objects, they leave something which is really worthless. They say they will have no Creed and no Catechism, and the result is that every teacher is his own Creed and his own Catechism. The result of unsectarian teaching is a colorless residuum, which I should think would be as objectionable to the earnest Christian as it is contemptible to the earnest unbeliever.'

By the express desire of the Holy Father, thanks have been tendered on his behalf to President Roosevelt for his success in bringing about peace between Russia and Japan. The President intends to send his Holiness a letter on the subject.

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