

Some time ago we compared the versions of cable message that had been sent in identical terms to the daily papers in the four chief centres of population in New Zealand. The results were still more surprising than those quoted by our Sydney contemporary. The comparison set us wondering, and leaves us still wondering, whether the cable man was born that way, or became so by the cultivated habit of tricking out news with the gewgaws of his own fancy.

'When little boys tell tiny fibs,
We turn all roary-tory,
And tells how lions ate the child,
Who told one naughty story.'

But no deterrent—not even that of periodical exposure—seems to ruffle the calm serenity with which the cable man pursues the even tenor of his great and tiny fibbing. It seems as hard to mend his ways as to teach a crab to walk straight.

Leze Majesty

The nuns that remain in the hospitals of Paris have been adjudged guilty of the crime to which the Germans give the formidable name of Majestaetsbeleidigung. Which, being interpreted, meaneth leze majesty or treason. The pious women have been guilty of believing and practising the Christian faith, and of devoting their lives, without earthly fee or reward, to a whole-hearted service of the sick and poor. Such rank treason was not, of course, to be tolerated by rulers who (as the 'Saturday Review' recently said) are waging a war to the knife, not so much against Catholicism as against bare belief in God. And so the little 'traitors'—that served their country so nobly on the battlefield and in the pest-stricken cities—are to be bundled out penniless, and left to live or starve or die as fate or circumstance may determine. 'We have,' said M. Brisson, one of the standard-bearers in the Freemason campaign against devoted women, 'driven God out of the schools, the barracks, the navy, the hospitals, the asylums, and other public institutions, and it is now our duty to consummate our great work by turning Him out of the State.' Here is the declaration of war, made for the twentieth time in all its brutal and blasphemous frankness.

Well, we can easily recall some interesting results that followed a similar course of hospital 'laicising' that took place a few years ago at Marseilles. A fortnight after the nuns had been driven out, the microbe of the bubonic plague got its microscopic fangs into the population of the city slums. The Ste Marguerite Hospital was transformed for the occasion into an institution for the treatment of plague patients. 'All the nurses of Marseilles,' says a report of the incident, 'refused to attend the patients, and the authorities were in the end compelled to apply to the Bishop of Marseilles, Mgr. Andrieu, for nuns for service in the plague hospital. Mgr. Andrieu selected eighteen among a large number who volunteered, and placed them at the disposal of the Prefect and of the Municipal Hospitals committee.' When the present irreligious fury has passed, the nuns will also return to their beloved poor in the hospitals of Paris. We may apply to Australia and New Zealand the remarks which the 'Saturday Review' made regarding the attitude of the English press towards the war against religion which is being waged with such savagery in lodge-ridden France: 'It is remarkable that, in a country which so ostentatiously boasts of its Christianity as England, the press should treat the effacement not only of Catholicism, but even of the bare idea of God, from a neighboring and just now favorite nation, with indifference or approval.'

The Congo

The Belgian authorities have 'put up their hands' and have got some 'dirty lefts' and 'straight-jobbing rights' on the corpus of the association that has given itself the sham designation of the Congo 'Reform'

Society. As stated in our last issue, these 'Reformers' have been for some time carrying on a campaign of calumny about Belgian 'atrocities' in the Congo, in the interests of Liverpool shippers and missionary traders. 'The answer of the Belgian authorities to British critics is,' says a Liverpool contemporary, 'at the close of a summary of the document, 'to say that their hostility springs from commercial interests, religious prejudice, and causes of that kind. They have, they affirm, suppressed cannibalism, mutilation, human sacrifices, and the slave trade. They have suppressed another trade, not less deadly—the liquor traffic. And they retort: Why not respond to the cry of Odonka, the Gold Coast chief, who, in a letter which has appeared in the "Daily News," says that the people are being poisoned by elephant gin imported by thousands of cases every month?' The late Sir Henry M. Stanley made no secret of the low opinion which he entertained of the veracity of the 'Reformers,' and during the past year the great explorer's wife convicted them, in the columns of the 'Glasgow Observer' of May 15, on two counts of peculiarly brazen-faced prevarication. It related to two interviews with her husband, on Congo matters. At both of these she was present, and of one of them (the vital one) a newspaper record was published. What with the other damaging facts related or hinted at in our last issue, it seems that truth and Congo 'reform' have about the same affinity as oil and vinegar.

The Cardinal and his Critics

The two 'great dailies' of Sydney pass the days swinging like clumsy pendulums between epilepsy and hysteria, with more or less lucid intervals of tolerably even duration in the middle. They have lately been throwing a charming variety of fits. These, as usual, were easily brought on. Some questions were put to Cardinal Moran by the Melbourne 'Age' in reference to the agitation got up by the parochial party in New South Wales in connection with the Federal Capital. In reply, the Cardinal spoke like the true patriot. He deplored the spirit of provincialism that marked the action of some people in Sydney. He pleaded in effect, for broader and more statesmanlike views, and urged the citizens of the Commonwealth to be Australians first and 'Walers,' Victorians, and the rest afterwards.

When this was published, the two big Sydney dailies 'went off.' They had more than once invited sundry non-Catholic clerical politicians to air their views on State and Federal questions. Time and again they had made themselves the sounding-boards of dancing dervishes who perambulated the country setting creed at the throat of creed in the interests of a political party in the State. But when a Prince of the Catholic Church opens his mouth in temperate speech on a matter of Federal interest, he is screeched at as a trespasser upon the domain of party politics, and journalistic 'hell and broken bottles' are let loose to warn him to keep off that grass. Now it so happens that Cardinal Moran is the very man whom the Sydney dailies lauded when he took a leading part in the Federal movement. In State politics he is no party man. Says the Sydney 'Freeman':—

'We defy anybody in good faith to point to a single instance in which the Cardinal has shown a tendency to interfere with the party politics of this State; indeed, it would be difficult to say how far he favors or opposes the Carruthers Government; and who, amid all the clash of fiscal battle, has yet ascertained from his public utterances whether his Eminence is a Freetrader or a Protectionist? But there is one thing the Cardinal has made no attempt to conceal, that with him provincialism takes second place to Australia; and that he should in his capacity as an Australian citizen say, or decline to say, a word upon a Federal subject which is in everybody's mouth, is surely a matter which concerns himself.'

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