

Current Topics

The Maori

Races may vanish by physical extinction or by assimilation. According to Dr. Pomare (Native Health Officer) our splendid aboriginal people are treading the latter path to racial extinction. 'It is only a question of time', said he in Wellington last week, 'when the whole Maori race will disappear, as it becomes assimilated with the pakeha. Take the South Island, nearly all the Maoris there now are half-castes. Fully 75 per cent. of the Maoris in the South Island have European blood in them, if not more. There is the same tale to tell in the North Island. The old stock is gradually dying off, and even now the majority of the young representatives of the race have European blood in them. Within 30 years there will not be a pure-blooded Maori in the whole of New Zealand. In the King Country 40 per cent. of the Natives are half-castes. In the Urewera Country you find less half-castes than elsewhere, but there you also see the poorest class of Natives, many of the old stock still preferring to live in their primitive state.'

A 'Bluggy' Tale

We are accustomed to associate mentally pork and beans, beer and skittles, chops and tomato sauce. In like manner, long experience has led the public to associate Orange leaflets with the hysterical, the preposterous, and the 'bluggy'. No one out of Bedlam would dream of going to such a source for sanity of statement, honesty of quotation, or normal reasoning. To suit the crude mental condition of the lodges, the leaflet must, above all, be 'bluggy'. This sort of mentality finds an apt illustration in 'Helen's Babies'. 'Tell us about Bliaff (Goliath)', said the story-loving Toddy. 'No', said Budge, 'tell us about Joseph'. 'No', urged Toddy, 'I want Bliaff. Bliaff's head was all bluggy (bloody)—bluggy as everything'. 'Well, Tod', replied the brother, 'Joseph's coat was just as bluggy as Bliaff's head was!'. It was the 'blugginess' of the stories, and not their spiritual significance, that appealed to the undeveloped minds and animal instincts of Helen's Babies. And it is precisely the same crude and uncultivated instincts that demand the 'bluggy' leaflets and other 'literature' that is from time to time circulated among the simple-minded gobemouches who constitute the bulk of the rank and file of the Orange lodges.

In the Auckland district the P.D.A. (one of the 'aliases' of the Orange fraternity) have recently been circulating a fuddlecap anti-Home Rule story (copied from an Irish Orange paper) to the following effect: (1) That 'the Ancient Order of Hibernians of to-day makes it its proudest boast that it is the same organisation and identical in every respect—except in name—with the Rapparees, Irish Tories, Whiteboys, Defenders, Whitefeet, Blackfeet, Molly Maguires, and Ribbonmen, whose iniquities still cry to heaven for vengeance'; (2) that it is a secret society 'bound by terrible oaths'; (3) that it is the revolutionary 'great unknown power' at the back of the Home Rule movement; (4) that it is 'steeped in disloyalty, rebellion, murder, and other (sic) agrarian crimes of the deepest dye'; (5) that 'in Australia Cardinal Moran is its Grand Chaplain'; and (6) that it is actively preparing to levy war upon Great Britain! 'Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur'. Omit the name of Cardinal Moran, and for the Whitefeet, etc., substitute the Oak Boys and the Steel Boys, the Wreckers and the Peep-o'-day Boys, and in the story given above you have the substance of the history of the Orange organisation. The 'bluggy' and preposterous story about the A.O.H. was spun ostensibly to keep the moon (the British Empire) from the wolves (the 'rebelly Papishes'). People of normal information

and sanity do not need to be told that the story is a fabrication. No proof is, of course, offered in support of this glowing fairy-tale. Instead, the public are offered—for a small part of the story—some 'extracts'—two or three of them, of the customary scrappy character, and with the usual bogus air about them that one expects as a matter of course in such a quarter. By themselves, the alleged 'extracts' tell no particular tale. But when treated by an entirely new process of 'reasoning' (patent applied for) they yield results that must satisfy to some extent the rather exacting demands of the Helen's Babies that are 'yellow'. The 'blugginess' of this flimflam story could, however, have been so easily enhanced, that we rather think the narrators must (as another great character in history did) have stood aghast at their own moderation. Why, for instance, did they not warn their brethren in New Zealand that the Ancient Order of Hibernians carry matches in their pockets, ostensibly to light their pipes, but in reality to set fire to Protestants on Pentecost Sunday; that they secretly bake Protestant babes and serve them hot on toast at twenty minutes past six on Friday mornings; that they 'fill the butchers' shops with large blue flies', cause droughts in the South and floods in the North; that they are making preparations to 'illivate' Auckland by an earthquake on April Fools' Day, and to bombard the roofs of Nelson on the ninth of May with stars raked out of the constellation of Orion? If this story is not 'bluggy' enough for the taste of the P.D.A., we can (for a modest consideration) add enough gore to it to slake the thirst of even a Blunderbore.

Zola and Company

'Zola', says the Boston 'Pilot', 'was a sincere preacher of iniquity: he practised what he preached. He resembled Victor Hugo in this matter. Respect for their own wives and the domestic hearth was no article of these French "inmortals." Madame Zola is as tolerant as Madame Hugo. She has just applied to the French Court of Appeal for leave to confer her dead husband's name on two children born of his intrigue with another woman, a Madame Rozerau. Here is forgiveness indeed, but pathos, too. It is overdone. It is the rotten sentiment of Ibsen and Zola—the confusion of right and wrong, begotten of baneful ideas and the rejection of God and His moral law.'

This is a case in which history has repeated itself. Voltaire and Rousseau were the literary forbears of Hugo and Zola; they were the twin prophets and high priests of the eighteenth century infidelity that added such a weight of horror to the French Revolution. And, like the anti-Christian Hugo and Zola, Voltaire and Rousseau were 'sincere preachers of iniquity: they practised what they preached'. Rousseau tells in his 'Confessions' how he was a cheat, liar, thief, rascal, and hypocrite. His political creed was that of Russell Lowell's 'pious editor':—

'In short, I firmly do believe
In Humbug generally,
For it's a thing-thet I perceive
To hev a solid vally'.

A political Pumblechook, he exhorted the mothers of France, in melting words, to nurse their own infants—while he sent his own five illegitimate children to the Foundling Hospital. The more virile but more malignant Voltaire was imprisoned for gross crimes against morality. He betrayed his country, wrote to his friends Diderot and Thiriot panegyrics on lying, openly advocated it as a method of propaganda of infidelity, trauced the sainted Maid of Orleans, and for half a century—till death stilled his tongue and pen—waged against the Church a bitter war, which assumed at last the proportions of an overpowering mania. 'You must lie like a devil,' said he to Thiriot (vol. xviii. of his 'Oeuvres Completes')—'not timidly and for a