

mate Advertiser, which prints a lengthy report of an address delivered at Waimate by the Rev. R. J. Liddell, a Methodist minister of Timaru. It is worth noting, by the way, that these reverend Orange worthies rarely have the courage to let off their 12th of July fireworks in their own pulpits; they exchange churches for the day, and thus avoid unpleasantness with their possibly indignant or disgusted congregations. Brother Liddell worked off a number of ancient and vulgar falsehoods of which any Christian man, to say nothing of a Christian minister, ought to be heartily ashamed to make himself the mouthpiece; and he gave especial prominence to the old sing-song story which represents the Catholic Church as hostile to the Bible. 'He contended,' says the Waimate sheet's report, 'that the Papal Church, which boasted that it never changed, would, if given the power, again close the Bible, interpreting it to the common people in such a way as to serve its own purposes of taxation.'

There was a time when this old superstition—that the Catholic Church forbids to her children the reading of the Sacred Scriptures—was widely believed. But

'The legendary tales that pleased of yore
Can charm an understanding age no more.'

The course of historical study and 'the schoolmaster abroad' have combined to pole-axe full many of the 'legendary tales that pleased' the bitter or uninstructed fancy of a past day; and the clergyman who comes forward at this time of day with this moss-grown calumny, no matter in what particular church he may happen to be located, stamps himself at once as a representative of the intellectual 'back-blocks.' We might say of it what Macaulay said of the story which connected Catholics with the starting of the Great Fire of London in 1666; that it has been 'abandoned by statesmen to aldermen, by aldermen to clergymen, by clergymen to old women, and by old women to Sir Harcourt Lees'—who represents the *gobemouche* or gaping credulity that finds an annual voice when the Boyne dog-star is in the ascendant. A perusal of Archbishop Carr's *Church and the Bible* will give the popular reader an excellent idea of the extent to which Protestant writers and scholars of the first rank have themselves exposed the wicked folly of this 'legendary tale that pleased of yore'; and we have no intention of again going over ground which has been so often traversed in these columns. We content ourselves with merely bringing past refutations up to date by mentioning that at the very time the reverend orator was proclaiming this calumny we were engaged in reading the following item in the well-known paper, *Rome*, printed and published in that city. 'The Pious Society of St. Jerome, established in Rome many years ago under the presidency of Mgr. Della Chiesa, now Pope Benedict XV., for the diffusion of the New Testament among the people of Italy, in spite of war and hard times has just issued another edition of many tens of thousands of copies of its volume containing the Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The original preface has been slightly changed, two letters of approval of Pius X. and Benedict XV. have been added, some few modifications have been made in the notes, and the new edition has been put on sale at three pence a copy. Many thousands of copies are, thanks to the benefactors of the Pious Society, being distributed among the immense numbers of young men who are now under arms in Italy.'

Under the circumstances it would seem to be, to put it mildly, rather a stupid waste of energy for any real lover of the Bible to be denouncing 'the Papal Church' at a moment when that Church is printing the Gospels by tens of thousands and distributing them as fast and as far as possible amongst her people. It is also misdirected energy. The real enemy of the Bible is not the Catholic Church, which believes and acknowledges it as the inspired Word of God, but rather the so-called higher critics and rationalising professors of divinity, who deny its infallibility, question in large measure its authenticity, and explain

away those cardinal and fundamental doctrines which have been its especial glory, and which have given strength and consolation to the Christians of all ages. These men are not the product or the property of the 'Papal Church'; they are the lineal descendants of Luther and the religion 'made in Germany'; and they are strongly represented in this Dominion, and in high places also, in the Church of which the Rev. R. J. Liddell is a minister. It is idle for ministers to be delivering lofty harangues about 'an open Bible,' when they themselves do not really believe the Bible. If the Rev. R. J. Liddell is really anxious to promote reverence for and belief in the Sacred Scriptures he will find plenty to do nearer home. It is always well to have your own door-step clean before you set out to lecture and correct the neighborhood.

LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER TO THE DEAN OF THE SACRED COLLEGE

(From our Rome correspondent.)

To the Lord Cardinal Serafino Vannutelli, Bishop of Ostia and of Porto and S. Rufina, Dean of the Sacred College—Rome.

LORD CARDINAL,—

It was Our purpose in the early days of next June to convoke the Sacred Consistory in order to provide for the many churches at present without a Pastor and to avail Ourselves of an opportunity so favorable to consider with the Sacred College of Cardinals other grave and urgent matters affecting the government of the Church; unfortunately, however, painful happenings which are known to all have hindered us from doing so.

Now that Our words cannot be directed to the entire Sacred College assembled together, We deem it opportune, Lord Cardinal, to address them to you, intending thereby to address them to the venerable Assembly of which you are the worthy Dean.

In Our first Encyclical, moved by the supreme desire to see the awful carnage which dishonors Europe cease, We exhorted the Rulers of the belligerent nations, in view of all the tears and blood that had already been shed, to hasten to restore to their peoples the vital benefits of peace. 'May those hearken to Us,' We said, 'who have in their hands the destinies of the peoples. Other ways there certainly are, other methods there are, whereby the rights infringed can be asserted; to these, an armistice having been meanwhile arranged, let them have recourse, sincerely animated by a right conscience and by good-will. It is charity towards them and towards all the nations and not Our interests which makes Us speak thus. Let them therefore not permit that Our voice, which is that of Father and friend, be addressed to the winds.' But the voice of the friend and of the Father, We say it with a heart crushed with grief, was not hearkened to; the war continues to imbrue Europe with blood, and on land and on sea even means of offence which are contrary to the dictates of humanity and to international law are not avoided.

And as if that were not enough, the terrible conflagration has extended even to Our beloved Italy, making one fear for it also that sequel of tears and disasters which is wont to accompany every war, even when successful.

Our heart meanwhile bleeds at the sight of so many misfortunes. We have not desisted from devoting Ourselves to relieve and diminish, as far as lay in Our power, the deplorable consequences of the war. We give praise to God, Who has been pleased to crown with happy success the efforts which We made to obtain from the belligerent nations the exchange of prisoners of war unfit for further military service. Furthermore, recently We have also exerted Ourselves, and with hope of success, in favor of wounded and sick prisoners of war, not wholly unfit for military service, with a view to render their condition less grave and to facilitate their recovery.