

waters of youth come from a higher source than that of earth. Her marvellous vitality has been the theme of many an unfriendly pen. Macaulay's words have been often quoted. But the following sentences therefrom, well worn as they are, will, in the present circumstances, bear repetition:—'The proudest royal houses,' says Macaulay, 'are but of yesterday when compared with the line of Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond Pepin the august dynasty extends till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The Republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the Republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the Republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. . . . Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all governments and of all ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world, and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain—before the Frank had passed the Rhine—when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch—when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca; and she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.'

THE LEAGUE AS RUNAWAY

We desire to briefly direct attention to the two further challenges issued by Bishop Cleary to the representatives of the Bible in State Schools League which appear on page 29 of this issue. In one, his Lordship undertakes to furnish his list of past questions and demands, and challenges the League to set forth their 'proofs' and 'replies' thereto, and submit them to arbitrators expert in evidence, selected in the customary way, the verdict to be published. In the other, he repeats in a more emphatic form his invitation to the League to hold two public 'question nights'—one for the League's picked representatives to answer his relevant questions regarding the League's scheme, the other for his answers to questions by the League and all comers. Men with a strong case would literally 'rush' such an opportunity, especially as they claim 86 per cent. of the population as their supporters—a percentage which would (if existent) presumably appear to hear and support them. But instead of eagerly closing with Bishop Cleary's offers, the League representatives in Auckland intimate in Saturday's *N.Z. Herald* that they decline both invitations, and say, in effect, that they have had enough. This is only the last of a long series of challenges from Bishop Cleary which the Leaguers have failed to face. We have ourselves also challenged them to hold a 'question night' in Dunedin, and have personally undertaken that the meeting should not fail for want of questions. We have further offered the League representatives—and the offer is hereby made a standing one until the question shall have been finally settled—reasonable space in the columns of the *N.Z. Tablet* to answer any or all of the moral issues arising out of their demands which have been placed before them again and again in our columns and in the columns of the public press, but so far without eliciting any response. In the columns of the *Outlook* and at 'demonstrations' of their supporters League representatives declare that their case is 'fair, full, factual, and final,' and that they have everything to gain by full discussion; and then, when the opportunity for full discussion is offered to them, they promptly run away. If the League leaders continue these tactics much longer, they will begin to look positively foolish.

Notes

An Easy-going 'Mahatma'

The 'Mahatma' who supplies, from a distant town in the North Island, the 'Tricks and Illusions' for our fireside page, has sent us his matter just as we go to press—in excellent time for our *next* week's issue. Will our contributor please note that matter for our domestic page must reach us not later than Thursday morning, for insertion in the following week's issue of the paper.

Appreciation

Catholic journalists, like other people, are none the worse for an occasional word of encouragement; and the following letter from a brother journalist, the editor of a flourishing secular paper, is couched in such kindly terms that it would be ungracious on our part not to make acknowledgment. The letter, which bears date of Saturday last and is addressed personally to the editor, runs:—'This morning I have just read your letter in the *Daily Times* on the Bible-in-schools question. Every time I read your letters I feel exceedingly proud that your services are available to write in defence of the Catholic side; and on several occasions I felt I should write a word in acknowledgment from one individual at least. But this morning I think you have topped your previous efforts, and I will put off no longer dropping a note. Amongst a very wide circle I must state my admiration for the manner in which you uphold "our" side, and hope your pen will long be available in the able manner in which you use it at present.'

'The Monk and the Woman'

New Zealand Catholics have received ample warning—both through notifications in the *N.Z. Tablet* and from the published resolution of the Provisional Executive of the N.Z. Catholic Federation—as to the objectionable character of this specimen of 'bellow-drama'; and we have every reason to believe that they are doing their duty and staying away from the production. We have not looked up the North Island press notices of the play, but the reports in South Island papers indicate that it is encountering heavy weather in its passage south. The *North Otago Times* of April 11 is very severe on the production. 'There was a good, though not crowded, house last night at the Opera House,' it says, 'to greet the initial performance of George Marlow's dramatic combination. The piece presented was "The Monk and the Woman," and we frankly confess that the drama was not to our liking. The author has, with great daring, explored a new field, and a field that it would have been better to have left unexplored for dramatic purposes; for scenes and subjects are dealt with of a nature that do not furnish proper material for the playwright's skill. Moreover, they are presented in a manner that cannot be other than intensely displeasing to a large section of the public, while there is nothing about the piece calculated to have an elevating influence amongst even those who may not see ought particularly wrong in the adoption of the theme. In parts it certainly possesses no small degree of literary merit, and the situations are on occasions undeniably strong, but these qualities do not compensate for the inherent faults of the piece or its flagrant improbabilities. As to the staging of the drama and the acting of its exponents a good deal of praise may be honestly bestowed, and our only regret is that so much talent should be expended upon so bad a work. It is, therefore, pleasing to receive the assurance that the play to be presented to-night will be of higher merit and the players relieved of the weighty task of making acceptable something it were better had never been created.' After referring in detail to the different characters, our contemporary concludes: 'There were at least two other male characters of some prominence, but in our mercy we abstain from comment there anent.'

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