

Current Topics

The League and Its Methods

There is ever-gathering evidence that the unscrupulous and deplorable methods adopted by the Bible in State Schools League organiser in this country, and either directly or indirectly condoned by the League Executive, are beginning to recoil upon the party using them. In the *Otago Daily Times* of September 12 Mr. J. J. Ramsay, ex-chairman of the Otago Education Board, gives vent to the indignation felt by large numbers of fair-minded citizens in the following vigorous fashion: 'To misrepresent a man and put statements in his mouth that he never uttered seem to be inseparable from the Bible-in-schools policy. That and labelling men "atheists," "secularists," and "Catholics" are favorite methods of the so-called ethical leaders. Thank goodness, ordinary people have a soul above that kind of warfare. It would not even be tolerated in a prize ring.' And Mr. A. R. Atkinson, who has been insultingly and shamefully treated by Canon Garland, Dr. Gibb, and others of the League, thus sums up, in the *Wellington Post* of September 10, the effect of the League's methods in his own case: 'That the action of the secretary of the Bible in State Schools League has done me no harm in the place where I am best known, but has on the contrary seriously damaged his own reputation and his own propaganda, is fortunately beyond doubt. An organisation which stands by while its principal officer conducts himself in this fashion cannot possibly escape the moral responsibility for tactics which it has abstained from disavowing. The injustice, the intolerance, the vindictiveness, the entire disregard of the ordinary courtesies and decencies of honorable controversy with which I have been treated have made a profound impression upon the public mind.'

The 'Ulster' Business

The Dublin *Leader* puts the position in regard to the Orange attitude towards Home Rule pithily and admirably in the course of a brief comment on an utterance made by the Irish Unionist paper, the *Irish Times*. In a leading article the *Irish Times* had said: 'Viscount Morley was reduced to pitiable embarrassment by the question: If Ulster resists Home Rule to the extremity of civil war, will her loyal citizens be shot down by British troops.' On which the *Leader* remarks: 'Waiving the nonsense of supposing that a province, a majority of whose Parliamentary representatives are in favor of Home Rule, will fight against it, it is absurd to ask if loyal citizens will be shot down by British troops. Of course, they won't. The loyal citizens will be on the side of the troops. Arnott's paper should ask what will be done to disloyal citizens taking up arms—wooden or otherwise as they may be—against his most gracious Majesty, the King?'

In the meantime it is satisfactory to note that Irishmen who are in a good position to judge are strongly of opinion that the occasion for asking and answering the question will never arise. Orangemen, said Mr. John Dillon significantly in a recent speech at Birkenhead, may be brave but they are not lunatics. Mr. John McCormack, the famous tenor, who from his position as a sort of professional wanderer may be regarded as being capable of taking a fairly detached attitude on the question, in a press interview at Adelaide the other day declared enthusiastically, 'We will get Home Rule,' and as vehemently waived aside all suggestion of trouble from Ulster. 'The first people to come along and say let's sink our differences will be the Ulstermen,' he avowed. 'I know the North of Ireland people, and I am satisfied their hearts are in the right place. I am a Catholic, but the Protestants are just as proud of my success as though I had been a Protestant.' According to the Irish Press Agency, the most reliable information from well-informed Unionist sources in Belfast is to the same effect—that there will be no civil war and no Provisional Government, that

Sir Edward Carson is not taken seriously by the majority of Unionists who count for anything in position or influence, that the 'Ulster' agitation has about worked itself out, and that Home Rule, when it comes, will be accepted and worked by 'Ulster' for all it is worth.

A Remarkable Confession

We print the following remarkable confession, not because it is a slap in the face to the notorious *Menace*—which has received more notice than it really deserves—but because it takes the public behind the scenes, and gives them an inside view of the spirit which animates the whole anti-Catholic propaganda in America, and of the sordid and despicable means by which that propaganda is carried out. And it is a fair presumption that the application of the striking statements which are made as to the principles and methods adopted in the campaigns of bigotry against the Catholic Church is not confined to America. The declarant—to borrow a legal term—is one who was a leader and standard-bearer in the forces of aggressive Protestantism—one who was for twenty-two years the head of the Baptist missions and propaganda in Mexico. He is ex-minister Mr. William H. Sloan. Mr. Sloan is now a Catholic, and the editor of a Catholic paper published at Las Cruces, New Mexico. 'His statement,' says the *Ave Maria*, 'was prompted by the receipt of copies of a widely-circulated anti-Catholic sheet, of which he writes as no one that we know of could write. In returning a corrected proof of this open confession which we had submitted to him, Mr. Sloan says: "I am quite willing you should republish the enclosed. I am sorry I am too busy just now to polish it and to add to it; but I may before long send you something more satisfactory."'

Here is the confession, as supplied direct by Mr. Sloan to the *Ave Maria*: 'We ourselves were engaged in writing and preaching such stuff probably before the editor of the *Menace* was born—for his articles show that he is yet in the "puppy" age as well as of the "puppy" character,—and we know all about the origin and source of the lies and calumnies that he gives the public every week. We ourselves have waded through all the disgusting mire of slanderous attacks on the priests and the nuns; we have anathematized the bishops who wanted to take public funds from the treasury for the support of Catholic institutions; we have cried to Heaven to defend our public schools against the insidious attacks of Rome; we have accused the Pope of lying awake at night to devise some way by which he might surreptitiously win over the United States to the "Romanist" cause; we have painted the ignorance of Mexico and South America in most lurid colors; and we have reason to believe that much of the bigoted drivel now going the rounds of the *Guardians* of Liberty press, and heard in bigoted Protestant pulpits, had its origin in our sophomoric declamations years ago, when we travelled through the States in search of funds with which to carry on our work of Protestant propaganda, and inveighed in most bitter terms against "superstition, immorality, ignorance, and vice" as found among the Roman Catholic people where we labored. We were not entirely to blame: we were paid for doing it (as is the editor of the *Menace*), and we were easily persuaded it was all true. We learned the truth after a while. A compassionate God took hold upon us, lifted our feet out of the mire, and placed them upon the Rock.'

It is certainly to be hoped that Mr. Sloan will find time to carry out his intention of elaborating on the facts here so vigorously expressed.

Theosophy and the Theosophists

We publish in another column—purely as a matter of courtesy, and certainly not on account of its intrinsic merits—a letter from the general secretary of the N.Z. Section of the Theosophical Society in which the writer professes to correct one or two 'misstate-