

State schools. Such a situation is intolerable, and should not be borne by the electors at any price. The matter must be faced, therefore, and all members should be definitely informed that if they act contrary to the expressed wish of those who elected them (whether it be in contradiction to the answer of the second question, or of the analysis of the whole voting), they do so at the peril of losing their seats and the confidence of their constituents.

We commend this 'elegant extract' to the attention of our friend the 'Outlook.' Our contemporary must steel its heart, for there is more to come. The painted warrior-chiefs of the Bible-in-schools party sent out a third official letter with a view to the more effective 'hand-  
upping' of recalcitrant politicians. This letter (says the 'Age') was 'forwarded by the heads of the Protestant denominations represented on the Council to clergymen throughout the State.' It urges each of the reverend 'Campaigners' to 'see the Members for the district in both Houses of the State Parliament, and obtain from them, if possible, assurances of support in carrying the Bill this session.' On top of this black-coated campaign, a petition was to be presented; public meetings were to be held, and the clerical agitators (says the 'Age') arranged to 'interview all Members of the Legislative Assembly who are considered "doubtful"—presumably after the above means have been tried on them—before the vote is taken' (on Mr. Watt's Bill on August 23).

We have no hesitation in saying that, in all its varied history, Australia has never before witnessed such a shameless and nauseating exhibition of organised and wholesale clerical intimidation in the arena of politics. And yet it is from this very quarter—from the clergy of the Bible-in-schools party and from their organs in the press both in Australia and New Zealand—that we hear the raucous cry, the ungrounded accusation, of 'bargaining,' bullying, and undue pressure by Catholic prelates and clergy upon the freedom of action of the country's chosen legislators. If the Catholic Hierarchy of Victoria had signed and issued circulars such as those from which we have quoted, they would be ordered by their Bible-in-schools opponents to step off the earth, and we greatly fear that the perusal of such threatening documents would land our esteemed contemporary into a fit of apoplexy. Now—in view of this Bible-in-schools pronouncement, and the action of the secularising party in New Zealand—what becomes of the principle apparently adopted by the 'Outlook,' that 'the clergyman who directs his people how to vote insults their intelligence'? We are forwarding the Victorian Bible-Campaigners' extracts to our Presbyterian-Methodist-Congregationalist contemporary, and shall await its editorial comment with more than ordinary interest.

### 'Fainting by the Way'

A gifted mother, whose chief wealth is a crown of sorrow bravely borne, writes to us: 'If I were a great person, I would above all things try to help the mothers. I would give them all the kindness and sympathy I could possibly spare. It is quite wonderful how much a little kindness and sympathy can do for those who are heavily burdened. The "fainting by the way" is terrible. If one could do it once only, die right off, and be done with it! But (as some one has remarked) the slow struggling back to life is awful, and then the hanging in mid-air—like Mahomet's coffin! . . . Those who have reached the summit by their safe, mossy path, straight and sure, little know what it is for those who get glimpses of the Great Light in the immeasurable distance, which they never can reach. One evening I set out to walk along the sea-shore, to be alone with God. After I had gone a long way I found the strand barred by tumbled rocks. The tide was coming in. I tried to climb the bank to the road above. The rocks were steep and smooth and slippery, but by dint of great exertion I managed to get half-

way up. Then I had to stop, almost exhausted. There was no use in trying to get any higher; so I had to go back by the shore. Fortunately, the tide was not quite in. But the other attempts to climb are so sadly like that! How hard it seems at times that we have not the little human helps which would so effectually prevent us from wishing to climb! How easily and smoothly and comfortably some people travel along the shore! They happen on the right time, when the tide is out and the beach washed smooth and clean. But for us who are caught between the waters and the rocks, it sometimes seems to our frail sense that it would be better never to see the Light that shines above the banks, when we cannot reach it.'

Thus far our correspondent. But—'no cross, no crown' is the common lot. For many it is true that

'By the thorn road, and none other, is the Mount of Vision won.'

To those who find the road to the delectable mountains hard and rugged, and are ready to 'faint by the way,' we commend the thought that runs through the following majestic stanza from a recently published book by that gifted Catholic mother of a gifted Catholic son, Madame Rayner Belloc:—

'Oh, looked we clearly on the sharp ascent  
So many elder pilgrim-feet have trod,  
Seeing the end, we should not dare to faint,  
Nor speak of loneliness—alone with God!  
Help of the Faithful! my full heart to-day  
Was sad and weak.  
I said: "Before some altar I will pray,  
And He will speak."  
And Thou hast spoken! All Thy words are true  
And surety give.  
I will more bravely all henceforth endure,  
More humbly live.'

Three women once stood under the Cross on Calvary,  
bearing the pitiless pelting of a storm of affliction—

'Undaunted by the threatening death,  
Or harder circumstance of living doom.'

But, 'seeing the end, they did not dare to faint' by the way. No querulous fretfulness with Providence was there. They learned the swiftest cure of every ill—to thank God for the mercies and blessings that still remained.

### A Flimflam Tale

Some gay romancer has been spinning to a South-land inquirer some of the kind of 'tall tales' that, in Rabelaisian English, would fall under the designation of 'flimflam stories and pleasant fooleries.' On Rabelais' principles, 'an honest man, and of good judgment, believeth what is told him.' But our correspondent politely, though firmly, draws the line at the solemn flimflam 'fact' that there are in Ireland five policemen to each inhabitant! The unregenerate would call this a jim-jam, rather than a flimflam, tale. It would burden the most distressful country with a standing army of over 22,000,000 'peelers'—enough to 'make Dungarvan shake' and plant the British flag in every capital from Tokio westward to Lima. Knowing the infinite capacity of some people for padded-cell assertion, we are not surprised at this Munchausen tale. It is merely a good average sample product of that incurable form of folly which (as a Spanish proverb has it) does not itself think, and thinks that others do not think. The battled millions of armed Irish constabulary exist, of course, only in the mind's eye of the narrator; for the total population of the country in 1902—including the p'leccemen—was only 4,434,000. The number of police in Ireland in 1896—the latest date for which we have returns ready to hand—was 13,140. This gave a ratio of 29 to every 10,000 inhabitants, or one to about every 345. The Irish police force has been largely used as a landlords' garrison. Its chief function has long been the forcible collection of rackrents and the carrying out