

We dealt with the story here simply because it has received some warped prominence in a section of the New Zealand press, and because it furnishes a fair average sample of the methods of the Orange platform clergy. The matter was taken up in the New South Wales Parliament by a Labor Member, Mr. Arthur Griffith. He moved for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the allegation of the Rev. Wools-Rutledge. His motion elicited a clear statement of the facts of the case by the State Premier, who 'declined to agree to an inquiry on a charge notice of which had come to him only through the press.' He then gave the House the following information furnished by the Chief Secretary, Mr. Hogue:—

'Mr. Hall joined the service in 1871; he lost his position in 1893; eighteen months later, when Mr. Reid was Premier, he got a temporary appointment in the Land Tax Office, and held that till 1897, when he was, on the recommendation of the Public Service Board, given a permanent position at £300 a year. It was not until fifteen months after that that he changed his religion. When Mr. Coghlan (Government Statistician) went to England Mr. Hogue appointed Mr. Hall as acting Statistician. His salary is now £425, and he never received more.'

It turned out, in the course of the debate on Mr. Griffith's motion, that on a particular occasion Mr. Hall was entitled to an increase of salary of £50 a year. 'Having regard to Mr. Coghlan's sensitiveness,' says a report before us, 'Mr. Hall mentioned to him that he had become a Catholic; whereupon Mr. Coghlan declined to recommend the increase lest he should be charged with favoritism.' The Chief Secretary said:—

'No sectarian influence had been used; Mr. Hall's appointment had nothing to do with his change of religion, and he had received no increase of salary until long afterwards, but by virtue of his ability and good conduct he was entitled to promotion, and he was appointed assistant-statist and sub-editor of the Government year-books. He (Mr. Hogue), when Mr. Coghlan left for London, gave him the position of Acting Statistician. It would, he added, 'be a dark day if appointments, promotions, or increments in salary were dependent to an extent on a man's religion.'

And thus the Orange clergyman's story of the circumstances and results of Mr. Hall's conversion and of the amount of his salary were officially declared to be so many falsehoods. The tone of the debate was strongly hostile to the Rev. Wools-Rutledge. By 37 votes to 21 the House agreed to the inquiry, in order (as Members expressed it) to give the accuser 'a chance to support his statement on oath'; to 'prove his statement or apologise'; to 'make early reparation' if misinformed; to keep parsons to their proper business; to meet the 'campaign of calumny'; and to 'make clergymen and others weigh well their utterances in connection with such matters'

In the face of the official declarations given above, the work of the select committee should be short and easy. But we think those Members are hugging an illusory hope who expect either proof or apology from the Rev. Wools-Rutledge. These are the only alternatives open to men gifted with the normal sense of fairness. But recent events in our own Parliamentary life show that there is a third resort for an accuser who has been 'caught out': to demand a public inquiry, at the public expense, in order to ascertain how the deuce he came to make such a mistake!

A Story of 'Stuffing'

'Our principle is never to retract.' So spoke an American gutter-press editor, to any angry visitor whom he had falsely credited with having committed suicide in a fit of temporary insanity. 'But,' added the newspaper man, 'as you appeared greatly annoyed by the paragraph, I am willing to state in to-morrow's paper that the rope broke, and that you

are fortunately alive.' The Rev. Wools-Rutledge seems, in like manner, to imagine that the Walls of Derry would fall if he admitted having made a mis-statement. Last year he followed up his flim-flam tale of the invisible and anonymous 'ex-Methodist' by declaring that the public service of New South Wales was, as the result of the customary 'conspiracy,' scandalously 'packed' with 'Papists.' This cry was, as is usual in both Australia and New Zealand, raised with a view of influencing the result of the elections. It is now being repeated in New Zealand. It was eagerly taken up by the Rev. Dill-Macky (Presbyterian) and his Yellow Pup friends and shrieked all over the Mother State. The malevolent vehemence of the cry led to the publication, in June, 1904, of Part VIII. of the 1901 Reports of the Census of New South Wales. It deals with the 'Occupations of the People.' It is compiled from the particulars as to religious beliefs and occupations furnished by the people at the last census, and gives separate tabulated returns for the males and the females employed in the various branches of the public service in New South Wales.

The male State public servants reach a grand total of 28,189. A table before us shows their distribution, as to numbers and religious beliefs, in each branch of the service. Of the numbers mentioned above, 13,332 are adherents of the Church of England, 6519 are Catholics, 2750 Methodists, and 3381 Presbyterians. The remainder (2207) are divided up among unspecified creeds or non-creeds. The following table shows that Catholic males are numerically represented in the public service well below the Catholic proportion to total population, and that Anglicans, 'others,' and especially Presbyterians are those that do the 'packing':—

	Proportion in whole Population.	Proportion in Public Service.
Church of England ...	46.6 per cent.	47.3 per cent.
Roman Catholic ...	26.0 "	23.1 "
Methodist ...	10.3 "	9.8 "
Presbyterian ...	9.9 "	12.0 "
Others ...	7.2 "	7.8 "
Total ...	100.0 "	100.0 "

If the various creeds enumerated above had a grip on the public service in accordance with their relative numerical strength, the comparison would work out as follows:—

	Actual number in Service.	True Proportion.	Actual Excess ...	Shortage ...
Church of England...	13,332	13,136	196	
Roman Catholic ...	6,519	7,329		810
Methodist ...	2,750	2,903		153
Presbyterian ...	3,381	2,791	590	
Others ...	2,207	2,030	177	
Total ...	28,189	28,189		

Of the minor creeds referred to as 'Others' in the Statistical Reports, the Congregationalists, who are only 1.9 per cent. of the population, have no less than 2.1 per cent. of the positions for males in the public service. Among the female public servants, the Presbyterians again 'pack' the offices of emolument in an overwhelming way, at the expense of Catholics, Anglicans, and Methodists alike. There are altogether 3814 of the gentler sex in the public service of New South Wales. On the basis of their proportion to total population, 37% of these should be Presbyterians. The actual number is 588. And yet it was a Presbyterian clergyman (Rev. Dill-Macky) that shrieked about the predominance of 'Papists' in the public service till he almost cracked his cheeks; and in New Zealand the latest scream upon the same subject came from the official organ of the same creed. Here is an official return that shows at a glance who are 'packing' the female positions in the public service of New South Wales:—