

loss to account for the multitude of incompatible schemes that have found their way within the collective head of the Bible-in-schools League. These efforts to capture the coy elector remind one of the wondrous 'systems' that are invented by hopeful gamblers to break the bank at Monte Carlo. But all these 'infallible' combinations and sequences are the merest moonshine. They never give a moment's uneasiness to the bank. The croupiers smile as they rake in the shakels, and the authors of the 'systems' go their several ways with lighter purses and heavier hearts than they brought to Monte Carlo. 'Fallacia alia aliam trudit.' So runs the old logician's motto. One fallacy drives out another: In the same way, one Bible-in-schools scheme annihilates another, and the victor is in turn swept away to make room for yet another system that also bears the hopeful political gamester's brand, 'infallible.' And so on and on runs the weary circle of change, like a whim-horse tramping his monotonous round. But the scheme that will capture the heart of the free and independent elector of New Zealand seems as far off from discovery as ever. And Parliament and the country may smilingly possess their souls in peace, while the precious years fly past and find the clerics still sleepily poring over political puzzles and scheming out fresh permutations and combinations of 'unsectarian' sectarianism for the endowed State creed of their hopes and dreams.

And so the years flit, and one by one the players pass—so far as the school-children are concerned—unprofitably to the grave, mere makers of mud-pies, blowers of soap-bubbles, spinners of airy schemes. The road to the delectable mountains is steep and rugged and thorn-strewn. 'By the thorn-road, and none other, is the mount of vision won.' Thus the poet paraphrases the Savior's warning words. Do our political preachers seek the souls of the children? Well, these are not to be won by mere political agitation, but by toil and sacrifice for their sake—by faithfulness to duty, even when the rocks bruise and the brambles pierce. Tennyson wrote:—

'And I must work through months of toil,  
And years of cultivation,  
Upon my proper patch of soil,  
To grow my own plantation.  
I'll take the showers as they fall,  
I will not vex my bosom;  
Content if at the end of all  
A little garden blossom.'

We should hear less of empty churches and of religious ignorance among the young if each cleric of the Bible-in-schools League cultivated as he ought the district or 'patch of soil' committed to his care. Is there nobody to shame their indolence, to rebuke their complacent trifling with a great issue, and to take them by the nape of the neck and send them to care as they ought for the tender young reeds that are being bruised day by day in every corner of their 'proper patch of soil'?

### The Gunpowder Plot

'It is certain,' says Bacon in one of his essays, 'that a man who studieth revenge, keeps his own wounds green, which would otherwise heal and do well.' But time is the great healer. It blunts the edge of bitter feeling, as it dulls the edge of grief, and gives social and religious and political sores a chance to close. Time and the historian have joined hands in softening the fierce resentments that so long clung around the anniversary of the Gunpowder Treason. The recent efforts of a section of banded enthusiasts to resurrect those dead and buried animosities on the occasion of the third centenary of the Plot met, both in New Zealand and Australia, with one of those failures which give a zest to the social and religious life of our day. In Melbourne the Anglican Archbishop (Dr. Clarke) condemned such celebrations with a frankness that was refreshing. He pointed out that the Gunpowder Plot was the work

of a few fanatics and that the Catholic body had no complicity in the attempted crime. 'We have lived,' said he, 'to see all reference to it eliminated from our prayer book, and its very memory has almost perished in England. I do not wish to see it revived or kept alive in this new country. Are we through the centuries to learn nothing, forget nothing, forgive nothing? Or are we to suggest that anyone living here in Australia approves of the Plot, or regards it as anything else than a wicked thing? Here we breathe an atmosphere of freedom in all religious beliefs, and I consider it unjust to produce some of the darker scenes of English history, and, by inference, to suggest that people now living would rejoice if such things could be re-enacted.'

### A Cry for Cromwell

The Bourbons were not the only people who never learn and never forget. The very people who docked the curled heads of Louis and his kin, and regarded royalty as a tyranny and religion as a superstition, turned the guillotine into an instrument both of tyranny and superstition. The monster saurians of palaeozoic days lived long past their prime in the wild and unexplored fastnesses of the earth. In an analogous way we meet with strange and fantastic survivals in the hinterlands of thought and the howling wildernesses of social life. Witness, for instance, how the barbarous penalty of death by fire still endures among groups of the savage whites that inhabit the Black Belt of America.

Another curious survival of the fierce spirit of evil days that are happily gone for ever, is manifested in the cry for a new Cromwell that goes up periodically from the throats of an Irish secret organisation, whose souls live in the seventeenth century, and who never learn and never forgive and never forget. 'We want another Cromwell,' said the Rev. Mr. Carey in Melbourne recently, 'to straighten up some crooked things.' In the Orange Charter Toast the grim old Puritan butcher's name occupies a place of honor second only to that of the Patron Saint of the association, to whom the brethren frequently offer up this hymn of prayer:—

'Great Spirit of William! from heaven look down,  
And breathe in our hearts our forefathers' fire;  
Teach us to rival their glorious renown,  
From Papist and Frenchman ne'er to retire.'

Giffard, the father of the association, was not satisfied with the fierce old Protector's red work of massacre in Drogheda and Wexford. For Plowden, in his 'Ireland from its Union' (vol. i., pp. 21-22), tells how, in the presence of five named witnesses, Giffard declared that 'he would forgive Cromwell everything but one thing'—namely, 'his not having exterminated the Catholics from Ireland.' We do not know—for he has not told us—what are the 'crooked things' that the Rev. Mr. Carey desires to see 'straightened' by the methods of the canting, cruel old Roundhead. But, take the expression how you will, it has an ugly look. Yet, after all, what is there to prevent a reverend Orange brother from fondling an idea merely because it has not a pretty look—just as the fairy Titania, when cast under a spell, caressed the donkey-headed bumpkin and loved him for his 'sweet, large ears'?

The Rev. Professor Rentoul (Presbyterian) 'said things' about the Cromwell cry and Cromwellian methods in the course of a blistering letter to the Melbourne 'Argus.' 'In God's name,' said he in conclusion, 'will it never cease—this mutual hate of men and ministers who claim to love the one God and the one Christ? Anyhow, I wish to protest that Cromwell's way of "straightening up crooked things" by vengeance and war and force only makes things more "crooked" and more terrible. I protest that in the free Commonwealth of Australia, where we have to build a nation of neighbors and citizens, we must choose another way—which is Christ's way; and when tried it always wins.'