

The finding of the Committee and the vote in the House spell a complete defeat for the Bible in State Schools League. Like the Kaiser, they entered on the campaign with high notions as to what they were going to accomplish. Like that misguided egotist, also, they boldly claimed God as their ally. They represented (they said) 74 per cent. of the population; they were fighting 'the battle of the Bible'; they had pledge cards or petition cards signed by 150,000 electors. Nothing, in short, could stand against them. Every iron was put in the fire in the effort to achieve success; appeals were made to bigotry, sentiment, and self-interest; threats, persuasion, pressure of every kind, were brought to bear. Parliament, like Liège, was to be carried with a rush. And the end of it all has been defeat by a nearly three to one majority. The League, it is true, still keeps up talk as to what it is going to do in the coming election, and its activity in this direction will require watching; but for all practical purposes the bubble has been pricked, and the movement now stands revealed in its true dimensions. Parliament has, in this respect, adequately reflected public opinion on the proposals; and candidates of all shades of political opinion may be safely trusted to realise that they no longer need to stand in awe of the bluff and tall talk so freely indulged in by the League. The *débauche*, complete though it is, has latterly been quite expected. From the time when Canon Garland appeared before the Committee in an attempt to cross-examine Bishop Cleary, the League organiser and his cause have become swiftly and surely discredited. Canon Garland himself appears to have made anything but a favorable impression upon the Committee. The press reports of the cross-examination to which he was subjected by Professor Hunter, Mr. John Caughley, and Bishop Cleary, are exasperatingly inadequate, but they are sufficient to show that the League representative cut a sorry figure. Members of the Committee themselves felt called upon at times to resent his lack of straightforwardness. Mr. A. S. Malcolm, for example, Member for Clutha, an ex-teacher and prominent Presbyterian, protesting against the evasiveness of the answers he was receiving, declared warmly that 'he understood the English language and was not going to be humbugged by the witness.' At other stages of the proceedings, Messrs. McCallum, Statham, and Hanan pulled the Canon sharply up. And Mr. Caughley, 'unsatisfied,' as the press report puts it, 'with the answers,' bluntly summed the whole position up by remarking that 'Canon Garland, who should be the man most able to explain the whole system, was unable to give a straight answer.' At the very outset of the present campaign we predicted that, starting, as he did, as an apostle of bigotry, Canon Garland was going the sure way to bring about disaster to his side. That prediction has now been amply fulfilled.

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Two of the arguments against the League's scheme which have always been specially stressed by Bishop Cleary are that the State has neither the right nor the competency to teach religion, and that the scheme involved an outrageous violation of the rights of conscience of the teachers; and the form of the Committee's report shows that these are the considerations which have had especial weight with the Committee in arriving at their formal finding on the subject. It will, indeed, we think, be readily admitted by all the interested parties that the splendid fight put up by Bishop Cleary throughout this agitation, and especially before the Committee, has been a most important, if not the deciding factor in bringing about the complete collapse of the movement. It is, in our humble judgment, the especial merit of Bishop Cleary's magnificent championship of the cause of truth and justice that he has, from first to last of this long and strenuous controversy, never made a single sacrifice of principle, nor abated the jot or tittle of the essential position of the Catholic Church. Steadfastly and unflinchingly he has represented the Church as always and ever the true friend of religious education; and he has placed in the very forefront of his evidence the willingness of the Catholic leaders to meet all other interested parties in conference upon

this subject. 'If the Bible-in-Schools League,' he has said, 'or other interested parties are willing to sit around a table with us and accept or recognise the principle of the equal rights of conscience of all, we will gladly and joyfully meet them.' To that, sooner or later, the Bible-in-schools leaders in this country must eventually come. They will do at last what they ought to have done at first—consider and consult others, and especially that staunch and consistent exponent of religious education, the Catholic Church. Then, perhaps,—and certainly not till then—the ghost of this vexed education problem will be permanently laid.

Notes

Cross-Examination of Bishop Cleary

The Education Committee having presented its report to the House, we are now in a position, without committing a breach of Parliamentary privilege, to give a *verbatim* and official report of the evidence given by Bishop Cleary under cross-examination by Canon Garland and others, and we commence publication thereof in this issue. Readers will note how the carefully-prepared 'trap' questions utterly fail of their purpose; how Bishop Cleary, who is supposed to be on the defensive, is really from the outset vigorously aggressive; and how, under plea of saving the Committee's time, Canon Garland becomes eager to escape from the uncomfortable corner in which he finds himself. These, and other still more interesting features, will appear yet more strongly as the evidence develops.

Irish Songs in Battle

A special contributor who supplies a weekly column of war items and comment to the London *Daily Dispatch* has the following in the issue of September 4: 'I have been favored with a letter from an officer at the front. In describing the behaviour of one of the battalions of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, he says that the men 'fought like devils,' and a comical incident of their presence in the long-drawn action in front of Cambrai was that in the intervals of the German waves of attack being precipitated on their line they sang 'The Wearin' o' the Green' and 'God Save Ireland.' A field officer of this particular unit testily remarked, "We've heard enough all day of your Fenian songs; give us something else." Then, when there was a cessation of the Teutonic onslaught, some Dublin "corner boys" struck up a still more ultra-Fenian chanson:—

Why do we meet but to repeat
Our vows made night and day—
For Ireland, brave old Ireland—
Ireland, boys, for aye!

'As my old brother officer observes, "these confounded Fenians can fight. Four times within one hour my blackguards drove a charge home with the bayonet."'

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A similar incident was referred to by Mr. John Redmond in his speech in the House of Commons on the final passing of the Home Rule Bill: 'Then there is the story in yesterday's papers from the lips of a wounded French soldier, who described how the Irish Guards charged with the bayonet three regiments of German cavalry, and, as the French soldier said, "They charged singing a strange song that I have never heard before." And the newspaper man asked the wounded soldier what were the words, and the answer was, "I cannot tell you what the words were, but they sang something about God saving Ireland" (Nationalist cheers). I saw these men marching through London on their way to the station. They marched passed this building singing "God save Ireland," and it is unnecessary for me to tell this House the magnificent material the country has at its disposal in the Irish soldier.'