

should limit itself to non-contentious legislation is too much in the nature of a counsel of perfection to be really practicable. Mr. Myers's own proposal—that Parliament should meet and introduce some form of proportional representation, and that thereafter a fresh appeal should be made to the constituencies—seems to us much more likely to produce a decisive settlement of the difficulty.

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For us, it need hardly be said, the paramount interest of the election was its bearing on the prospects of the Bible in State Schools League's referendum proposal; and in this respect the results are, from our point of view, extremely gratifying. From evidence already available, it would appear that the League pursued at the election the devious and unscrupulous methods which have from the first been so unpleasant a feature of their propaganda. In the Dunedin Central constituency both candidates declared themselves unequivocally against the Referendum proposal; but Mr. Statham, who had been particularly direct and outspoken in his attitude, was singled out for special hostility by the local representatives of the League. At a very late stage in the election what was described in the daily press as a grossly unfair leaflet, attacking Mr. Statham, was circulated by local Leaguers; and the time remaining was, of course, insufficient to permit of that gentleman getting out a reply in such a way as to reach the electors whose minds had been thus poisoned. One ministerial member of the League, the Rev. Mr. Scorgie, Presbyterian minister of Mornington, publicly repudiated and protested against the League's action, and another prominent member, the Rev. Professor Dickie, has since publicly announced his resignation from the League on account of the objectionable electioneering tactics adopted. In Wellington, as will be seen from the remarks quoted elsewhere in this issue, Canon Garland again hinted darkly at the dire fate in store on the Judgment Day for those of his hearers who failed to vote as directed by the League. The electors, however, were impervious alike to trickery and threat; and the League have suffered a second and crushing defeat. Of the 76 European members returned, only 18 are in favor of the Bill as demanded by the League, 10 are in favor of a referendum but not of the Referendum insisted upon by the League, and 48 are opposed to any Religious Referendum Bill. Thus there is a majority of 20 against any Referendum Bill, and a majority of 30 against the particular Bill demanded by the League. We have made a careful analysis of the attitude of members, and also of the respective parties to which they belong; and should there be a further early appeal to the electors this list will, at the opportune time, be published in our columns. In the meantime it is for us matter for the liveliest satisfaction to note that the League have failed to make the least impression upon the country, and that as time goes on they are visibly losing rather than gaining ground in the electorates.

Notes

The Prohibition Vote

The returns of the voting on the licensing polls are not absolutely final, but they are very nearly so; and the one or two returns to come cannot alter the general result. The figures seem to indicate a rather remarkable revulsion of feeling against Prohibition throughout the country. As our readers are aware, in order to carry Prohibition there must be a three-fifths majority of votes in favor of that issue. At each preceding election there has been a very marked and steady advance in the Prohibition vote. At the last election (1911) the Prohibitionists secured more than 55 per cent. of the votes cast, and the party appeared to be well within sight of their goal. This year the vote has gone back to such an extent that there is an actual majority against them. The figures for 1911 were: For National

Prohibition, 259,943; Against National Prohibition, 205,661. This year the figures are, in round numbers: For National Prohibition, 240,000; against National Prohibition, 245,000. The hostile vote is not confined to the towns or to one patch of country, but is fairly general throughout the Dominion. The position as regards local No License remains unchanged. No new district has gone 'dry,' and none of the No License districts have carried Restoration.

The Song of the Maxim Gun

The war poet is abroad in the land, and the amount of war verse already published is sufficient to fill many volumes. All will agree with the closing sentiment, at least, in these lines by Marcus Tydeman in the *Westminster Gazette*:—

'I am the heir of the Mitrailieuse,
Fashioned in hell for the devils to use.
As the reaping machine cuts the golden ears
So I garner my harvest of blood and tears.—
R-r-r-r-rpp, R-r-r-r-rpp.

'See in the trenches the rotting heaps,
(Already the worm to the banquet creeps).
A human soul was in each of those
Till my leaden vomit cut down the rows.—
R-r-r-r-rpp, R-r-r-r-rpp.

'Surely no longer the stricken earth
Will bear with the Hell Hounds who gave me birth.
Haste! If you'd hear my crackling blast,
For this song which I sing is my loudest and last.—
R-r-r-r-rpp, R-r-r-r-rpp.'

As Canon Garland Sees It

Preaching at St. Paul's Pro-Cathedral, Wellington, on the Sunday preceding the election, and taking for his text the words, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,' Canon Garland, according to press reports, spoke in part as follows: 'He contended that the principles of justice were travestied by the course taken by the Education Committee of the House of Representatives. The churches who took part in the agitation represented 75 per cent. of the people. They did not claim that every member of those churches was wholly with them, but the churches which represented 75 per cent. of the people made a modest request. They didn't ask for the Bible in schools, they did not ask for a particular system of religious instruction, they only asked Parliament to find out from the people by means of a ballot what the people had to say in regard to an agreement which those churches had arrived at. Two priests of the Church of England and a handful of Presbyterian ministers objected. A handful of Methodist ministers did the same thing, and Parliament had said to the world, "We won't listen to the voices of any of these Christian churches, but we will pay every attention to two dissentient priests, to a handful of ministers from one of these churches, but we will treat with contempt the voices of these churches themselves. "There's one church they don't treat with contempt, and it is not 75 per cent. of the people—the Roman Church. That Church said very clearly, "We don't believe in a referendum," and Parliament takes a course which shows that it is in agreement with the view of the Roman Church." It was time, then, for Christian ministers to speak out when these rights of a majority had been crushed under the noisy encroachment of the few. What, he asked in conclusion, would be their verdict on Thursday next. Were they going to think of Mr. Massey or Sir Joseph Ward, or were they going to think of God—and he adjured the congregation that when in the ballot box they should think of God, to Whom they would one day have to answer for their action.' Evidently the electors had their own opinion as to which party had God on its side, for they have returned an overwhelming majority of members opposed to the unjust proposals of the League.