

that there may be certain occult forces rarely called into play : or, it may be, that only known forces are acting, but in a strange combination, so that the exception is apparent—not real." But the laws of nature are only known to be uniform by experience ; and if these laws on rare occasions had not acted uniformly, this also could only be known by experience. "But how if the experience of uniformity, being the stronger, should have denied all force to the experience of the rarer exceptions ? Why, that would have been blind tyranny of might over right—it would have been against reason. Now, this blind sacrifice of the weaker to the stronger is precisely the thing of which we complain. On the sole strength of general uniformity, occasional non-uniformity, no matter how clear its claim, is refused all recognition, and declared to be only uniformity in disguise." But very good reason should be given for assigning unnatural effects to natural causes. It would be sufficient to trace the events to the forces that produce them, or to show that such forces, though occult, must exist in nature, from the demonstrated fact that no supernatural force ever can be, or is exerted in the universe. "Now, no one attempts the first of these two plans, otherwise the forces would no longer be occult. Neither does any one pretend to have given proof according to the requirements of the second method of defence. For no man—that is, no reasonable man—tries to make believe that he has demonstrated these propositions : That God does not exist ; that God did not create the primal elements of matter, and give them their forces and laws ; that God cannot interfere with the universe a little more effectually than men interfere with that small portion which is subject to their dominion." Nescience on these subjects is the most that is asserted, but when awkward facts are brought against this theory they argue, not from the know-nothing point of view, but from certain knowledge that God does not and cannot interrupt in any instance the settled course of nature.

We learn from a *Daily Times* telegram that the Auckland *Free Press* thanks us for obtaining for it several new subscribers. This is neither gall nor wormwood to us, much less both combined. We have not the least objection to furious bigots having their organ ; in short, we rather prefer it, we prefer to see our enemies "weeping and gnashing their teeth" in public, rather than have them plot and plan in the dark against us, and make themselves ready to do us an ill turn when, perhaps, we should least expect it. Besides, a paper like the Auckland *Free Press* may act favourably on the rest of the press of the country ; it may so disgust all journalists of decent tastes as to make them think twice before they write any sentence that should seem to smack of its infirmities, and, in consequence, Catholics may find less that is displeasing to them in the columns of other newspapers. In short, we beg of all the furious bigots in the colony to subscribe at once to the Auckland *Free Press*, they will find it a most worthy exponent of their views, and quite capable of expressing the rage that devours them in language fitted to such a purpose.

OUR contemporary, the *New Zealander*, finds himself in a position to prove that secular education by no means is a cause of harrikinism, as affirmed by Archdeacon Stock, because a boy, named Jones, having been drowned, his parents declared that they had had no control over him since the early age of four had been attained to by him. Our contemporary says:—"To the pernicious habit many parents of the lowest class have of abandoning all control over their children, and allowing them to roam the streets at all hours of the day and night, is due the growth of the army of hoodlums which infest San Francisco, and who have attained such numbers that they rank as a power in that city." We are not disposed by any means to dispute this statement, but we are unable to discern how it tends to prove the superior excellence of godless education, or to show that such an education may not help to render parental authority weaker, by failing to inculcate the obedience that religion teaches to be due to it. It is a fact frequently recorded that children religiously instructed in school have been the means of re-establishing order at home, and awakening neglectful parents to a sense of their responsibilities, but it yet remains to be established that the three R's are capable of counteracting the natural love of the haunts of mischief, or of accomplishing any thing more than furnishing scamps with increased powers of hurting themselves and others. In fact, it is clear to us that, at least so far as our contemporary the *New Zealander* is concerned, the argument of Archdeacon Stock has received no sufficient answer whatsoever.

THE question of the Bible in schools is not only distracting our worthy folk here at present, whose superstition it is to worship a book they are totally unable to vindicate from the "oppositions of science," on every side brought against it, but people's minds in America are also divided upon it. We find the *New York Post* deal with the matter thus—"It has always seemed to us that the Catholic claim, that secular education ought to be combined with religious instruction, is substantially conceded by Protestants when they insist upon reading the Bible in the common schools, or upon introducing any religious exercises whatever there." This is the common-sense view

to take of the matter, and it is vain to pretend that schools in which the Bible is read are not denominational. They become distinctly Protestant—understanding the term in its religious sense—and it matters not whether any particular sect predominates there or not. Protestants by advocating the measure referred to, *ipso facto*, recognise the justice of the Catholic claims, but their object where Catholics are concerned is not justice but proselytism, or in its stead rancorous oppression. Apropos of the matter we perceive that the secular system continues to be warmly denounced in the States : the Boston *Pilot* furnishes us with the following paragraph :—"Rev. Professor David Swing, the Presbyterian minister, whose trial for heresy was a transient sensation a few years ago, preached a week ago on education, and characterised the public schools as wholly unsatisfactory. He has the largest and most cultivated congregation in the West,—but as he is not suspected of Popery, he has not been denounced by the press or slandered by his brethren in the pulpit."

We clip from the San Francisco correspondence of the *Daily Times* the following paragraph taken from a speech of Denis Kearney's :—"When this insufferable coxcomb, Thomas Guard, challenged Bob Ingersoll to a discussion, his shallowness was soon discovered to be measured only by his conceit. Everyone who heard him felt that he had given away the Christian faith to infidel Bob, through his want of ability to answer, just as he gave it away, without challenge at all, to the Chinese consul on Wednesday last. His own people found him out then, for the great Dr. Thomas Guard, light and guide of San Francisco Wesleyans, was dropped like a hot potato, and quietly unshipped ; and now that wandering star, 'to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever,' is browsing upon short commons in Oakland, and seeks to fill his clerical crib with corn from the Chinese bin, and offerings from their heathen altars. That is a nice specimen of a Christian minister for you ;—one of the men who would preach a funeral oration over Judas Iscariot 'because he was a thief and carried the bag,' and would mock at the life of love, beauty, and truth of Sister Frances because she was a nun." It is not now for the first time we have heard of Dr. Thomas Guard, and we recognise the justice of the portrait Kearney has painted. But we find in the preacher one of a numerous class, people who oppose to the free thought of the day none but the feeblest utterings of a superannuated cant, and who reserve all their vigour for furious and unscrupulous attacks upon the Catholic Church, unabashed by the lives of "love, beauty and truth," into which she has guided many such as 'Sister Frances,' and making these the subject of their malevolent raillery and unfounded calumnies. Meanwhile freethought grows apace, and is nourished by the hypocrisy, secret unbelief, and malice that it readily detects.

ONE of the most amusing transitions in the expression of journalistic opinion that we remember to have met with for some time is that we find occasioned in the columns of the *Times* by the Holy Father's encyclical, which we publish in this issue. On January 10th the correspondent of the journal alluded to, writing from Rome, speaks of the Pope in terms of the highest respect and admiration. he says, referring to the letter of his Holiness to the Archbishop of Cologne : "Whatever may be the quality of the wisdom the Pope possesses, his gentleness in its application is untiring, and were he speaking as simply the great pastor of the most widely extended branch of the Christian Church, were all possibility of the ambitious aims of the Sovereign Pontiff and King excluded, his words would—as, indeed, they must for their great prudence—command the attention and consideration of all thinking men. Of course the Pope speaks, as all Popes must, from the conviction this Pope has most uncompromisingly declared, that there neither is nor can be any other Church but the Roman. . . . But it is the acuteness of the political insight shown by Leo XIII. in the choice of the road by which to accomplish his purpose, the skill with which he seizes the opportunities the actual condition of things affords him, which make his utterances this Christmas especially worthy of attention." Meantime the encyclical appears, and all is altered ; the words of the Pope no longer display "great prudence" nor "command the attention and consideration of all thinking men." Neither does his Holiness show any particular "skill" in seizing the opportunities the "actual condition of things afford him." On the contrary, in one short week our contemporary discovers that the Pope is a mere common-place Pope, a little more civil than his predecessor, but nothing more enlightened, or at one with the spirit of the age. In a leader of January 17th, he says :—"Precisely the same things were said by the late Pope. Indeed, the only difference between the epistles of Leo XIII. and those of Pius IX. is that the newer documents are somewhat more urbane. Both bear the stamp of the Vatican. Both are written in that curious style of mingled unction and vagueness which is as much a hereditary possession as the regulations of the Papacy. It seems to matter little whether the Pope has or has not any sympathies with modern society, for he signs his name to the same set of phrases. It would be foolish to blame or even to wonder at a literary and theological monotony which is entirely akin to the whole spirit of the Papacy. An institution which would be always consistent with itself, and which would