

## VASCO NUNEZ DE BALBOA.

On a land remote and nameless  
Shone the golden orb of day,  
Painting weird fantastic shadows  
Over mountains dark and gray.  
On the topmost heights that reared its  
Minarets of shattered stone,  
Overlooking hill and valley,  
Stood a warrior, still and lone.  
Far below him lay a vision,  
Never seen nor dreamed before,  
Of a beautiful Eden lying  
By a dim uncertain shore.  
O'er this region beauty-haunted  
Dwelt his raptured soul in awe—  
Rapt, transported, half-enchanted,  
By the wonders which he saw.  
Mountains rising to the heavens  
From the centre of our land—  
Valleys, bathed in endless summer,  
Dreaming in their mystic band;  
Sweeping in majestic grandeur  
To the limits of the sky,  
Lay these western realms of Thule,  
Newly opened to his eye.  
Stately palms that swayed and battled  
With the music-breathing wind—  
Silver pines that fringed the summits  
Of the craggy peaks behind,  
In the red and hazy sunlight,  
Waving dimly, fitfully,  
Tossed their plumes in verdant billows  
O'er a visionary sea.  
Through arroyos dark and dismal  
Poured the torrent's foaming tide,  
Winding in a train of silver  
Down the mountain's massive side.  
In the misty realms to westward  
Lay a golden-tinted streak,  
Where the glowing sunlight left its  
Image on the ocean's cheek.  
As his burning glances lighted  
On that lone, mysterious sea,  
Overcome by strange emotions,  
To the earth he bent his knee—  
While the languid breeze that wafted  
Summer odours on the air,  
Soared into the gates of heaven  
Freighted with a thankful prayer.  
Ere his orisons were ended,  
Warlike forms around him stood,  
Gazing with ecstatic rapture  
On that radiant solitude;  
While their faces vainly questioned,  
In a voice without a tone,  
Of the scenes that lay before them—  
Regions hitherto unknown.  
Were these realms a blest elysium  
Where the soul of man might rest,  
While the peaceful waves of Lethe  
Pulsed for ever in his breast?  
And that dim and distant ocean—  
Did its waters far outpour  
Into regions vast and formless,  
Limitless, without a shore?  
This and more they stood divining  
Of that land without a name,  
While their dreams revealed a morrow  
That should laurel them with fame.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Wearily the sad Pacific,  
Beating on its rocky shore,  
For the warrior-chief Balboa  
Chants a dirge for evermore.

—The West.

WILLIAM HAMILL.

## A CARDINAL IN THE WITNESS BOX.

We take the following clever pen-picture from the Irish correspondence of the 'N. Y. Tribune,' describing the scene in court when his Eminence Cardinal Cullen entered the witness-box:—

Here there is an interesting "situation" for the future historical novelist! As a contemporary chronicler and eye-witness, I can help him to conceive the picture, for I sat beside the jury in the gallery just opposite the witness-box. The court was crowded with a select audience, including a large number of priests and a few ladies in the galleries. The members of the bar, with their wigs and gowns on, filled all their own seats, the counsel engaged in the case, except the juniors, occupying the Bench called the Inner Bar. The Chief Justice, clothed in ermine, and fully conscious of the dignity of his office, does all he can to preserve it; but he sometimes fails, from the excitability of his temperament, which is a mixture of the nervous and the sanguine, his pale, thin features, by their quick changes of color, betraying the emotions that agitate him, and make him restless and impatient. This sometimes gives an advantage to Mr But and Sergeant Armstrong, who do not always treat him with the respect which his position demands. He is an acute, though not a profound lawyer, and considering that he was all his life an excessively strong partisan, and that his intellect is weakest in the judicial faculty, he has proved

an efficient Judge, and he generally decides fairly. In the recent libel case, however, *Stannus v. Finlay*, proprietor of the 'Northern Whig,' his partiality towards the land agent was so marked that an order for a new trial has been obtained, on the ground of misdirection of the Jury. He went so far as to maintain that a landlord or his agent had a perfect right to refuse to sell or let a site for a place of worship, Catholic or Protestant, if it seems good to him to doom the population of the locality to spiritual destitution. It is worth remembering also that this former ardent champion of Protestant ascendancy is the author of a work on Italy in which the Papacy is not spared. He is 67 years of age.

Paul Cullen, Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin, was called as the first witness for the defence. A priest beside me said it gave him great pain to appear in that capacity. We can easily believe that. At all events he decided wisely for the interests of his Church. He might have let judgment go by default, and paid whatever damages a jury might award against him, thereby asserting the dignity of his office as a Prince of the Church. But against this course several important reasons might be urged.

All eyes were eagerly directed towards the Cardinal as he slowly ascended the platform and stood beside the witness's chair, while the New Testament was put into his hand, and the official said (rather flippantly, then resuming his seat): "The answers you shall give to the Court and the Jury shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God." Think of such language addressed by a young Protestant official to a Cardinal, a delegate of the Vicar of Christ! The book was hurriedly kissed, and handed back. His Eminence then quietly took his seat. There was a subject for a picture. The densely-crowded court, the jury-galleries on each side, the public gallery in front, with the fat court-crier, cooped in his cage; the barristers, in their costume, filling the middle of the court; the side passages thronged with gentlemen standing, and guarded by police; the Lord Chief-Justice alone on the bench, looking as grave as possible; the grand central figure of the Cardinal attracting every eye, with his long black robe reaching down to his feet, his small red cap placed back on his head, his scarlet apron, his chain and cross, and his ring, which the faithful, wealthy and high-born are proud to kneel down and kiss. His presence is very venerable. He has a remarkably fine forehead—high, broad, and nobly arched—indicating benevolence, veneration and ideality, although there is not a gleam of fancy or imagination in his writings or speeches. His face is full, smooth, florid and unwrinkled, with the healthy hue of temperance, quite different from the meagre physiognomy of Dr Newman or Archbishop Manning. The expression of the Cardinal is quiet, placid, rather heavy, but determined. He speaks always as the conscious organ of an infallible Church, and missing no opportunity to assert its claims. Thus, when asked whether the Pope has a right to interpose directly in the government of the Church in all countries, he answered: "From the day that Jesus Christ said to Peter, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church,' till the last Vatican Council, the Pope has always had the right to rule directly and personally every part of the Catholic Church."

## THE COERCION CODE IN IRELAND.

THE speech delivered by Mr J. O. Blunden at the Home Rule meeting on Tuesday will be read with approval by many persons who are not themselves Home Rulers. The maintenance of a coercion code in a country notoriously so peaceful, calm, and tranquil as our own is one of the most indefensible acts in the long record of wrongs inflicted by English Parliament on the Irish nation. Mr Blunden has too correctly sketched the constitutional conditions under which we in Ireland now live. In any proclaimed district—and we believe nearly the whole island is proclaimed—the peasant who stirs from his house between sunset and sunrise may be dragged before a petty sessions bench, and if the justices believe that "he was not out of his house on some lawful business he may be imprisoned, with or without hard labour," for any period not exceeding six calendar months. Then, as all the world knows, any newspaper in Ireland may be crushed by the will of the Government without trial, inquiry, or legal process. Again, the man who sells over an ounce of gunpowder or a bullet to an unlicensed person—the farmer who, without a license, carries and old gun to shoot the crows—is liable to the felon's doom. Add to this that any man in Westmeath may be imprisoned for life at the nod of the Lord Lieutenant, not alone without a trial, but without an accusation. A wretched man may, under this cruel and infamous law, rot for years in a jail, the victim of the malicious falsehoods of an unknown slanderer. Let us complete the picture by the fact that the police possess a power of domiciliary visitation far more extensive than any enjoyed by the sbirri of the old Neapolitan regime. Such a code, scarcely defensible in a disturbed country, is in a peaceful and tranquil land an outrage, an anachronism, and a wrong. True it is that our rulers are better than their laws, and that some of the worst provisions in the code have been allowed to remain dead letters. But the liberties of a people should repose not on the broken reed of their masters' prudence or good temper, but on the broad basis of Positive Law.—'Dublin Freeman.'

## AN EPIDEMIC OF SUICIDE IN RUSSIA.

A PHENOMENON of an entirely new sort has come into existence in Russia, namely: an epidemic of suicide amongst young persons of from fifteen to twenty years of age. This pest is attributed to the revival of the classics, which the Minister of Public Instruction, Count Dmitri Tolstoy, is promoting with such zeal that five days per week are devoted to that study exclusively; whilst only one day is given to the acquisition of the Russian language. By dint of putting forward Socrates as the great model for imitation, each boy learns to consider himself as a young Socrates, and stuffs his pockets with hemlock. The truth is, however, that the lack of religious instruction is causing this evil, which is one without example, in any community.