

eradicate the rabbit pest was between £1300 and £1500.—In the House of Representatives, Mr. Bruce moved the second reading of the Seamen's Representation Bill. He said he would ask the House to take the debate on the committal of the bill. Agreed to.—Mr. Turnbull moved the second reading of the Rating Act Amendment Bill. He explained that the object of the bill was to exempt friendly societies from the Rating Act. Agreed to.—Mr. J. C. Buckland moved the second reading of the Impounding Act 1884 Amendment Bill. The object of the bill was to place the Provincial District of Otago on the same footing as the rest of the Colony. The Hon. R. Stout opposed the second reading. He did not think it wise to alter the law in the direction proposed by the bill. The motion for the second reading was carried on a division by 40 against 25.—Mr. Fisher moved the second reading of the Law Practitioners Act 1882 Amendment Bill (No. 2). Agreed to.—Mr. Guinness moved the second reading of the Armed Constabulary Act 1867 Amendment Bill. He said the bill provided that the members of the police force and armed constabulary should exercise the right of voting at general elections. The motion for the second reading was carried on a division by 46 against 22.—Mr. Guinness moved the second reading of the Miners' Rights Fee Reduction Bill. Agreed to.—Mr. Guinness moved the second reading of the Coroners Juries Abolition Bill. The Hon. J. A. Toke said it would be rather a sweeping change to abolish Coroners' juries altogether. He moved that the debate be adjourned. The amendment was carried on the voices.—Mr. Downie Stewart moved the second reading of the Evidence Further Amendment Bill, and briefly explained its provisions. Agreed to.—Mr. Garrick moved the second reading of the Distress Bill. Agreed to. In the committee of ways and means several of the proposed duties were negatived as follows:—Cornflour, farinaceous food, maizena, macaroni, prepared groats, sago, tapioca, and vermicelli, 3d per lb. Bacon and hams, 3d per lb. Canned beef and pork (salt), 4s the cwt.—Boots and shoes, per dozen pairs, provided no duty exceeds 15 per cent. *ad valorem*. Boots and shoes—men's, No. 6 and upwards, 17s 6d; youths' Nos. 2 to 5, 14s; boys' Nos. 7 to 1, 8s 6d; women's, No. 3 and upwards, 11s; girls' Nos. 7 to 10, 7s; children's Nos. 4 to 6 and slippers, 3s; women's "lasting" and "stiff" boots, 7s; goloshes of all kinds, 3s 6d; slippers, men's, women's, and children's, from No. 7 and upwards, 4s. Butter and cheese, 2d per lb. Candles, tallow, 1d the lb or reputed package of that weight; candles, stearine, 2d; candles, paraffin or wax, 2½d; candles, not otherwise enumerated, 2½d. Carpet bags, 2s per cent. *ad valorem*. The duty on tea was reduced from 6d to 4d a pound.

Whatever the sentimentalists might wish, it is a fact that England finds little sympathy this side of the Atlantic in her international quarrels. As between her and Russia, American opinion is decidedly on the side of our life-long friend and against our equally life-long enemy. If anything were needed to emphasize the distinction, the cowardly and clumsy tactics of England in trying to avoid a fight would suffice, for Americans despise a poltroon. As our esteemed contemporary, *Life*, the wittiest and best humorous paper ever published in America, puts it:—"The fact of the matter is, that England finds herself in the position of the man who, after fighting and licking all the small boys and women in the neighbourhood, is suddenly confronted with a man of his size, and patronizingly says, as he backs down, 'Fight you? Oh, no; I might hurt you.' Then everybody in the neighbourhood laughs at him, and all the small boys and women whom he has harassed in the past come up and kick him. So it is with England, and ere long the ignominy of this back-down will be rendered more ignominious by the sounding thwacks of the small boy Afghans, Zulus, Boers, and Soudanese. It had to come sooner or later, and the world cannot but rejoice that the greatest bull-dozer of the age has at last been unmasked."—*Pilot*.

St. John's, N. F., May 18.—On Sunday another anti-Catholic demonstration occurred at Bay Roberts. The house of William Daley, a leading Catholic trader, was almost demolished by stones. Some of Capt. Hennebury's property was thrown into the sea. Several Catholic boys and men were assaulted on their way to the chapel.

The *Saturday Review* of April 24, thus sums up the history of the Soudan campaign in one short sentence:—"The progress of the affair, as it is looked back on, resembles nothing so much as the progress of a drunken man, in its alternations of torpor and wild zigzag rushes, its absence of any apparent object, and its final collapse."

Speculating in one of its most recent issues as to how far the Crimes Act may be renewed, the *Pall Mall Gazette* says:—"Everything depends upon the standpoint from which your approach this question. We approach it from the standpoint of Home Rule. We recognise quite as fully as Mr. Parnell that the present state of things in Ireland is exceptional and provisional. Within five years we shall be driven by Parliamentary exigencies to grant Ireland some sort of legislature of her own. Keeping that in view, we are strongly of opinion that nothing should be done to disturb social peace in Ireland during that period of transition. If the floodgates of crime were once more unloosed, Home Rule would only be attained after a spasm of military repression. That of all things, in the interest of both countries, it is necessary to avoid. Pending this radical transformation of Irish administration and legislation, it is important that Englishmen should not be led to feel that they have been driven to concede Home Rule by violence and crime. Parliamentary exigencies will bring it about fast enough without agrarian crime, and Home Rulers need not grudge the temporary inconvenience of a law which will help them to increase and consolidate their Parliamentary contingent, and will serve as an illustration of England's impotence to govern without coercion. On all grounds, then, we are inclined to think that the best thing would be to let Lord Spencer have whatever bill he wants, and pass it for the five years that will probably be needed for the establishment of Home Rule."

Correspondence.

[We are not responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

"WE CATHOLICS."

TO THE EDITOR N.Z. TABLET.

SIR,—Judging by the apparent earnestness with which the so-called *apathy* of the Catholics of New Zealand is being canvassed by your various correspondents, I am inclined to think that we may reasonably conjecture that in the not very distant future there is a prospect of seeing that sin—let us call it what we may—wiped away. The first step towards removing an evil is that those who possess the power to remove it are fully convinced of the necessity of doing so. It would appear that this step has been made. Let me express the hope that those who have raised their voices in lamentation will not now retire into obscurity, satisfied that they have done all that their duty required.

One great difficulty at present seems to be to discover the cause of the present inactivity of the Catholics of New Zealand. Well, it matters little what may be the cause, if we can only discover a remedy; but, after all, is the cause so very hard to find? Both Mr. Maskell and Mr. Perceval admit that we are not united, and may not that very fact be the cause of the evil they deplore so much? I protest strongly against the word *apathy* being made use of to express the condition of Catholics—in Canterbury at all events. Whatever their defects, *apathy* is not one of them. Do their noble and cheerful responses to the many calls which are constantly being made upon them, for the support of their schools and convents, for the building of churches and for the cause of education generally throughout the Colony point to the sin of *apathy*? Call them whatever else you please, but do not call them apathetic. I will grant, however, that there is amongst them a very lamentable inactivity, which inactivity, I attribute, as I hinted above, to their being utterly disunited.

And now let me go a little further and ask, what is the cause of this disunion? I know no other, indeed I require no other, for that is the very cause, the "standoffishness" between class and class which Mr. Maskell dislikes so much, and which we all see and are inwardly amused at. One need not reside a long time in the midst of a community like that of Christchurch, to perceive that the very men, whose influence if exerted would be productive of the very best results, simply don't exert it at all. Why they don't is not easy to say, but they don't. And what is the consequence? Well, just this: the people finding themselves deserted, shunned I might say, by those who ought to be their leaders, naturally feel discouraged and of course fail to carry out even those projects which they know to concern their most vital interests. Your Christchurch correspondent in his letter of the 13th ult. holds up this discouragement almost as an accusation of guilt, but in doing so I don't think he acts wisely. They can no more help feeling discouraged than would a handful of imperfectly drilled recruits who found themselves opposed to a well-equipped and disciplined army. Here, then, is the secret of our disunion. The very men who by reason of their social position or intellectual abilities would easily acquire an influence over the great body of Catholics, the very men whose duty it is to lead them, avoid them, shun their societies, scowl at them perhaps in the street, as Mr. Perceval correctly puts it, and are never seen any more.

Did I shock you when I spoke of being amused at this queer thing, "standoffishness"? (I am glad that Mr. Maskell hit upon this word. It is one I had long sought for and had failed to find). When viewed as I have just been viewing it, there is of course nothing amusing about it, but it has a comical aspect nevertheless. Mr. Maskell says he knows instances where a Catholic has lived in the town for a very considerable length of time and people haven't called upon him, haven't invited him to dinner, haven't tried to induce him to become intimate with them. Did the gentleman in question expect that any of these good things would happen to him? It seems almost incredible that Mr. Maskell can have known a case like this, but as he never jokes in a serious matter, I must take his word for it.

I said, sir, that *apathy* did not exist among the Catholics of Canterbury. Allow me to correct myself. *Apathy* there is, but it does not rest in the quarter your correspondents suppose. It rests with those who ought to lead their co-religionists and don't. The Catholics of this Colony ought to be a considerable power, but they will never be so, except—to quote the words of your Christchurch correspondent—"by combination and mutual help." Let me, however, remark that for purposes of combination leaders are required, and that mutual help pre-supposes fraternal charity. Let all—more especially the apathetic ones—take to heart Mr. Perceval's counsel and do what they can for each other, forgetting all former "standoffishness"; let them jointly consider what they want, and aid each other in getting it. Let them not, for instance, be content with deploring political disorganisation, but let them find out the best way to become organised. Either it can be done or it cannot. If it can, it behoves those who have most experience in these matters to get it done; if not, a thousand times better to have said nothing about it.

To make myself quite clear, let me recapitulate what I have said. The great bulk of the Catholics of New Zealand are not apathetic, but they are inactive. This inactivity is due to their disunion and disorganisation. This disunion and disorganisation result from the fact that their natural leaders stand aloof from them individually and collectively, and are themselves sunk in the very *apathy* of which they accuse their fellow Catholics. The remedy is that they shake off their *apathy*, and assume the position which they ought to occupy.—I am etc.

R. DOBBIN,

Christchurch, July 6, 1885.