

Ireland.—Another instance of misrepresentation occurred with respect to an allocution delivered by the Holy Father at Christmas, and in which he complained that, so far as the teaching office of the Church was concerned, the Pope would soon have no more freedom than had his predecessors when they hid from the tyranny of the heathen emperors in the Catacombs. The telegraphic agencies reported the Holy Father as complaining that the liberty of the Church had been reduced to that which prevailed in the early ages, and immediately an outcry was raised against the arrogance that claimed more than the Pontiffs had enjoyed in the times of a greater simplicity—that is, when the Roman Empire had become Christian. But from all this we see the necessity of accepting with caution intelligence regarding Catholic matters that reaches us from sources that are not Catholic. No reliance whatever can be placed upon it, and sometimes it is distorted for mischievous ends.

A STANDING CALUMNY. MR. ALFRED WEBB (says the *Dublin Freeman*) has contributed to the Irish Press Agency's series of pamphlets an excellent *brochure* upon "The alleged massacre of 1641." In no other country of the

world, perhaps, would it be necessary to discuss the events of nearly two hundred and fifty years ago as bearing upon contemporary politics. But the opponents of the Irish cause, for want of better material, have had recourse to the monstrous fictions of Sir John Temple, and have argued that Home Rule would lead to the massacre of Irish Protestants, since in an armed insurrection against maddening oppression, the Catholics of Ulster committed atrocities in the reign of Charles I. The story of the pretended massacre, resting upon the evidence of the Trinity College depositions, has been exposed by various writers as a tissue of absurdities, impossibilities, and transparent falsehoods. Edmund Burke was convinced of the fraudulent character of these depositions, and John Mitchel in his trenchant reply to Froude, entitled "The Crusade of the Period," has torn the fabrication to pieces, and made clear the vile motives that prompted the inventors of the lies. But Mr. Webb, by giving the evidence of Protestant writers exclusively, many of whom were bitterly hostile to the Irish, has amassed a body of proofs and opinions that must carry conviction to the minds of the most prejudiced. That murders were committed by the insurgents is certain; that massacres of the Catholics were perpetrated by the Protestant settlers and soldiery is not denied; but it would be impossible to induce Englishmen of common intelligence to believe, if Ireland were not concerned, that the "rebels" put 300,000 Protestants to death in Ulster at a time when there were only 200,000 Protestants in all Ireland, and only 20,000 living outside the walled towns which never fell into the hands of the Irish. Yet this is the Loyal and Patriotic version of history.

A STRIKING ADMISSION. OUR contemporary the *Dunedin Evening Star* makes an admission in relation to the education of the period that, coming from a rabid secularist, is somewhat striking. Referring to Mr. Rolleston's speech at Temuka, our contemporary delivers himself as follows:—"It is not reasonable to suppose that education can change the moral nature of mankind. In a large degree, the propensity to crime is attributable to inborn vicious inclinations, which no education, secular or religious, can ever thoroughly eradicate. Want is also a frequent parent of crime. Of itself, want is at once a provocative and a temptation, and when engrafted on a naturally vicious disposition, it becomes terrible in its effects. But in these respects New Zealand compares favourably with other countries and colonies. On this head Mr. Rolleston quoted Sir Robert Stout, who recently pointed out that there has been a steady decrease of juvenile crime since 1877. It would be pressing the argument too far to ascribe this result to educational influences; for, as Mr. Rolleston remarks, the time that our educational system has been in operation is not sufficient to afford a fair test of its results in this direction. And after all, the chief responsibility for the conduct of our youths rests with their parents. Only judicious parental control and teaching, and, it may be added, example, can possibly direct the young into the right grooves of life. It is idle to charge the school with blame, for home influences are ever the strongest and most enduring, so that it may be said of a man that he is what nature and his parents have made him. That crime has of late years taken a new direction is an indisputable fact. Crimes of violence are more rare, and offences requiring skill and a certain amount of education are more frequent. If the criminal records are examined it will be found that the number of offenders who can read and write is greatly on the increase. It could not be otherwise now that almost all read and write. But these things prove nothing as against education. They only show that the people of the present generation are less brutal and better educated than their predecessors, and so far education may be credited with the diminution of brutality." But at least, let us be thankful for small mercies. It is something after all that your criminal should know how to commit his crime genteelly, and like a gentleman.

WE may, however, question this assertion that A DIFFERENCE brutal crime becomes less as education advances. OF OPINION. At all events, a good deal depends on the meaning given to the epithet. Here, for example, is what experience, supported by official returns, tells us concerning the effect of education in altering the nature of crime in France:—"Les crimes nés de la violence, . . . font place aux crimes honteux et bas. Chez nous, on remarque moins d'assassinats et meurtres, moins de viols sur adultes, mais les infanticides et les viols sur les filles mineures, mais les avortements sont devenus extrêmement nombreux." (*Revue du Monde Catholique*, August, 1836.) It appears to us that the crimes here described as replacing the more violent kind are infinitely more brutal. But that, of course, is a matter of opinion.

WHEN a learned and wise professor dons the cap and bells, and takes up his place among the wearers of BROWN PLAYS of the motley, the occasion is a festive one indeed. THE FOOL. "Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles" become invested with an authority that advances them to a most exalted position, and broad jokes may claim a consideration that under less favourable circumstances would be accorded to keen and refined wit alone. A very broad joke was that in which Professor M. J. Brown, under the auspices of certain Caledonian friends, and no doubt inspired by the spirit of their particular folly, classed the Irish settlers in America with the Chinese, the Negroes, and the Mormons and attributed to their presence an imminent danger to the Republic. For, said our festive Professor, in substance, the Irish are a "Theocracy," and as such form a standing menace to popular institutions. But are not your professors and learned men privileged in their efforts to prove themselves original? Have we not before us, for example, the case of that man of science in Pickwick, who, taking Mr. Samuel Weller's lantern for a celestial phenomenon, and receiving in return for his erudite curiosity a light blow from Mr. Samuel Weller's fist, retired to his apartment rejoicing in the conviction that he had made a most important discovery in electricity? Professor Brown has evidently also been poking his nose into quarters where his frame of mind did not qualify him to pry, and returns fully equipped to minister to the bigotry and prejudice of his Caledonian friends, by the nonsense of his conclusions. The word "Theocracy" is undoubtedly a fine word, and most worthy to be pronounced even by any eminent professor, but it might, perhaps, add to any professor's reputation to use words when, at least, he is addressing ordinary people, in their plain sense, and not to seek for admiration by an attempt to mystify his audience. Professor Brown, if he known anything at all, and verily his qualifications and vast funds of erudition, like those of Oliver Goldsmith's venerable pundit, are a marvel to simple men, knows that the influence of the Catholic Church over her dauful children is not at all that of a theocracy properly so-called, and that she makes no pretensions to wield such an influence. But perhaps the Professor, in addressing Caledonians, thought he could the more readily catch their sympathies by making use of a word that should naturally be held in horror among themselves. For when the Kirk assumed somewhat of the nature of a theocracy, we know what was the condition of Scotland. How enlightenment and learning bid fair to perish there, and oppression and fierce persecution were the order of the day. The fact is, moreover, that instead of any danger's accruing to the Republic of the United States from the existence there of a large Irish population in faithful communion with the See of Rome, or as a "Theocracy" if the authority of Professor Brown makes the word more desirable for use, the very life of the Republic depends upon their presence and the fidelity observed by them towards their religion. This is manifest, for example, by the fact that out of eleven thousand births which, in a recent year, took place in the city of Boston, seven thousand were those of the children of the Catholic inhabitants. Into the considerations connected with this matter, nevertheless, it is not advisable that we should enter very closely. It is sufficient that we should suggest them to the initiated and those who can prudently reflect upon them. But surely the first of all popular institutions is the population itself, and if that cannot be maintained without the aid of a "Theocracy," then let the "Theocracy" be duly honoured. The truth is, however, that when a learned Professor borrows the motley and the cap and bells, and so fits himself to delight an audience delighting in broad jokes, he seems also under the necessity of borrowing the jokes in question. That old, stale, accusation of the menace against popular institutions formed by the Irish settlers in the United States is so utterly threadbare by this time that it should shame any man with a second idea in his head to repeat it, and it has not now and never had the shadow of a practical proof on which to rest. Irish Catholics took part, in a large degree, in obtaining the independence of the United States; they have had a full share in building up all the popular institutions of the Republic, and their aid in sustaining those institutions is in nothing less steadfast or less valuable than that of their fellow-citizens. Our learned Professor's broad joke, after all is a piece of vulgar claptrap, suited only to a vulgar and bigoted audience. But no doubt he understood those with whom he had to deal.