

rate, below which members shall not work. Nor can the enforcement of this minimum rate be said to be in any sense arbitrary. As a strict matter of fact it is as much fixed by the employer as by the union.

The latest demonstration made by the French Government in hostility to religion was an attempt to interfere with the celebration at Poitiers of the centenary of St. Radegonde on August 14th. The police, acting under strict orders, did their best to prevent the people from taking part in the ceremonies, but without any very remarkable success. The attempt, however, shows what the disposition of the authorities who preside over the fortunes of the Republic really is. How long must Catholic France endure their rule, or what will be the nature of its termination?

THE report that Mr. Chamberlain proceeds to the North of Ireland to promote the cause of Union among the Orangemen speaks bodefully for the fortunes of the Liberal-Unionists. Things must, indeed, have fallen very low with them when their champion finds it necessary to appeal to religious bigotry on such a well-used field. The time honoured trick, however, can hardly now prove of much avail, and the resort to it must only serve to give additional encouragement to the Nationalists by the weakness it betrays. In the commotion, nevertheless, that will probably ensue, some lives may be lost, for which the unhappy Joe will be accountable. Let us not forget the sad coincidence of the sudden death of poor Lord Iddesleigh, arising from agitation—and which could not fail to remind us of the nun who died from a somewhat similar cause during his ill-omened visit to Ulster—also undertaken in the cause of Unionism.

ONE of the most painful, if it be also one of the most ludicrous, incidents that have taken place in connection with the dynamite scare has been the arrest and imprisonment of Mademoiselle Drouin at Cowes. The unfortunate lady, who was suffering from ill health, had been recommended to pay a visit to the Isle of Wight, as well for the effects of the sea passage as for the change of climate. She was told, she says, that she would find the place a Paradise, but she pathetically adds, that so far she found it only a Purgatory. The lady, who is the daughter of a late professor in the Fine Art School at Rouen, and who seems to have inherited artistic tastes, unfortunately carried with her a bag containing a small quantity of clay to be used in modelling. This substance to the official eye assumed the appearance of dynamite, and led to the incarceration of its owner. After a vexatious inquiry and an imprisonment of three days, the unhappy lady was discharged, but without compensation or apology. It is needless to say that the affair has created some sensation in France, and more especially at Rouen, where Mlle. Drouin is well known. A moral may be drawn, meantime, that the English Government should free the official mind from all fear of dynamite by relinquishing the unjust struggle that afflicts all who are engaged on the wrong side with an evil conscience.

GENERAL DE SONIS, who, together with General Charette, led the Pontifical Zouaves at the Battle of Patay in 1870, losing a leg in the fight, died on August 15th. The General was as remarkable for the consistent and fervent piety that characterised his life as a Catholic, as he was for bravery in his career as a soldier. Before the Franco-German war took place, De Sonis had distinguished himself in the Italian campaign.

THE outbreak of cholera in Sicily has been accompanied by a display of the extraordinary popular superstition as to the disease's being the work of poisoners. In some instances even the Sisters of Mercy who went to attend on the sufferers were violently driven away under the prevailing suspicion, the patients themselves taking part in the rough treatment given to them. At a place called Leonforte a serious conflict took place between the peasants and a body of gendarmes, who were attacked—as being engaged in the nefarious spread of the pestilence. The cholera has also been heavy in the neighbourhood of Rome, and some cases have occurred in the city. Sanitary measures were adopted for its prevention.

IT seems adding insult to injury that the Russian papers should make light of Lord Salisbury's satisfaction at the settlement of the Afghan frontier question. The *Novoe Vremya*, a semi-official organ at St. Petersburg, commenting on his Lordship's recent speech at the London Mansion House, where he professed himself as much pleased at the settlement alluded to, as well as extremely confident with respect to the preservation of European peace, declares that he is easily contented. And, as we know that Russia gained all the advantage, and obtained almost everything she had originally demanded, the truth of the declaration is manifest. But, nevertheless, it comes from a sinister quarter. The *Novoe Vremya* further avows that Lord Salisbury's views as to peace are very doubtful. Peace, it affirms, is altogether due to the disinclination of the Emperor of Germany to witness a revival of war. But, it adds, preparations are being busily made for what most likely will occur when the Emperor is no longer present to hinder it, and we must remember that his

Majesty is advanced in his 91st year. Prince Bismarck, says this newspaper, knows that the consolidation of the German Empire depends on the weakening of those powers to whose interest such a measure would be opposed. He relied on the friendship of Russia for Germany, and the lasting inferiority of the military power of France, but both these points of reliance have failed him, and now he must look for some other support. The *Novoe Vremya* thinks the result will not be in accordance with Lord Salisbury's peaceful predictions.

THE Coercion Act has been brought into complete ridicule by the appearance in court of Mr. T. D. Sullivan, when summoned for publishing in the *Nation* reports of the suppressed branches of the League, in his Lord Mayor's robes, and attended by the aldermen. Even the majesty of British law gave way before such an apparition and assumed a very shame-faced and insignificant position. We can well fancy that the scene in court was a very remarkable one, and quite unique in the history of prosecutions. As a matter of course the case was dismissed, and it is evident from the wailing of the anti-national Press that the Government's notice of appeal was a mere empty ceremony which was intended to go no further. The Press referred to call upon the executive to act with vigour, but as their doing so would entail proceedings which they dare not employ in view of the aroused attention of the English public, and due deference being paid to the signs of the times given by the recent bye-elections, the voice of the charmer is likely to find the adder's ears in their traditional state of deafness. The League, it seems, goes merrily on as usual in all its suppressed branches and nothing can be done to prevent it, with the exception of the complaints that are made of the extreme impropriety of its action so far as they go. Law and order are quite outraged because a becoming respect is not shown to the requirements of Mr. Balfour—who, by the way bids fair to prove immediately even a more futile and ludicrous object than any of his predecessors, which is saying a great deal. Coercion in all probability will be the speedy destruction of the Ministry. Played with and used merely as an idle threat, or a bug-a-boo to frighten children, it overwhelms them with derision, but used in earnest it would cause enormities which would swamp them in detestation and reproach. We may well believe Lord Rosebery, who, speaking at Ipswich, is reported as saying in this connection that the confidence of the British people in them is being rapidly forfeited.

THE Government has now fallen in with a jewel, and the very broth-of-a-boy above all others whom they wanted. We refer to one Mr. Coleman, who has come forward to confirm all that the *Times* has been engaged for many months in publishing with relation to Parnellism and crime, with something more, if possible, thrown in by way of a make-weight. Mr. Coleman's antecedents might, perhaps, be found fault with by over particular people, for, in the course of his brilliant career, he has been a convicted thief and a deserter from the army, and he still remains a drunkard. But what of that? *In vino veritas*, and Mr. Coleman in his cups may be a sufficiently reliable person. He has only to swear away the lives or reputations of inconvenient Irish agitators, and the least grain of truth in the world should suffice for that. Indeed, there are grounds for asserting that it can be done without any truth at all. There will, moreover, be the additional advantage that Mr. Coleman, when he has sworn all he is wanted to swear, can be shut up in gaol, as at least a deserter, so that nobody can shoot him, and so that he might even be produced again to swear if he were wanted on some future day. The particular value of Mr. Coleman's evidence, meantime, is that it seems to compromise Mr. Dillon, who, he declares, by his denunciation of land-grabbers recently caused a fatal moonlight outrage in Clare. This was a vision which, possibly, Mr. Coleman saw in the sparkling glass, but *in vino veritas*, as we have said, and who can say, if Mr. Coleman swears it, that it is not true? It is to be hoped that Mr. Coleman will not prove too strong a morsel to be digested in the maw of the Salisbury Ministry, for he appears to be a *trouvaille* of a most inestimable nature, and one most consistent with the tactics that have hitherto been employed. If forgery be creditable in the columns of the London *Times*, why should not desertion, thieving, and drunkenness be becoming in the person of Mr. Coleman?

Mr. F. W. Lake, Moray Place, Dunedin, is ready to execute, on the most satisfactory terms, all commissions in connection with the tinsmith's, plumber's and gaudier's trade. All articles belonging to the business are also constantly in stock. Mr. Lake's water tanks are particularly recommended.

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Professor Richard A. Proctor, the eminent English astronomer, has decided to become an American citizen. He has purchased a tract of land at Orange Lake, Fla., and is erecting a cosy cottage. Professor Proctor was born in 1837.