

half-and-half that might prove more wholesome. If Mr. Begg ever recovers from his dazed condition, gets the buzzing out of his brains, and, first of all, re-habilitates the pristine elders of the Kirk, whose memory he has so grossly aspersed, perhaps he may consider the matter favourably. There is decidedly room for improvement in his condition, and it seems as likely to come from the Glory Hole as from anywhere else.

The corruption of the age seems to be turning the minds of thoughtful men towards the great remedies that of old purified the world and which still in a considerable degree maintain it pure:—The following passage from *Good Words*, a well-known Protestant periodical, is significant of this:—"We need a new Mariolatry, and voices again to cry to a sensual age, Hail Mary! for it will mean, when reason uses it, Hail Modesty! Hail Purity! Hail watchful Motherhood! Hail patient, heroic endurance! Of this worship we are sadly deficient, who interest ourselves in the temple, and who almost think that lewdness is not lewd when 'swathed' in sentimental French."

Among the interesting events of the late session of the Imperial Parliament was the reappearance in the House of that fine old gentleman the O'Gorman Mahon who was first elected a member fifty-seven years ago. Warm greetings were bestowed on the veteran as he entered, not only by the leaders of the Opposition to which he belongs, but also by Mr. Smith and Mr. Balfour, chiefs of the Government party.

AMONG the scenes that characterised the close of the late session of the House of Commons, was the suspension of Mr. Graham, Member for Lanarkshire, for a slighting reference made by him to the House of Lords, and for which he declared his conscience would not allow him to apologise. At the same sitting Mr. Harrington also was suspended for refusing to obey the Speaker, who told him to resume his seat, during a debate in which he had taken a rather warm part: He replied passionately: "I will not resume my seat. You have been watching to pounce upon me ever since I rose. I claim my right to speak." He was then named, and Mr. Smith moved for his suspension, eliciting from the Parnellites ironical laughter, and cries of "Hear the bookseller," in allusion to Mr. Smith's proprietorship of the railway bookstalls. And so the fun went on.

THE report of the Committee of Council on Education for 1886-7 bears strong testimony to the services rendered by Catholic schools in England. While free education is given in these schools to a number of children which equals that of the children so educated in all the other schools in the country combined—their expenditure is the lowest, and, at the same time, their percentage of passes stands highest, amounting to 88.06. This is a state of things that Catholics may well rejoice in, and which must put the opponents of their schools to shame.

A CURIOUS petition is that of those Maoris who pray that Parliament will pardon certain members of their tribes who have lately committed murder on suspicion of witchcraft. When we recollect, nevertheless, how comparatively short a period has elapsed since the laws of Great Britain sanctioned the punishment of witches, we must admit that after all there is no very great extravagance in the opinion put forward by our less civilised neighbours to the effect that there is nothing in the code of New Zealand to provide for the punishment of those who put to death persons guilty of the practice alluded to. The persecution of the witches must remain as a blot on the founders of British society as it exists to-day, and on the memory of some who are boasted of as having been very far in advance, indeed, of anyone to be found among the Maoris.

ONE of the greatest contemplated works of the period, that is the Manchester ship canal may now be looked upon as fairly set on foot. At a meeting of the company held on August 29, it was announced that the difficulties connected with capital, and which, if not surmounted by the 6th August must have resulted in a lapse of the powers granted by Acts of Parliament, had been obviated through the kindness of Messrs. Baring Brothers and N. M. Rothschild. The contract of Mr. T. M. Walker had been accepted for the completion of the canal in four years from the commencement of the works at a cost of £5,750,000. No extraordinary difficulties in carrying out the work were expected to arise.

THE returns of the Intermediate Examinations for the year in Ireland give, as usual, a good record of the Catholic schools, by which fifty-eight per cent. of the money prizes were taken. The pupils of the Jesuits and of the Christian Brothers particularly distinguished themselves—the latter carrying off especially all the medals given in Celtic. The pupils of the nuns' schools did not present themselves in any considerable numbers for examination. Irish parents, for the most part, not holding advanced views on the education of women,

MR. GLADSTONE, in proposing the health of the Queen at a jubilee treat recently given by him to all the parishioners of Hawarden of the same age as her Majesty and upwards, testified warmly to her Majesty's personal character, as well as to the great benefits derived by the country from the wholesome and powerful influence she exercised. Among the rest he stated as the result of knowledge which he had had exceptional means of gaining that the Royal assent had been given by her to the great Liberal Bills passed during her reign, not grudgingly, or as a duty whose performance she was unable to avoid, but willingly and in such a manner as made her the prime benefactor of the country. He added that the constitution had been observed by the Queen in a manner more perfect than had ever been known in the time of any other Sovereign.—And no doubt Mr. Gladstone while he spoke cherished the reasonable hope that he might live to witness the consent of her Majesty given with equal willingness to the greatest of all the Liberal measures of the century—the emancipation of Ireland. The Queen by letting her goodwill in this respect be known would indeed secure on the part of the Irish people the prayers that Mr. Gladstone claimed as her due from all her subjects, and to which he heartily recommended her. And, even although the celebration of her Majesty's jubilee may have been postponed by the Irish people for a year or two, it need be none the less ardent when at length it takes place.

It appears that, according to the old saying, there is method in the madness of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Mr. Balfour, as credibly reported, owes his devotion to the cause of the Irish landlords to the fact that he himself sails in the same boat with them, and is also an evictor, and a consumer of the fruit of other men's toil. On his estates in Scotland, however, it is not the small tenant at will who has suffered, but men of a higher class, and whose substance was worthy of consumption in whatever manner it might be obtained. In fifteen years Mr. Balfour managed to become the better by a sum of £50,000, being the capital of scientific agriculturists who were so unskilled in the ways of the crafty, unscrupulous, landlord as to expend it on his land. As a matter of course, then, the right honourable gentleman has a soft place in his heart for his Irish brothers, now more or less in misfortune, and naturally looks upon coercion as the heaven-sent discipline against which it is mortal sin to complain. There is even some reason to suppose that Mr. Balfour would also willingly see the introduction of the machine gun, so strong is that touch of nature that makes the whole world kin—the touch of a common interest, that is, which unites him to the evictors of Ireland.

It is stated in the French Press that the reports made to the Holy Father by Mgr. Persico of the religious condition of Ireland will affect the establishment of diplomatic relations between His Holiness and the English Government: It is further stated that his Excellency's report will quite counteract the mischievous attempts made to misrepresent the Irish priesthood and people, his Excellency being delighted with all he has seen of a country abounding not only in patriotism, but in religious zeal, fidelity to Rome, and the practice of all good works. The Irish priests as well as their people have secured his highest admiration, and his personal experience has fully convinced him as to the false witness borne at Rome by certain Englishmen, who even accused the Irish priests of being members of secret societies. All this is rumoured in France and it would seem with much appearance of truth.

EVANGELICALISM, as a religious creed, appears to be on its last legs in Europe generally. The *Glasgow Mail* tells us, for example, of the Church of Calvin at Geneva that it has no longer a confession of faith or standards of any kind, and that the people select their own favourite preacher and, becoming what our contemporary calls "church tramps," follow him about from church to church—no pastor having any fixed pulpit any more than a fixed creed. "Many of the pastors," says the *Mail*, "are far from being orthodox, and so it happens that from the same pulpit the most contradictory doctrines are promulgated. The hearers do not know what to believe, and many of them end in believing nothing." Mr. Spurgeon, meantime, utters a bitter complaint concerning the state of the Evangelical sects in England. Some ministers, he says, are making infidels. The efficacy of prayer is denied by them, the inspiration of Holy Writ is denied. "It is a common thing," says Mr. Spurgeon, "to hear working-men excuse their wickedness by the statement that there is no hell—'the parson says so.' Meeting houses are empty. The places which the Gospel filled the new nonsense has emptied." But this is exactly the state of things that Catholic theologians foretold as to happen when the Reformation was inaugurated, and from which prediction their successors have never since departed. Matters will go from bad to worse—though, perhaps, with some spasmodic reaction now and then, and the world which has renounced the Church of God sooner or later must become completely atheistic.

WE are a great people, sirs, a very great people, a people whose grasp is on the windpipe of the reputable world, so that for fear of