

it, was particularly significant. There the various trades and labour organisations were brought into contact with one another, and had the opportunity of personally judging of one another's qualifications and becoming impressed by mutual confidence and respect. There was among these men, moreover, no wild suggestion of anarchic notions, no visionary incentives to form a Utopia based on Socialistic theories, nor any of the fads and fancies that we hear occasionally propounded in our own colonies. Declarations of contentment with and adherence to their own excellent Constitution and of a desire to see all such abuses as might exist amended in accordance with its provisions were what was heard from them. All their conduct was that of moderate, sensible, men, on whom a nation might well depend with confidence for its future. It is to these men, therefore, we look to give a pattern to the world, and to discover and insist upon the remedy for every abuse that affects the working-man's position. The working-man of America who repudiates all sympathy with the anarchic masses of Continental Europe and who is emancipated from the dependent, timorous, spirit of the working-man of Great Britain is the hope of the modern world, and must prove the champion to overthrow the sweating system and every other evil of the kind.

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION.

We should now know a good deal more about the Westminster Confession than we ever knew before. It has been discussed in a most open, not to say a loud and violent way, by the Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland, and, so many learned and

eminent divines having been engaged in discussing it within our hearing, it would be natural to conclude that extreme stupidity alone could prevent any man's arriving at right conclusions. Are we, therefore, in a position to pronounce a well-informed and settled opinion on the Westminster Confession, such as should fill the mind of a disciple who had sat attentively at the feet of a whole assembly of learned and sapient Gamaliels. We acknowledge that such is not the case, and that we are in a complete maze, and, so to speak, do not know whether we are standing on our head or our heels in the matter. Are we, for example, to receive as an authority the light and festive Mr. Will, who takes Topsy for his pattern, and has set out from the Confession, as from the State of Kentucky, with large margins to fill up, not with black flesh and bone of course, but with spiritual understanding, and expansion in righteousness. "I've specks I've growed," pleasantly observes Mr. Will, in affirming his right to depart, always in the straight direction, from the Confession of Faith, he signed thirty-five years ago. Don't bother me, replies Diomedes to old Nestor's boastful prating. We're ten times better men than ever our fathers were. Could the fathers of the Kirk return, they must recognise in the Rev. Mr. Will a man of many times their stature. Shall we then take the light-hearted, pleasant-tongued, highly-expanded Mr. Will for our teacher, or must we return into the past and take up our position behind, let us say, the conservative and archaic, if not completely fossil, Mr. A. C. Begg? Mr. Begg expand or depart from the measure of the elders. He would burst first, and the Kirk would be spattered all over with *disjecta membra* breathing indignantly the odour of outraged sanctity. Mr. A. C. Begg is ready to go back in spirit and sit in condemnation once more on that Hemphill, whose case, as Dr. Dunlop, Professor of Theology, informs us, was decisive over one hundred and fifty years ago as to the impossibility of salvation for the heathen, or on that of one Professor Simpson, who, some years before, was pronounced a heretic for holding that all infants dying in their infancy might be saved. Mr. Begg and the fathers are at one. No State of "Kintuck" for him, no spiritual expansion, no growth in anything, no salvation for the heathen, but perdition without stint or modification for unelect babies. Verily the fathers of the Kirk taught Christian doctrines with a vengeance and quite as vengefully do those who walk in the fathers' steps maintain them. On the whole, then, perhaps it is just as well to remain in some degree of confusion with regard to the Westminster Confession. Thoroughly to understand it and enter into its spirit would hardly have an improving influence on the Christian mind. Therefore, illogical as their position may be, let us congratulate those members of the Synod who have followed with Mr. Will and "growed" pleasantly and with jollity in broader mould—leaving to their less fortunate brethren a hide-bound condition that is grim and relentless. The lesson we have derived from the discussion of the Synod bears on the impossibility for falsehood to stand the test of time or to prove of lasting influence.—"For if this counsel or this work," says Gamaliel, "be of men, it will come to nought."

A COMICAL TRIBUNAL. THE opening of the Parnell Commission on Monday September 17, was not attended by any very brilliant promise of success on the part of the *Times*.

In fact, if in this case also the old rule holds good that coming events cast their shadows before, the defeat of the *Times* might have been confidently predicted. The Judges, or at least Sir James Hannen, the President of the Commission, showed a disposition to act with impartiality, and did not make any effort to favour the *Times* or to fall in with arrangements to suit its con-

venience. In the first place Sir James defined the limit of the Commission as extending only to those charges and allegations made in the action taken by Mr. O'Donnell, and to the persons so accused. He further decided that it devolved upon the *Times* to tender such evidence as it might have in support of the charges made. Where the *Times*, however, showed the particular weakness of its case, was in the quibbling replies of Mr. Graham its Counsel, to the questioning of the Judge regarding the substantiation of the charges. This occurred on the reading by Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Parnell's Counsel, of passages from "Parnellism and Crime," showing the indefinite nature of the charges made, and his demand that plain language instead of insinuations should be employed. This demand was met by Mr. Graham with an objection against making the *Times* parties to the suit. "You are here," said Sir James Hannen, "representing the defendants in the action. Do you propose to substantiate any charges?" "We propose to give you all the evidence we can," was the evasive reply. "Do you propose to substantiate any charges," again asked Sir James Hannen. "We will give you evidence, answered Mr. Graham, "which will tend to substantiate the charges." On further examination the Counsel could not tell what charges he referred to, nor the particular persons against whom charges were or could be made. All he was able to do in the matter was to accuse the organisation and to point out that certain persons were mentioned in "Parnellism and Crime." Sir James Hannen, however, would not consent to remain content with this, but gave it as his final opinion that particulars of charges should be given, adding that, if the *Times* did not give these particulars, it would be the duty of the Court to collect them for themselves. Never before, in fact, has such a case come before a tribunal, and never has a tribunal been so constituted or so required to conduct a trial. The plaintiff has no case, cannot define in what it is that he has been ill-used.—The judge, who is judge and jury, prosecutor and detective, all combined, is required to find out the offence that had been committed, if offence there has been:—to detect the criminal who has committed it if such a criminal has any existence, and then to arraign him and pronounce his guilt. The whole affair seems a mockery not only of justice but of common sense, of gravity, of all that is respectable, and, among the wonders of the age, hardly a greater one can be found than that connected with the sanction by Parliament of such a farce.

Colonial Notes.

AN event particularly interesting to invalids has occurred at Ashfield in New South Wales. It must be especially comforting to those persons who need the constant attendance of a doctor. It seems that for some years a gentleman, known as Dr. Edward Drummond, had been practising in the locality. Dr. Drummond had a large clientele to whom he had evidently given much satisfaction, for he had amassed a considerable fortune. It turns out, however, that Dr. Drummond was not himself at all but quite another sort of a person, who had stolen the diplomas of the genuine Dr. Drummond, and turned medical man in his place. The Doctor has now disappeared, taking with him, besides his own money amounting to several thousand pounds, a sum of £6000 belonging to his wife, whom he has left behind, and whom he had also taken in, she being a most estimable and respectable lady. It would be interesting, meantime, to receive the testimony of Dr. Drummond's late patients as to the effects of the medicines ordered by him, and which we may suppose at best to have been rather harmless than efficacious. Will the confidence of invalids at Ashfield continue firm towards bread-pills?

The humanity of the secular system has just had an illustration at Parramatta where certain pupils of one of the Government schools have inflicted serious and most probably fatal injuries on a little boy whom they accused of throwing a stone at them. Their treatment of the child was barbarous in the extreme, and amounted to positive torture. Only the most degraded and cruel minds could have suggested it. But the absence of moral training makes everything possible among the rising generation.

His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop is expected to return to Sydney by the R.M.S. *Cuzco*. His Eminence will bring out with him a large reinforcement of priests and Sisters of Mercy for the missions of the diocese.

By the death of Mr. Robert Butcher, Sydney has lost one of her most respected citizens, and the Catholic community a deservedly esteemed member. Mr. Butcher, who was a native of Lancashire, England, came to the colony some thirty or thirty-five years ago, and by his energy, perseverance, and uprightness, raised himself speedily to a prominent position, which he sustained with honour. His loss is greatly regretted. Much uncausness also prevails as to the possible results of a severe attack of illness from which the Right Hon. William Bede Dalley is suffering.

The Rev. Father Kavanagh O.P., in a lecture delivered by him the other evening on Father Tom Burke took occasion, in alluding to Father Tom's defence of his country in America, to claim for the priesthood their full right to take part as citizens in politics. In referring to the attitude of Australia towards the Irish cause, the rev. lecturer gave it as the results of his personal experience, that Mr. Parnell, whose vindication of his character he looked upon as certain,