

religion. There is nothing which it is harder for a man who has a contempt for it to hide than is that contempt. There is nothing which it is easier for a man to convey to those minds subjected to his influence than his own feelings of indifference on this great subject. Those parents, then, who desire to bring up their children as Christians must be careful to commit them only to Christian teachers, and to Christian teachers not bound by the rules of godless schools to disassemble their Christianity, but so placed as to show openly in their lives what are their hopes and their belief.

**MR. PARNELL**, it appears, has gone to the United States, and has been accorded a hearty reception there by his fellow-countrymen. The reason of his tour is stated to be that he may appeal for aid for the sufferers from want in Ireland. This is, indeed, a much more rational reason than would be afforded by any intention of evoking sympathy in America for any political movement in Ireland, and which we confess we should regard with anything rather than a favourable eye. Some years ago when Mr. Froude went over to excuse the Irish policy of England to the Americans the English Press condemned his action strongly; but a much stronger feeling of indignation would be excited were the object of Mr. Parnell's visit held to be that of stirring up rancour abroad. It would seem like an appeal for the intervention of foreigners in the internal policy of the country that it would be difficult to justify; and it might most powerfully be availed of for the purpose of persuading the English masses of the irreconcilable hostility of the Irish—means much resorted to for the support and continuance of a harsh and unjust Government. It would retard the attainment of true liberty and consequent prosperity in Ireland. But on the other hand we should not have thought there would have been any need for Mr. Parnell to go to America in order to solicit relief for the famine-stricken at home; the Irish in America, we have every cause to believe, are already extremely anxious to contribute towards the aid of their suffering fellow-countrymen, and hardly any more can be done than has already been done to awaken their sympathies—never very dull in such a case as this. The London *Times*, speaking of the distress in question well remarks: "On Ireland itself the first shock of the burden of relief must fall. Irishmen will be expected to help Irishmen; not that Ireland and England as such know any difference of obligation to benevolence, but because a sufferer's neighbours should set the precedent of assisting him. Irishmen are Irishmen's nearest neighbours in the same sense that Lancashire men are the nearest neighbours of Lancashire men. When the cotton famine starved the operatives of Lancashire, Lancashire stood foremost in bearing the brunt." We, however, give to the word Ireland its broadest signification, and include under it the Irish people scattered throughout the world. It is in their power to do a great deal to save their kindred from starvation, and undoubtedly it is their bounden duty to do all that lies in their power for such a purpose. But to come to a point of the question that most nearly concerns us here in New Zealand. The season is advancing, and we are informed that the distress is becoming more aggravated, while as yet nothing of the least importance has been done by us in helping towards its relief. It is not becoming of us to sit quietly looking on with buttoned pockets, whether or not comforting ourselves with the assurance that Irishmen in America are exerting themselves with more or less success to lighten the evil. They can do much, perhaps, but still much will remain to be done. It is not a town, or a district, or a province even, that is in destitution, but an entire nation. However much there may be done towards its relief, there will be a huge amount of suffering to be borne without alleviation. And the time is going on; unless some active steps be at once taken here, it will be too late, and the Irish of New Zealand must for ever hereafter bear the conscience, and sustain the reputation of these who have signalled themselves by holding aloof, when throughout the whole world their fellow-countrymen were everywhere extending a helping hand towards their famine-stricken kinsmen at home.

**CREMATION.** THE longer we live the more we learn. Up to this we had had no notion in the world that it ever by any chance occurred to an Anglican clergyman officiating at a grave, in the "sure and certain hope" which has occasioned so much discussion, and caused so much embarrassment, that he was engaged in making a deposit of manure. A like idea had indeed been mooted. It had occurred to at least one economical mind that the bodies of the dead might be utilised, but the mind in question was that of an infidel writer, and from such quarters we know anything may be expected. Molescott, in a word, had written as follows in 1852: "We may confidently predict that the need of man, which is the supreme reason of rights, and the most sacred source of customs, will one day make us look on cemeteries with the same eye with which we now look on a peasant burying his dollars in the ground instead of putting out at interest, in some form or other, his hard-earned money." This, it will be seen, is a remarkable passage, not only

justifying much that might be accounted unjustifiable by less enlightened intellects, but hinting at new and profitable industries and pursuits. It, however, as we said, comes from a quarter whence it might rationally have been expected. The matter which astonishes us is to find an Anglican dignitary seeming to agree with some such sentiments, and introducing into the consideration of death and burial notions that might furnish the material for lines even stranger and more whimsical than any already to be found in the many queer epitaphs to be met with in English churchyards. To come to the point, then, we clip the following from a contemporary:—"As to cremation, the Bishop of Manchester, England, said in his address at the Social Science Congress, that, though himself greatly preferring burial, which, among other advantages, restores to the earth her fertility, he regarded cremation as a system which might ultimately have to be adopted, and repudiated the notion that 'any Christian doctrine could be affected by the method in which this mortal body is disposed of.'" The bishop, indeed, differs from the writer whose prediction we have quoted, inasmuch as he regards the cemeteries as the great emporiums whence fertility is dispensed to the surrounding country rather than as the hidden treasuries containing so much valuable material utilised. We leave His Lordship, however to regard the bodies of his flock in a manner that people of delicate sensibilities might, perhaps, think even more objectionable than the "boney light" that excited so much horror in the mind of one of Dickens's heroines. Neither shall we enter upon a theological discussion in order to determine whether the bishop is unassailable in his assertion that no doctrine of Christianity can possibly be affected by the manner in which the body is, after death, disposed of. We shall confine ourselves to a notice of some of the authorities by which inhumation and cremation are respectively supported, and of at least one objection that may be brought against the proposal to reduce the dead body at once to ashes. Burial, then, was the method by which corpses were disposed of amongst the Jews. To be deprived of it was considered a disgrace. "Go," said Jehu of Jezabel, "and see after that cursed woman, and bury her: because she is a king's daughter." But when they went to do as he ordered they found her eaten by the dogs. "And coming back, they told him. And Jehu said: It is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elias, the Thesbite, saying: In the field of Jezabel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezabel. And the flesh of Jezabel shall be as dung upon the face of the earth in the field of Jezabel, so that they who pass by shall say: Is this that same Jezabel?" We may, however, remark *en passant* that the Bishop of Manchester evidently has scripture for his idea concerning the fertility of the soil. Again Isaias pronounces the deprivation of burial a heavy curse upon the King of Babylon. "All the kings of the nations, all of them, lie in glory; every one in his own sepulchre; but thou art cast out of thy grave, like to an abominable branch; like the raiment of the slain thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit. As a carcase that is trodden under feet, thou shalt not be joined with them in burial." The early Christians also made use of burial. It was attempted to show that they did so from superstitious motives but from this they were defended. St. Jerome mentions burial as usual in his time, and St. Ambrose speaks of it as general. On the other hand its opponents have been most suspicious men. Julian the Apostate advocated cremation as adverse to Christianity. The men of the French Revolution were loud as to its benefits, and Garibaldi is said to have appointed it to be applied to his own body. But apart from all other considerations, and there are many that may be opposed to it, cremation would dangerously affect the concealment of crime. This was made clear by Signor Burci, an Italian senator, speaking on the subject in '73, and with his argument we shall conclude. "Cremation," he said, "from the juridical point of view, would not be advisable, for it is not always sure, as soon as a man dies, that his remains may not be a necessary or a useful factor for the ends of justice. It often happens that bodies buried for one or more years even have been dug up and the traces of a crime detected in them. And here I may be allowed to relate a fact well known to me. A certain doctor had occasion to speak to a mayor of a town in France, who was at the moment watching the translation of some human bones from one cemetery to another. While speaking to him, he noticed a skull which was unearthed. He exclaimed directly, 'Why, that man has had a severe blow on the head!' As in France the bodies in cemeteries are all numbered, it was easy to refer to the books and see what cause was assigned for the death of the person in question. The statement was that this person had died of apoplexy. Suspicion thus aroused, further inquiries were instituted; and after the lapse of ten years the murderer was traced, arrested, and convicted by the aid of this circumstance." "Chance."

Is not the *Daily Times* in a tantrum over the late FAIRLY RUINED! bazaars! Their fair promoters, according to his showing, are only fit for the "stone jug," and nothing else has led to the incarceration of certain criminals, who should otherwise have adorned society, than the carry-