

New Zealand Gabel

VOL. VII.—No. 380.

DUNEDIN: FRIDAY, JULY 30, 1880.

PRICE 6D.

Current Topics

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A "MISSIONARY NATION." "Nineteenth Century England" is a well written article, and which otherwise contains many excellent points, by the Rev. W. H. Fitchett in the current number of the *Victorian Review*. But it also contains a point or two to which we take exception, and more especially do we dissent from the assertions we find in the following passage. "England . . . represents, in a degree which no other nation does, the great ideas of religious freedom and activity. By her tongue the Word of God speaks to more ears than by any other language of this many tongued earth. She is the great missionary nation of Christendom." If the license that makes havoc of religion be understood by "religious freedom and activity," England, indeed, is its worthy representative, but in no other sense can she be said to be so. Again, if the "Word of God" be the strange, the vapid, the foolish, the cruel, imaginations of every man who chooses to entertain and utter such, it speaks most abundantly by means of the English language; otherwise there is no truth in the assertion that it is thus most fully expressed. But, finally, how it can be advanced with any pretence of justice that England has been or is, a missionary nation, we are unable to conceive. We cannot accept as a missionary nation, a nation that has done nothing towards extending Christianity amongst the peoples dependent on her. Where, for example, is, or has been, the tribe of North American Indians converted by her? They have been exterminated, not converted. The natives of the West Indian Islands have shared a like fate. The aborigines of Australia are undergoing it, and the Maori bid fair to follow in their wake. What has been the advance of Christianity in India under English rule? Dr. Döllinger told us the other day in a lecture of his published by the *Contemporary Review*. Mahometanism, he says is gaining ground there but not Christianity. Indeed he considers England particularly unfit to convert to Christianity the people in question. "Men," says he, "like Max Muller, Monier Williams, and Bishop Patteson . . . think the Christianity offered by the missionaries to the Hindoos is too strongly Western in its colouring, and takes a too specifically English form. "Nor do we find that missionary enterprise enters into the plans of Englishmen who anticipate extending their relationships with other peoples. Lord Sandon, for example, when speaking, in 1878, of the part England was about to adopt towards the nations of Asia Minor, never seems to have thought of the spread of Christianity among them. He spoke as follows, "Yes, we are coming; and, we hope, if security from foreign attack and peace and justice at home are secured to those lands, to bring in our train by the enterprise of our people, those things which our civilisation, our long peace, our just government, have brought to us—the railroad, the steam plough, the manufactories, and all the varied blessings of commerce, and all the arts and employments of peace, by which we have so greatly benefited." England, in fact, looks forward to doing exactly as she has done in the past: that is, to conferring such advantages of civilization upon the peoples subject to her as may advance her own commercial welfare and influence. This is her part in foreign lands but as a "Missionary Nation," she has no commission and has done no work.

ANOTHER passage of the Rev. W. H. Fitchett's "WHELPS" TO THE RESCUE. article which we venture to question is this: "And let us ask ourselves what would be the effect of any great national calamity—say, the spectacle of England invaded, and fighting behind her first emplacements—upon her children throughout the world? The shock of a great crisis and peril of this sort would kindle to flame the latent pride of race, the sense of a common origin and life, through all the offspring of England, and send the lion-whelps to fight beside the lioness-mother." We doubt it; we heard the other day one of our ex-Ministers giving public utterance to sentiments that seemed to express anything but loyalty to England. He spoke most approvingly of the declaration

of independence by the United States, and claimed that we might learn a useful lesson from it here. Since then he has presided at a celebration of the birth of a man into whose plans the crippling of England's power largely enters,—that is, Garibaldi who desires to wrest from her control the Island of Malta, which he includes under the name of *Italia irredenta*. Unless, then, these manifestations made by the ex-Minister to whom we allude, be merely intended to represent the eccentricities of genius, or if they have any meaning, we are warranted in concluding that his attachment to England is a mere cipher. And our ex-Minister, strange as it may seem, leads a party. We think then we are fully justified in holding it doubtful that, even under the circumstances mentioned by Mr. Fitchett, every "whelp" without exception would rush to the aid of the "lioness-mother."

STRANGE REMEDIES. A NEW and strange method of cure has discovered itself of late years to certain medical men in France. It is a very strange method indeed, for in it disease is frequently declared to be cured by means of disease. Hysteria, the nerves, and the imagination, such are the agents by which it is not denied that the most astonishing cures have been worked. Certain violent remedies, too, are said to produce salutary effects. The other day, for instance, a young lady who was in the last stage of consumption was three times immersed in the waters of an ice-cold fountain. The consequence was her sudden restitution to health, and then the doctor who had attended her said there was no doubt of her cure, but that it must be attributed to the violence of the remedy resorted to. In plain terms, such is the manner in which the Free-thinking French doctors are now accounting for the miraculous cures obtained by resort to the aid of our Lady of Lourdes; they are so many and so incontestable that it is impossible to deny them, a necessity has arisen for the device of some means to explain them, and it is thus that they are explained. Our Free-thinking friends are very ingenious in the invention of explanations and excuses that satisfy themselves; and, as for those who refuse to agree with them, they have a short way of disposing of the disagreement whenever their hand is strong enough; *à la lanterne* has ever been the motto of the sect, and we have yet to learn that it has lost its force.

SOMEbody or another said that our note, touching a recent article in the Jesuits published by the *Daily News*, was altogether wrong. We do not consider it worth while to spend much time on a reply. Carlyle's one "fatuous" person, the dunce, is hopeless to deal with. Still that we may air our good nature, by complying once more with the persistent demand of our Dogberry to be "written down an ass," we shall favour him with the following quotation from a standard Presbyterian authority:—"Clement XIV. . . . at length issued, 21st July, 1773, the celebrated bull, '*Dominus ac Redemptor Noster*,' by which, without adopting the charges made against the Society, or inquiring into the question of their justice, acting solely on the motive of 'the peace of the Church,' he suppressed the Society in all the States of Christendom." ('Chambers' Encyclopædia,' vol. V., p. 706.) If our pair body has an ounce of wit this should play the part of the "branks" towards him, at least for the moment. The translation of Latin, the slightest comprehension of anything connected with Catholic matters, or any information about the works of eminent English authors generally, we, of course, do not look for in the quarter to which we refer; we have had the most convincing proof that it would be vain to do so. Still we should have thought, prior to experience, that even the imbecility that can endure the pabulum provided there would have required some attention, at least, to the *very* known works of Presbyterian writers. It appears, however, that we were mistaken, and ignorance, therefore, is more profound and not more widely spread than we had supposed.

A DISH TO WASH. WE fancy we have somewhere or another heard someone request of us to write a treatise on the origin of evil. The task is above us; our powers are limited, and we desire modestly to abide within their boundaries. Still we should be sorry to hint that a treatise on