

without the king, who was charmed by so fine a proposition, making the least difficulty. Immediately, then, they set their hands to the task. With the revocation of the Edict of Nantes there appeared a crowd of proclamations which, each more cruel than another, followed in succession; the provinces were filled with dragoons, who were quartered at will in the Huguenot houses of all conditions, and who united torture with the destruction of which many died between the hands of these executioners. Flight was punished like obstinacy in heresy, and the galleys were filled with the most respectable and well-disposed men, as were the prisons with their wives and daughters. A great number redeemed themselves from tyranny by counterfeited abjurations; the dragoons who yesterday destroyed and tortured them, to-morrow brought them to Mass, where they made their abjuration, and confessed and communicated at once, without for the most part waiting until the next day. The greater part of the bishops lent themselves to this abomination, at which the intendants of provinces presided; each one vied as to who should the most distinguish himself. The king every minute received lists of abjurations and communions by thousands from all parts of the different dioceses. He showed them to the courtiers with a cheerfulness. He swam in these thousands of sacrileges as the effect of his piety and authority, without any one daring to testify as to what he thought of it, and every one on the contrary distinguishing himself as highly as possible by praises, applause and admiration; whilst each was pierced with grief and compassion, and the good bishops groaned with all their hearts to see the orthodox imitating against heretics what the pagan and heretical tyrants had done against the truth, the confessors and the martyrs; they wept bitterly over this immensity of sacrileges and perjuries, and all the good Catholics with them could not be comforted for the enduring and irremediable odium that such detestable means were spreading upon the true religion. The king thought himself an apostle, he fancied he was bringing back apostolic days when baptism was given to thousands at one time, and this intoxication sustained by endless eulogies in prose and in verse, in harangues and all sorts of eloquence, held his eyes hermetically sealed against the gospel, and the incomparable difference between his manner of preaching and converting, and that of Jesus Christ and His apostles. Nevertheless the time came when he could not but see and feel the sad effects of so many horrors. The revocation of the edict of Nantes, without the least pretext or any need, immediately followed by proscriptions, punishments, the galleys without distinction of age or condition, the long pillage of the dragoons authorised everywhere, tore families asunder, armed relations against relations to gain their property, and leave them to die of hunger, depopulated the kingdom, and transported our manufactures and almost all our commerce amongst our neighbours, and further away still, made their states flourish, filled their countries with new towns and dwellings, and afforded to all Europe the frightful spectacle of so vast a number of people proscribed, fugitive, naked, wandering, without any crime, seeking an asylum far away from their native land. . . . We shall soon see that to the immense interior wound which was the bitter fruit of so pernicious a council, there was joined a great war as Louvois had promised himself, and that from this year was prepared the famous league of Angsburg. . . . Innocent XI. Benedict Odescalchi, who then occupied the Holy See, was not the dupe of this action that pretended to be so religious, he only saw its sham policy and detested its sacrileges and horrors. Such then is the description of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and its attendant persecution as we have it from a Catholic nobleman who was an eye witness of it. Could even one of the persecuted Huguenots themselves have shown more contempt and horror at the treatment of his people? Meantime how splendid is the testimony we find borne against the calumny that accuses the Church of a disposition to persecute; these *dragonnades* have constantly been cast in her teeth, as her proper fruits, whereas they were loathsome to her sincere children, and detested by the Pope as sacrilege and horror.

THE *Saturday Review* in the course of an apology AN OUTSPOKEN for atheists speaks as follows:—"We may at least PHILOSOPHER. remark that some atheists have done their best to provoke and justify the feeling of antagonism. It becomes at any rate intelligible when a French atheist writer of the day blandly assures us that 'virtue and vice are the results of a current of electricity, and are natural products in just the same way as sugar and vitriol'; while a German writer of the same school, Hetwald, points out the moral of such teaching in the cynically frank avowal that the object of science is to destroy all ideals, and to show that belief in God is a fraud, that morality, equality, freedom, love, and the rights of man, are lies." But this is the glory of Freethought that every man should think exactly what it pleases him to think, and owe an account of his thought to no one. The French atheist, then, must not be called to answer for his opinion, and if he acts upon it, nobody can restrain him without incurring the odium of persecution. The German, Hetwald, too, must be allowed to carry out his theory into practice. He may teach his system, which we

have no doubt he is able to base upon grounds that will seem rational to many, and that are as rational as those upon which men less advanced than he base other systems of which we hear so much. His system has, moreover, at least the advantage of honesty. It is the true system of Freethought, that upon which it has acted on those occasions when it reigned untrammelled, and in the persons of its professors wholly walking unaided by Church-crutches, mocked a the existence of God, and set totally at defiance, although under the hypocritical banner of liberty, fraternity, equality, "morality, equality, freedom, love, and the rights of man." All this it has done now and again, notably during the Reign of Terror, and again with equal ferocity, although necessarily to a less extent, under the Commune in '71. Hetwald's system is, undoubtedly, the true issue of Freethought, and that at which it is abundantly proved that it arrives in practice whenever the opportunity offers.

A JUST COMPARISON.

EXTREMES meet, we again learn, and this time we find arrived at the point of meeting the kingdom which boasts itself the most elevated in the world, and the empire that is probably the most degraded; that is, England and Turkey. We clip the following from the telegrams via San Francisco:—"In conversation with Mr. Gosen, Abeddin Pacha, referring to the reform of Asia Minor, said: 'You know what difficulties the Government have had in Ireland, and how long it has taken to overcome them. In Asia Minor we have 16 Irelands to deal with.'" The parallel is not ill imagined, Asia Minor has been reduced to its deplorable condition by tyranny and misgovernment, and such also has been the fate of Ireland. Of the two, indeed, there is reason to believe that Ireland has been the worst used, for no other country in the world can point to such a sum of horrors as those inflicted upon her. The sword, famine, confiscation, and the cruel penal laws, all in their turn, worked havoc amongst her people, and if these are not to-day such abject wretches as we read of to be found in Asia Minor, it is to the Catholic faith they owe it. This was their sole support under their miseries, and, taught as it has been under heavy penalties, under restrictions, and even yet, to a very large extent, imperfectly because of the many impediments positive or negative cast in its way, it has preserved the Irish people markedly virtuous at home, and only failing in virtue when exposed abroad to the temptations cast in their path by Protestantism or Freethought—for Freethought is widely spread abroad, in various degrees, although as yet the name has not come into fashion, a fact of which certain pettifoggers who seek to build up for it a false reputation are anxious to take advantage. Even this year, notwithstanding the want in Ireland, we find the judges at the Summer Assizes in almost all the counties offering congratulations on the lightness of the criminal calendar.

WE last week inserted in our columns an article FALSEHOOD from the Dublin *Weekly Freeman* reflecting RE-PUBLISHED severely on the conduct of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in publishing a series of falsehoods relating to the distress in Ireland and its attendant circumstances. Since our issue appeared, owing to the anxiety of the editor of the *Dunedin Evening Star* to re-publish here anything calculated to wound the feelings of his Irish fellow-colonists, and to sustain the sentiment of bigotry against them, we have had an opportunity of seeing some of the malicious utterances referred to by the *Weekly Freeman*, and never have our eyes lighted on anything in print which more plainly bore the mark of audacious, rancorous, lying. The *Pall Mall Gazette* has, it seems, discovered an ingenious method of accounting for the distress which attributes it all to the extravagance of the people, encouraged by the shopkeepers, who in turn have been liberally dealt with by the banks. The banks, affected by the commercial failures in England, were suddenly obliged to contract their credit, but this did not for a time change the course of affairs, for the banks might be left unpaid, and it was not until the anti-rent agitation began that the shopkeepers took the people at their word and insisted upon ready money transactions. Hence the Irish Famine of '80, and there really has been no suffering at all. It is true the summer, and great part of the autumn were wet, but the weather, nevertheless, cleared in time to prevent any serious loss. The *Gazette* explains the matter as follows:—"It was in September, while the summer rain still continued, that the inspectors of the local government board visited their various districts. No wonder they reported that the potato crop would not give half its usual yield, that the general harvest was deficient in quantity and quality, and that the turf crop was practically lost. But with September the rain ceased, and before the official report was issued by the local government board on the 28th of October the corn had already ripened, and yielded an average crop. The sodden turf would not have been saved by twenty-eight days of October fine weather; but, fortunately, from the 1st of October to the 1st of January we had but three Jays' rain, so that the wells showed symptoms of running dry. With such weather it may well be accepted that the turf, though inferior, was by no means lost, and then the remainder of the winter