hardly say is very worthless—some of it stupid or ridiculous in the extreme, all those remarks concerning the danger the country runs from close adherence to its Catholic instincts being of such a nature. The greater part of the predictions for the future which we find emanating from the non-Catholic Press, in fact, contains but little worthy of comment, and it is only what we read stated there concerning the past that we find of profit, unless it be profitable to learn how prejudice, in laying down plans for the future, can with open eyes ignore the past, and declare a state of things which has hitherto been consistent with the growth of prosperity, and the advance of civilisation must now be altered materially in order to prevent the destruction of that which it has certainly helped to build up. A writer then, for instance, in the August number of the *Contemporary Review*, who is concerned for the evil effects of religion on the future of the country to which we allude, informs us, nevertheless, of how little religion has injured it since it became an independent Catholic Kingdom. He tells us it had been united with Holland, the "most decidedly Protestant" country in Europe, in order, amongst other things, to preserve it, because it was Catholic from "lapsing under obscurantist and retrograde influences." The Protestant King of Holland, however, abused his power over it. He had no confidence in the Belgians. "He suspected them of French leanings, because they were Catholics and spoke French; and he looked upon them as a dangerous class whom it was essential for the public safety to restrain." In consequence of his bad government the Revolution of August '30 broke out and separation followed. And now what was the form of Government this "most Catholic of Catholic countries" set up? The writer describes it thus:—"Freedom of conscience, religious equality, freedom of the press, of meeting, of association, of education, parliamentary government, ministerial responsibility, universal suffrage, inviolability of person and house, equality before the law, permanence of judicial appointment, publicity of legal courts, trial by jury, have all been not only legalised but practised in Belgium, without any of those evasions which make similar legislation in some countries virtually a dead letter. If, therefore," he adds, "it is hard to preserve modern liberties in a preponderately Catholic country, it must seem peculiarly so in Belgium, where Catholicism enjoys unusual authority, and where the liberties to be asserted are particularly extensive." The preservation, however, of such liberties for fifty years is a sufficient proof of the consistency of Catholicism even with modern liberty, and nothing that "Liberalism," falsely so-called, can now do, in its determination every-where to oppress and blacken Catholicism, can afford a proof to the contrary. The nature of the Government, also, established by this most Catholic country in her most Catholic days is, and will remain, a sufficient answer to the calumny so often repeated against the Church's adherence to despotism only. But how has Catholic Belgium prospered under her free Government? Her career is described as follows:—"For the first ten years Belgium seemed to be declining. She was engaged most of the time in hostilities and negociations with Holland about the limits of her territory, and her industries certainly suffered much during that period from the separation. She had always been hitherto accustomed to possess an open market for her commodities. She had an Austrian market when she belonged to the House of Austria, a French market when she constituted part of the French Empire, and a Dutch colonial market when she was united with Holland. She was now in the position of a tradesman who had lost one set of customers and had not yet got another; and Sir Emerson Tennent, who visited the country in 1840, says that its economical condition was one of universal distress and decay. He acknowledges, however, that the people were industrious, frugal, and skilful, and they have since then been able to secure access for their produce into neutral markets, and to hold their own in them. Belgian agriculture has doubled its produce since 1830, and has acquired a world-wide reputation. The mines of the country have been developed in a still greater ratio. Her iron manufactures have become formidable competitors of our own, and other industries are cultivated with almost equal success. Its commerce has been steadily increasing year by year; it received a great impulse after the Franco-German War, in consequence of the South German trade being largely carried on through Antwerp, and now, though it has not a hundred ships of its own all told, it has a commerce second to that of no nation on the Continent, barring France and Germany."

MR. PROCTOR.

SCIENCE, then, does not mop and mow. It does not grin and chatter over religion, and crack rude jokes on the text of holy scripture—the easiest wit in all the world, and coming most trippingly to the brain of those who are ribald enough to stoop to meet it. It does not assume that because some "Jeames" has suddenly become illuminated, and cast off in his mature years the "pains of hell" with which, mayhap, a canting grandmother had swathed his infant mind, all the world are to follow in his wake.—Men of refinement to hug his vulgarity, men of learning to embrace his small pedantry, men whose youth has been passed at the feet of scholars, reverent men, and gentlemen, to fall down and worship his bit of the "larnin," his tiresome mockery, his uncouthness. Science, then, in its true guise is dignified, respectful, considerate, announcing its opinions moderately, concealing nothing, but insolently forcing nothing upon its hearers. Such at least is the lesson we have derived from those of the admirable lectures of Mr. Proctor delivered in Dunedin which we have been able to attend. We had heard much of the lecturer in question, much that was laudatory of him, but something also that was adverse, and accused his lectures of not being in accordance with the teaching of the Church. This, we have, however, for our own part been unable to perceive. The long periods of creation borne witness to by geology, and to which astronomy, the lecturer tells us, also testifies, were discerned by St. Augustine, and admitted as probably true by St. Thomas long centuries before ever geology was dreamt of. The possibility of life in other planets contains in it nothing that we know of contrary to Catholic doctrine; a few weeks ago, indeed, we published portion of a lecture delivered by a Jesuit Father in which such a theory was strongly advanced. Again, the belief expressed by the lecturer that all the energy apparently wasted is preserved for the future resurrection of worn-out creation is a belief that can only be denied by those who enter into the councils of the Almighty, and where are they to be found? All that we have heard said in approbation of the lecturer, again, we can heartily endorse. More instruction more delightfully given, it has never been our fortune to receive. The charm of deep lessons conveyed simply and clearly we have never more, never, perhaps, so much experienced. The advent of Mr. Proctor, indeed, to these colonies has we trust inaugurated a new epoch in their history. For a long time we have enjoyed the visits here of artists of high talent and reputation in the old world, but much more important is it that we should be visited by scientific men of standing and noted merit. We trust that Mr. Proctor only leads the way, and may be followed from time to time by others alike capable of forming the taste of our settlers and teaching them what true science is.

STONE THROWING BY DWELLERS IN GLASS HOUSES.

WE are accustomed to hear the condition of the poor in France, during the course of the last century, frequently alluded to by writers who not only seek to excuse the Revolution, but to implicate the Church amongst the principal causes of the horrors they describe. They dwell much also on the great riches of the clergy and religious Orders, forgetful, wilfully it may be, that the chief object of the Church in permitting such riches was that there might be abundant means of carrying out the works of charity and ministering to the wants of the poor, a charge most faithfully fulfilled wherever the true spirit of the Church prevailed, and only neglected where the worldliness of the age had intruded itself, as unfortunately it had done to a lamentable extent. "The abbeys and bishopries of the Church were filled chiefly with courtiers," says a writer in the *Dublin Review*, "often of scandalous lives, who had succeeded in winning the good graces of a minister or a mistress, and who were usually as eager to shirk the duties as to obtain the temporalities of their preferments. The parochial clergy shared in the prevailing degeneracy. They were for the most part, it is true, of blameless conduct, but they were seldom men of solid learning, or active zeal, or a spirit ecclesiastical. As to the religious orders, there is an immense amount of evidence which establishes only too clearly the deplorable relaxation of their discipline, the Trappists, Cistercians, and Jesuits being, indeed, bright exceptions. Such were the accredited defenders of the faith in the eighteenth century; and, in truth, they were only a little less infected than their opponents by the new philosophy. They had drunk deeply into that dry, analytical, sensualistic spirit of the age, which they were called upon to resist." Still, even under such circumstances, the revenues of the clergy were available for public uses to a very great extent; in less than fifty years, for instance, that is from 1701 to 1748, they had contributed towards the cost of the wars two hundred and fifty millions, an enormous sum, especially if the value of money at the time be taken into consideration. The condition of the poor in France, then, during the eighteenth century, reflects not at all upon the Church, wherever religion was fervent charity was abundant. One monastery alone, for example, of the Bernardins, fed 1200 people for six weeks at a time of exceptional hardship, and neither the Church nor any other system can be judged by that which follows on the neglect of its ordinances or the contradiction of its spirit. But what of the English poor at the same period? Were they much better off than those of France, and did the Church of the "Reformation" display a truly Christian ardour, and spirit of self-sacrifice in their behalf? An article in a recent number of the *Saturday Review* instructs us, to some extent, on the matter in question. The writer speaks first of the pleasant views of life, handed down to us by many who wrote at the time referred to. "It is in works of a different class he says that we read what was the true condition of the poor generally, in many distinct periods of the century; works in which such themes as the alarming increase of poor, the decay of population, the want of work,