

Times' weekly edition, December 24th:—"Two poachers were encountered on Saturday night by gamekeepers on Lord Holmesdale's estate in Norfolk. One of the poachers struck at a keeper with his gun, which exploded, inflicting a mortal wound upon himself.—Two gangs of poachers were encountered on Tuesday morning by Lord Bute's keepers, near Cardiff, two of whom were so brutally beaten that fears are entertained for their lives. The same gangs also attacked the keepers on an adjoining estate, and severely injured two of them. Illegal fish poaching continues in Wales. The local police has been reinforced, and many arrests have been made." We have seen poaching in Ireland, too, in our time. It was when some young fellow, overcome by a love of sport, shouldered a fowling-piece, and went off in the broad daylight to have a shot at a snipe, or a partridge on forbidden ground, and trusting to his keen sight and quick foot to bring him out of the reach of the gauger or bailiff. But that is a different thing from the midnight expeditions of gangs bent, for the sake of profit, on slaughtering game to a great extent foreign and maintained at heavy expense, and fully prepared to commit murder if interfered with in their plundering. Is the life of an English or Scotch gamekeeper of less account than that of an Irish land agent? The telegraph is totally silent concerning outrages of the kind referred to, and the newspapers make no comments on them. Again, we find the following suggestive paragraph in a London weekly of December 18th:—"Mortality among Infants.—Mr. Humphreys held inquests on Monday at Bethnal Green on two children, both under 12 weeks old, who, according to the verdicts returned, had met their deaths by suffocation whilst in bed with their parents. In the first case, in answer to the coroner, the mother stated that she had had six children, five of whom had died in infancy. In the second case the coroner said: Mrs. Stanbury, I think we have met before? Witness: Yes, sir. The coroner: About three years ago? Yes, sir, but that one died of convulsions. Was not suffocation the cause of death? I think it was. I advise you to be careful. How many children have you had? Eleven, sir. How many now living? One, sir. They all died in infancy? Yes, sir. The coroner remarked that he had appointed eight similar inquiries for that day." Are the mothers in question to be numbered amongst the 16,000 murderers of children reported of to Parliament by Dr. Lankester, according to the *Westminster Review*, or do they only go towards forming a separate class of suspects? On the night of Christmas, again, a woman was horribly murdered with a red hot poker at Macclesfield, by a man named Stanway, and although this murder was remarkable both from the time and method of its committal, we find it but cursorily mentioned. It is evident our telegraph clerks and journalists consider a crime committed in Ireland of double the guilt of one committed in England, and there is a certain sense in which we agree with them.

PSALM
SINGING.

WE perceive that a mighty descent of the singers of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" on this colony is contemplated. The "Salvation Army" is moving towards us, so at least report says, and they are Evangelists of lusty voice. Messrs. Moody and Sankey also are thought to be possibly turning their minds in our direction, and all bids fair to raise a wave of sound here that, whether harmonious or not, should direct our thoughts heavenwards. We do not know, however, that the singing of such canticles is by any means, without exception, a cause of conversion. The natural man is very much given to noises of the vocal sort, and, somehow or other, religious songs seem to chime in with his natural tastes in a marvellous manner, but so that while they afford him means he finds most pleasant for the exercise of his lungs and voice, they leave him pretty nearly where they found him. We have, in our time, heard many an "Arry" most vociferously hymning, and yet, "Arry" he remained all the term of his life, and "Arry" he died. And we find that it has always been so: the Arians, a most unconverted people, were noted for their hymns, and, in a word, at all times the ungodly seem to have strangely affected them. The most remarkable example, however, which we find of this strikes us as being contained in a letter written by some worthy Huguenot to Catherine de Médicis, and which we take from the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of December 1, '79. It runs as follows, so well as we understand its somewhat antiquated French:—"This Father, full of mercy, put it into the heart of the late King Francis to hold as very agreeable the thirty Psalms of David, with the Lord's Prayer, the Angelic Salutation and the Apostles' Creed, which the late Clement Marot had transcribed and translated, and dedicated to his Greatness and Majesty. Which commanded the said Clement Marot to present the whole to the Emperor Charles V., who received the said translation benignly, and rewarded it both by words and by a present of two hundred doubloons that he gave to the said Marot; giving him also courage to translate the rest of the said psalms, and begging of him to send him as soon as he could *Confitemini domino quoniam bonus*, since he so much loved it. Seeing and hearing which the musicians of these two princes, namely, all those of our France, set, to the best of their powers, the said psalms to music, and everyone sung them." So far so good: here we have

had only to do with possibly decent people. What is to follow it is that we depend on to illustrate our point as to the effect of spiritual songs upon the ungodly, and, moreover, it will exhibit to us what kind of folk a worthy Huguenot, also the lover of spiritual songs, regarded even with complacency. "But if any one," continues the writer, "loved them and clung to them closely and constantly, sang them and had them sung, it was the late King Henry; so that the good people blessed God for them, *at ses signons et sa meretrice les aimoyent, ou faignoyent ordinairement les aimer*, so that they said 'Monsieur, shall not this be mine; you will give me that if you please.' And this good prince was then willingly hindered from giving them to them according as the fancy took him. Always he kept for himself, as you can and ought to remember, Madame, this:

Bien heureux est quiconques
Sert à Dieu volontiers, &c.

Himself set music to this psalm, which music was very good and pleasing and well suited to the words, sang it, and had it sung so often, that he showed evidently he was goaded and anxious to be blessed, even as David describes it in the said psalm. . . . I do not forget as well yours that you asked to be often sung; it was:

Vers l'Eternel, des oppressés le père,
Je m'en iray. . . .

Catherine de Médicis, Henry II., and others, at least no better than them, then, were all singers of psalms and spiritual songs. What hope, therefore, is there that psalm-singing is about to convert the ungodly amongst ourselves, or have these songs a power when shouted by the Salvation Army, or entoned by Messrs. Moody and Sankey that they fail to display when sung in the Chambers of Princes? Have the *canaille* only souls capable of conversion by song? We are under a cloud with respect to this matter; but revival, perhaps, breaking in upon us, by means of our startled hearing or cracked voice, may by-and-by enlighten us: we shall await it with much patience.

It was not, however, only with the "Word" as A STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE. given to her in the rhyming of Huguenot poets that Catherine de Medicis was acquainted.

We learn on the authority of the writer who has given us the old letter from which we have quoted, that even in her youth, when she was Dauphiness, this lady of full memory owned a Bible in the French tongue, and we are led by the information to inquire whether it may not after all turn out that the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was the fruits of private interpretation. Since Catherine's time many a self-authorised imitator of Israel in the Land of Canaan has wrought havoc upon his enemies, depending on the Bible, and why may not such a result have also followed from this Queen's study of the Old Testament? It will, however, be news to a good many worthy people, and ill fits in with the great Protestant tradition to learn that Catherine de Medicis, the Queen of the St. Bartholomew, had been a student of the Scriptures in the vernacular.

A FLAGRANT
UNTRUTH.

OUR contemporary, the *Boston Pilot*, asks if it is Mr. Moody who tells a story of his having hobnobbed in a spiritual sort of way with the Catholic Bishop of Chicago. Mr. Moody, if it was Mr. Moody, called on the Bishop, and Mr. Moody knelt down and said a prayer, and the Bishop knelt down by his side and said another, and then they both got up mutually delighted, and went their several ways refreshed and enlightened. The *Boston Pilot* says that, if Mr. Moody said that, he said something that was a little more than his prayers, and he asks was it Mr. Moody who said so? We believe it was; we know it was either Mr. Moody or Mr. Sankey, for some six or seven years ago, when these gentlemen were in England, a friend of the writer of this note, who was bent upon his conversion, and who had sat under these famous ministers, wrote him a long letter about them, and told him as especially edifying that very "whopper" relating to the Bishop of Chicago. Our answer was that whereas up to the moment we had had no reason to suppose that Mr. Moody or Mr. Sankey, whichever it may have been, was not an honest man, although a much erring one, we were now forced to alter our opinion, and consider him as a man who had no regard whatever for the truth. The *Boston Pilot* has been correctly informed, at least as to one of these two evangelists, and he has not been one bit too severe in his rebuke of such unblushing impudence—notwithstanding his heavy hand.

A suggestive incident (says the *Leinster Leader*), occurred at Edenderry Union on Saturday last. As two leading *ex-officio* members of the board were coming from the board-room after the meeting had adjourned, they were accosted by an inmate of the work-house, formerly an elected member of the board and a victim to land-grabbing ere Boycotting was in fashion, who drew himself up stiffly before them, and, with hands behind his back, enquired of one of the J.P.'s, "Did you see _____ up there?" (meaning one of the guardians). One of the J.P.'s, bowing politely, and touching his hat deferentially, replied, "No, your honour. I did not see him." To which the man "honoured" retorted, "Arrah, begorra, it's lately you got to be so polite in your manners." The J.P.'s proceeded on their way.