

It is wonderful to contemplate the fallings-out
A DIFFERENCE. that may occur among the most pious people. Here, then, we have the Irish Disestablishment as mad as ever its members can possibly be with another body of Evangelical Christians, who, it seems, have been giving an account of it in Canada that it by no means relishes. The Irish Disestablishment, however, should remember that its own most devout adherents have for long been accustomed to speak of their neighbours in just the same style as it now finds itself spoken of in its turn. But to calumniate Catholics, and to boast as to their falling away from their Church and embracing the Gospel of the Church of England in Ireland is one thing; to find the Methodists proclaiming an abandonment of their creed by the members of the Church in question is quite another. And the Disestablishment does not by any means relish the difference. Two Methodist ministers, then, speaking the other day in Toronto, maintained that the Irish Episcopal Church, as they called it, and the name is as good as another, was in the last stage of decline. "During the last eleven years," said one of them, "the number of ministers employed has decreased nine hundred, and a great number of their churches have been closed." He added, that the only thing to be done, in order to preserve the poor stray, shepherdless, sheep from going at once over to Popery, was to call on the Methodists to look after them—that we need hardly say would secure their salvation without further delay. The Irish Episcopal Church, said the gentlemen alluded to, would never rise again, and their very practical conclusion was that "The people of Canada should, therefore, do what they can towards raising Ireland to that position, temporally and spiritually, to which she has for a long time been a stranger." That is, of course, that the people of Canada should be very liberal in their subscriptions towards the object in question—especially as represented by the gentlemen who were there as its advocates.—The Irish Episcopal Church, however, for its part, was it would appear, by no means so anxious to surrender the field to the Methodists as these would-be benefactors of the Irish race would have desired. Their organ, the *Ecclesiastical Gazette*, indeed, may be taken as having expressed the voice of the community it represents, and its method of expression was by no means nice or of extreme politeness:—"For ourselves," it said, "we have no hesitation in stigmatising the assertions we have italicised as gross falsehoods, without a shadow of foundation, and sincerely hope our Canadian contemporaries will publish our contradiction to their countrymen. Some time since a northern Canon took us severely to task for our remarks upon Methodists. We do not think that even he will object to our calling attention to what we regard as outrageous misrepresentations about the Church of Ireland." As to whether the Methodists should take over the congregations of the Irish Protestant churches, however, or not, it is no concern of ours, nor are we interested in the future of the disestablished Church. We have merely found the controversy amusing because it seemed to us that a measure of justice had been returned to the Church in question, for the many false boasts of the conversions from the Catholic Church by which its congregations were swelled, or perhaps, in most instances, were about to be swelled without delay. At the same time we may remark the readiness with which these good people misrepresent and give the lie to one another, so that we may the less wonder at the reckless way in which they deal with all things Catholic.

WHAT COMES OF COMET-GAZING. THERE is nothing like the learning, and it is we that can get the full of our skulls of it any day in the week by throwing an eye upon the columns of our daily contemporaries, for they are brimming over with intelligence. There are people among us it seems, who are just bursting with information, and all that is wanting to them is the opportunity. The minute that offers itself out the learning comes with a rush. There is someone or another, for example, to whom our contemporary the *Otago Daily Times* devotes a paragraph with a heading, "The Comet," and who has been rewarded for getting up at all hours in the morning, or for half burning his eyes out at noon, by the flow of learned recollections the comet has carried with it, like another and a brighter tail, into his head. This gentleman is philanthropic also, and pines to share his intellectual treasure with his fellow creatures; it is in such a commendable frame of mind he has written to our contemporary for the instruction of the public. Our contemporary, moreover, has thought his communication worthy of especial consideration, and devoted to it a prominent paragraph. This pundit, then, tells us ever so much about a comet which he says appeared in 1459, and, among the rest, he writes as follows:—"Pope Calixtus II., terrified for the fate of Christianity, directed the thunders of the Church against the enemies of the faith, terrestrial and celestial, and in the same bull exorcised the Turks and the comet; and in order to perpetuate this manifestation of the power of the Church, he ordained that the bells should be rung at noon, a custom still observed in Catholic countries. Neither the progress of the comet nor the victorious arms of the Mohammedans were, however, arrested. The comet tranquilly proceeded in its orbit, passing through its appointed changes regardless of the

thunders of the Vatican, and the Turks established their principal mosque in the Church of St. Sophia." Now, here, we undoubtedly have some very startling information—but comets, as we see, have always been looked upon as portentous affairs, and if a pundit inspired by staring at one under trying circumstances, either in the half-wakeful condition of the hour before dawn, or the distressing glare of mid-day, is accountable for a little that is queer, we must not let amazement overcome us altogether. We find it, nevertheless, exceedingly strange that Pope Calixtus II., who died in the year 1124 should, in 1459, have issued a bull by which he "exorcised the comet and the Turks." Nor will it mend matters very much charitably to presume that the mistake is due to a printer's error, and that Pope Calixtus III. was the Pontiff meant by the writer, for Calixtus III. died in the year 1458, and therefore he could not possibly have "exorcised" the comet which appeared only in the following year, unless it be admitted that he was skilled in the science of astronomy far in advance of his age, or that he was endowed with the gift of prophecy,—neither of which hypotheses, we fancy, will be agreeable to the learned writer of whom we treat. This comet-struck man, again, is not quite accurate with regard to the ringing of the bells at noon—very inaccurate is he indeed, and very much misled by his luminary when he attributes this ringing to Calixtus II., who at the time it was ordered had been dead for more than three hundred years—if that makes any difference to the comet-stricken who deal with Catholic matters which to them, and some others likewise, are obscure as the path of their mysterious guide. But under any circumstances this writer is wrong altogether as to this matter of the bells. What the Angelus bell was, in fact, ordered by Pope Calixtus III. to be rung at noon for was to call the people together that they might implore the aid of God in the war against the Turks, being then waged with the Pope's assistance, and their prayers were notably answered by the great victory of the Christians at Belgrade. This victory is moreover commemorated, not by the ringing of bells, but by the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord, celebrated yearly on August 6th, and appointed to be observed by the Pope Calixtus III. So much then for the historical knowledge that is acquired by gazing at comets, and, if every one who rises at unearthly hours for such a purpose receives an equal reward, it would be as well for the world in general to remain comfortably wrapped in their blankets, and allow the strange wanderer to go its way unwatched.—But since we have shown the flagrant nonsense written concerning matters of fact by this profound correspondent of the *Daily Times*, we may leave unexamined his utterances on matters of the imagination, among which there may be included the exorcism of a comet by the Pope.—And surely if this correspondent has drawn his inspiration from the world of comets they remain unexorcised still, for out of them has come an impish influence that has induced him to expose his complete want of knowledge on the subject he still presumed to write on, and which his silence would have concealed—at least from the public.

It is not every one, however, who is so frank and outspoken as Bishop Moorhouse, and notably among those who are not so we find a leader-writer of the *London Times*. "Englishmen," says he, "have no

desire to parade force as the charter by which they keep their Indian Empire. But they are in India in right of qualities they possess, and for the fulfilment of duties to which they hold themselves obliged. Their consciences compel them to rule India for the benefit of its people in accordance with principles they are convinced are just and right." As if any one in the world could by any means be brought to believe that Englishmen are in India for anything but their own interests, or that they rule India in accordance with anything else. Verily, it is not the natives who profit by English rule there. Omitting all other considerations, they do not even receive from it so much as the benefit of the Protestant Christianity it might be supposed to foster; but, so far as England is concerned, are to-day hardly less heathen than when the first conqueror sent out by her placed his foot upon their soil. Even the English missions are a striking failure, as when their true condition is examined becomes apparent, and of this we find some striking details given in a recent number of the *London Tablet*. "The real success of the Protestant missions," says the *Tablet*, "was in the beginning of the present century, when the English power was fast rising, with assiduous charge of the wealth rather than of the souls of India, and when, after the French Revolution and the suppression of the Society of Jesus, many Catholic missions were broken up. Of the Madras Protestants—less than 118,000 in all—there are 50,000 in Tinnevely, their strongest point, and it is notable that these are mostly descendants of families, once Catholic, who were won over during the desolate period at the beginning of the present century." The Protestant mission schools, our contemporary tells us further on, are a failure; they are "to a great extent mere teaching establishments, where very little practical religion is learned, where children may attend unbaptised, and remain, as they began, Hindus or Mohammedans." "The ordinary newspapers of Madras," adds our contemporary, "have at times made