

The Melbourne *Advocate* points out as a matter of deep interest to Irish Nationalists how much changed towards Mr William Redmond, on his late visit to Australia, were the sentiments of his countrymen there. "For Ireland and her cause," says our contemporary, "their hearts remained as warm as ever, but were towards him as cold as ice." They would not have reproached him, our contemporary adds, had he appeared among them, unless he attempted to justify his conduct. "Mr Redmond, in acknowledgement of former services, has been spared as much offence and pain as possible, and yet the experience he has had should serve to impress the Irish people still more deeply with the truth that Parnellism, as represented by Mr John Redmond and his handful of followers, has no existence in this part of the world."

The issue by the Pope of the Encyclical on Holy Writ has particularly interested Protestants. We have heard the opinion of Father Ignatius. We now find a letter written to the *Irish Times* by the Rev Thomas Mills, Vicar of St Jude's, Dublin—who, in conclusion, expresses a belief that the document "will tend to draw both Protestants and Roman Catholics over the world into fuller and more complete accord in their religious views and convictions—into, in fact, 'the unity of the truth.'" The rev gentleman also fancies that he finds in the encyclical some traces of an intention to adopt methods of interpretation not only new, but opposed to those so far made use of. The Pope, nevertheless, as we may assume without presumption, would be quite as emphatic as he was in his audience with Mr. Chauncey Depew, with regard to his Encyclical on Labour, in declaring that no advance upon the existing doctrine of the Church had been made by him. It is well, meantime, that religious Protestants are turning with approval to consider the matter. The results, in all probability, will be, at least, their abandonment of time-honoured prejudices. Some of them, we may hope, will come to see that the Church has always been the true custodian of the Word of God.

A Melbourne paper, as we have it on the authority of our contemporary, the *Wairoa Guardian*, reports a new departure in missionary enterprise. A pious firm, we are told in effect, lately got a line of Bibles cheap, and introduced one each, by way of a Christmas box, into a number of chests of tea, which they were about to send out. "Yet will it be believed that one vessel of wrath wrote back to say that he didn't see the point in a Christmas box, when a 7½ Bible displaced two shillings worth of tea, and he returned the firm's Bible in the hope that the firm would forward his tea." "Some men," adds our contemporary, "don't know the meaning of gratitude."

In the Lenten pastoral of the Archbishop of Melbourne, his Grace repeats a charge made by him on a recent occasion that the secular system is "anomalous and ominous of future evil." The public schools, he says, are as non-Christian as if the pupils were the children of pagans. The Archbishop expresses his disappointment that an influential deputation that not long ago waited on the Minister of Education to represent to him the evils of the system, made no mention of the Catholic claims. He had hoped, he said, that they would explain the peculiar position of the Catholic body and propose that the Catholic schools should be made a department of the State system as is done in England and Canada:—"But instead of a practical proposal of this kind, calculated to benefit non-Catholic and Catholic children alike, what plan was actually proposed for the Minister's acceptance? The plan was to have some Scripture lessons, and to have morality without dogma taught in the State schools. Morality without dogma! That is, a house without a foundation—a circle without a centre. What is dogma, and what is morality? Dogma includes the existence of a God, the unity of God, the eternal law of God; and morality is the relation of man's actions to the eternal law of God. The Minister of Education was asked, therefore, to exclude from the State school curriculum the idea of God, and the idea of His eternal law, and still to provide for the teaching of morality. The problem remains still unsolved." His Grace, nevertheless, expresses a belief that "there are not wanting indications that wise and thoughtful men in various parts of the Colony are turning their serious attention to such a solution of the problem as will do justice to the claims of Catholics, and provide for the children of all denominations, without impairing the efficiency of the State system of education, a sound religious as well as a highly-prized secular education."

Mr Gladstone was 84 years old on Friday, December 29. There are, however, two members of the House of Commons who, in point of age, are senior to him—that is, Mr C. P. Villiers and Sir Isaac Holden, born respectively in 1802 and 1807. Of these the one entered Parliament in 1835, the other not until 1865. The date of Mr Gladstone's entering the House was 1832. The *Daily Chronicle* speaks thus of the scene in the Commons on the late occasion:—"Nothing is more striking than the dying down of the old personal hate of Mr Gladstone. Who can hate this charming veteran, this resplendent personality, bearing the weight of years like a snowflake, full of youth, even the faults of youth, and with a career going back in dim gradations to the years when men's dress and thoughts and habits were altogether different from what they are to-day? No wonder the Liberals and Irish, and even a Tory or two, rose when

the old man glided in, in his rapid, nervous fashion, gathering his coat-tails as he walked, his face suggesting, perhaps, something of a natural delight in his triumph, his whole demeanour alert, vivid; his colour high, his coat adorned with a huge button-hole—a heart of violets, a border of lilies." Of the estimation in which Mr Gladstone is held in Continental Europe, the following passage forming the concluding words of an article on his policy, published by the *Debats* will suffice as an example:—"But whatever the issue may be, the world has nevertheless had afforded it the example of this illustrious old man devoting all his remaining energies to a work of justice, and to the attainment of an ideal which many younger men have deemed too distant to be ever reached."

The Parliamentary record for 1893 will be memorable for the number of days on which the House sat. The number in question was 206, the nearest approach to it being made in 1838, when the number of days was 176. In the matter of divisions, however, the past year fell behind. The number in 1887, for example, was 485 for 160 days; in 1891, 416 for 141 days. In 1893 it was 404.

The report is revived that previous to the death of his brother, and while he was still of comparatively little consequence, the Duke of York had contracted a marriage, which, on his becoming heir presumptive to the throne, for reasons of State, he was obliged to break. It seems strange that, if there be no truth in the matter, an authoritative contradiction of it is not made. Surely even the Crown can hardly afford to set at defiance the feelings of people of good morals. If on the other hand, it is found necessary, in order to secure a desirable heirship for the Throne, to set at naught the laws of God, outrage the rights of the family, and legalise adultery, the sooner some form of government unassociated with such obligations is substituted for that now existing the better. It is all very well to despise a false report, but to leave one that is demoralising uncontradicted is a serious abuse of dignity.

The new development of the right of private interpretation seems rather worse than the old. We find another sample of it in a letter to the *Otago Daily Times*, from an interpreter who takes the Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster to task for a proposal made by him in a recent pastoral, as reported here by cable. This new interpretation identifies Christianity with modern communism, necessarily approving its conclusions by a text. Existing Christianity it sharply rebukes as quite differently constituted. Communism, nevertheless, in a legitimate form, has always existed in the Church, and has been encouraged and blessed by her. What, for example, of the religious orders? What, moreover, of those advocates of the new and impossible system who have always been the most virulent enemies and calumniators of those communities? The new development of the right of interpretation, in fact, bids fair to be more inconsistent and more foolish than the old.

Our contemporary the *Triad*, for the current month is to hand. Our contemporary, we see, is still in the pious vein. If our contemporary's piety threatens to become somewhat mixed, we must nevertheless, admit that there might be worse things than that. He now gives us to understand that he has profited much by a "thoughtful and suggestive sermon" preached at All Saints by the Rev A. B. Fitchett. "The child," the preacher explained, "thinks his father or mother or school teacher knows everything." This statement we, for our part, find—where, at least, the colonial child is concerned—thoughtful, perhaps, as based on imagination rather than experience, and suggestive chiefly of the preacher's innocence. We are, however, to take the sermon as the particular inspiration of our contemporary's present number. He says it afforded him "food for thought and stimulus for work." In any case our contemporary's line of thought continues fresh and bright, and his work is well done. We are, in short, quite ready to echo the opinion of the *Triad* expressed by a correspondent who writes from Westport—"It is a capital little paper." The musical supplement contains Abraham's song "The anchor's weighed," and the old ballad "The Lass of Richmond Hill."

As a proof of a statement previously made by it, and which, we may remark in passing, has been variously made and proved elsewhere, to the effect that the statistics of crime attributed to Catholics are swollen by a habit existing among Protestant criminals of entering themselves as Catholic, the Melbourne *Advocate* quotes the case of a man named Knox, arrested in connection with the Williamstown tragedy. This man, who represented himself as a Catholic, our contemporary tells us, "is the son of Protestant parents and was himself reared a Protestant. He never, before his arrest, professed to be anything else." Our contemporary goes on to quote the testimony of the Government statistician with regard to Irish settlers:—"As he had said frequently before in previous volumes, he repeats in his Year Book of 1892:—'The offences with which the Irish were charged, however, could not have been of so serious a nature as those in respect to which the English and Welsh were arrested as the number of the former committed for trial was smaller in proportion to their numbers in the population than that of any other nationality except Victorians.'" Our contemporary also gives Mr Hayter's testimony as to the part of Ireland in a better state of things:—"According to the

T. HOULT, Carlton Butchery, Victoria Street, Christchurch. For Prime Quality Meat (guaranteed), call at the above address. ½d per lb saved by purchasing direct from shop. Carts running daily through Town and Suburbs.