

confederate dungeon contributed by the President of the Swiss Republic to the *North American Review* for February. These colonies are particularly interested in the disposition in question now that a determination exists to renew slavery in a portion of their territory. Such, of course, was the meaning of the paper read the other day in London by Miss Shaw, and so loudly applauded by colonial "swells," anxious, by their airs and graces, to recommend themselves to the sympathy of high society. President Frey, when a young man, had gone on a visit to America, and had taken service in a farmer's family living in a Swiss settlement. While he was there the war broke out, and he enlisted. After various adventures he was taken prisoner, and confined in a Southern gaol. He gives his readers to understand that he leaves untold a good deal, but what he does reveal is enough to horrify those who read it. Among the rest, to such extremes of hunger were the prisoners reduced that they were glad to catch rats, with which their cell swarmed, and to have them cooked for their food. It is unfortunate for the fame of the slave-holding aristocracy that a man of such prominence survives to give testimony against them. It was not, however, their fault if he did live to tell the tale. His narrative should go far, moreover, to discredit the complaints of cruelty on the part of the Federals by the rebels of the South. General Butler's record, for example, must seem much lighter to those who read these details. If, meantime, something of the old ferocity remains, it is but what might be expected. It takes more than one generation to obliterate the traces of such an inheritance. That something of it, and even a good deal, does remain is evident in the atrocious punishments inflicted on negroes who have committed, or are supposed to have committed crimes. And we are now told of an unhappy woman put to death by horrible torture for a murder of which she was innocent. Some classical student among the mob had avidly recalled the treatment given by the Carthaginians to Regulus. Like him, this negress was shut up in a barrel among the points of nails and rolled about until she died. But these were the people who had their coloured fellow creatures at their complete mercy, and who, we are sometimes told, Mrs Beecher Stowe notwithstanding, treated them with the greatest possible loving-kindness. President Frey reveals to us the true disposition of the men, and gives to all who would preserve humanity from brutalising influences an additional reason to cry out against the establishment, on any pretence or under any appearance, of slavery in Australia.

In turning over the leaves of Cardinal Newman's "Apologia" we have come across a passage that is of some pertinence with regard to one of the favourite arguments of the period. The passage runs as follows:—"From the age of fifteen, dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion. I know no other religion. I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery. As well can there be filial love without the fact of a father, as devotion without the fact of a Supreme Being." What, however, Newman could not understand is as plain as daylight to many pundits of the day—who even, if they had their will, would force upon us all a religion without dogma. They acknowledge that such a religion is taught in the public schools, which they impose upon us—acknowledging also, albeit unconsciously, that they are talking nonsense, by way of an excuse for tyranny.

Our Contemporary the *Triad* for March completes his first year of publication. Our contemporary shows signs of the advance of time and of a maturer age. His tone this month is more subdued, if not more solemn; his matter is more solid, and generally the seriousness of life seems to have dawned upon his more reverent gaze. We do not know whether, for our part, our contemporary ranks us with those who, he says, have pinched him on the sly or pulled his baby hair—but we are aware of having now and then tried to pick a hole in his contents. Had we perceived that we were dealing with the tender flesh of a baby, perhaps we should have been less vicious. Our excuse must be that we dealt with an infant Hercules, whose skin was as leather to the touch and yielded but little satisfaction to the spiteful finger. May our esteemed contemporary proceed and prosper according to the promise of his completed year.

Our contemporary the *Dunedin Star*, rather to our surprise, and altogether out of keeping with the general tone of his columns, some little time ago published an excellent sketch of the Trappist community in South Africa from the pen of the agent who accompanied Mr Santley in his recent tour there. As a set off against the favourable description given, and by way of a return to what is more congenial to his tastes, our contemporary now publishes a sketch of a Trappist convent in Bosnia. It had been written by the Vienne correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*. It purports to be favourable and appreciative—nay, there are one or two passages in it that might be taken as showing that the writer really understood and valued what he saw. On the whole, however, the traces of the supercilious sneering visitor who looks contemptuously about him, and even to himself caricatures all he beholds, are evident. The kernel of the matter is that in which the writer suggests the conditions on which monks may be received into monasteries, and this it was, no doubt, that recommended the extract to the kind attention of the *Evening Star*.

The writer, in a word, came on a very curious sort of monk:—"A tall, well-built, intelligent hermit of some thirty-eight or forty years stood opposite me, gazing earnestly, wisely into my eyes. His face was both striking and prepossessing, a sort of Fra Angelico countenance characterised by a mystic sweetness and a holy melancholy that were captivating." This monk, though silence was strictly enjoined by the rule of his Order, begged a hearing of the visitor, and poured forth a plaintive tale into his ear. He was a novice, he explained, who wanted advice as to whether he should remain in this convent or try some other. A monk he must be. So his conscience and his confessor told him, but he was not happy here. To quote the writer's words:—"I am not happy here. The Novice Master is ever finding fault with me. I am wanting in alacrity, in obedience, he says. am slothful, inclined to self-indulgence. You cannot realise how these rebukes drive me to despair. Oh, what I suffer! And that is not the worst. Yesterday the bell rang for prayers, and I did not come in time. I am a little hard of hearing, and I did not know it had rung. When I told him that he actually said he doubted whether I was really a Catholic! I not a Catholic! I, who forsook the world, my country, friends, family, and children to devote myself wholly to the service of God in a monastery." "What, are you married, then?" I asked. "Certainly; and, after having left my wife and children to—" "But you don't mean to say that your wife is living?" "Yes, poor thing, and a hard time she has of it, with five children wholly unprovided for, in Moravia. And the man, who, to follow his vocation, has not hesitated to—" "But, but your wife—I mean, your children." I did not know what I meant or was saying, so astounded was I at these revelations. However, I collected my thoughts and resolved to give him a bit of my mind: "Well, in my opinion, the person who leaves his wife and five young children without any means of subsistence, and who hopes—" "Brother, I see the Father Novice Master coming. Good-bye. Praised be Jesus Christ." And he was gone." We do not believe the tale to be an invention. The description appears too realistic for that. Where we doubt the writer's good faith is in his probably having withheld the explanation that it seems hardly possible he did not obtain. He had simply met with a madman, possibly neither monk nor novice, but some poor fellow imagining himself to be such and charitably humoured by the community. Whether the visitor was deceived by the wild imaginings or yielded to the correspondent's temptation and made a sensational story of them is the doubtful point. As he does not otherwise write like a fool, we fear it was his honesty rather than his wit that was at fault. Our contemporary the *Star*, in borrowing the tale, possibly failed on both points.

Mr P. J. O'Regan, M.H.R., in a letter which we publish elsewhere, refers to the utterance on the social problem recently made at Sydney by the Cardinal Archbishop. Mr O'Regan, as we all know, is an ardent disciple of Mr Henry George, and consequently insatiable by anything except land nationalisation in its extreme forms. We, nevertheless, hail Mr O'Regan's enthusiasm as a favourable symptom. No young man is worth a straw who is not enthusiastic on some subject. The condition gives evidence that stuff is in him which can eventually be shaped into what is good and useful. Mr Henry George's theories are very fine to read—more especially for people in the towns, to whom they suggest a life of ease and comfort to be enjoyed at the expense of somebody else. In fact we see Mr George's theories adopted by no man of any practical experience or tried common sense. Mr O'Regan, we are sure, has plenty of common sense, not tried as yet but worth a trial. We may add that their being feverishly taken up by Dr McGlynn, an ecclesiastic whom we for our part hold in no very reverent estimation, in our opinion tells strongly against them and of itself proves their unsoundness. It is just such sensation-mongers, popularity-hunters, and would-be leaders of a mob, whose purposes they are calculated to serve. If, in fact, as Mr O'Regan argues, the day of small holdings is past, so much the worse for the world. We have entered upon a period of difficulty for which there is no solution. We know, of course, that times are changed since the Mosaic code was in force or men submitted to the laws of Licinius. No doubt his Eminence was accountable also for so much knowledge when he spoke. But human nature remains the same, and full scope must be left for individual effort to develop the full resources of the land, on which both town and country depend. Small holdings worked by men encouraged by the full enjoyment of their fruits are what is necessary. This also will be effectual in securing general prosperity and abundance—if not in altogether doing away with poverty and bringing about a condition of equality—that can exist only in the imagination of dreamers or the mouths of charlatans or schemers. Mr Henry George we class with the former. We are convinced of his perfect honesty of intention, as we need hardly say we are also of that of Mr P. J. O'Regan.

The death of Lord Hannon is reported. Lord Hannon was better known to us as Sir James Hannon, the Judge who presided over the Parnell Commission. The appointment of his Lordship there, as our readers are of course aware, was with the intention that he should pass sentence on men prejudged. His being forced, on the contrary,

IMPORTANT NOTICE. For relief of Colds, send for my Special Preparation of **COUGH SYRUP**, which always gives great satisfaction. For Liver Complaints, try my **Dandelion Liver Pills**—instant relief in all cases. **CLIFFORD TOON**, Medical Herbalist, 165 High Street (near A. J. White's), CHRISTCHURCH.