

sum of £5,000,000, less than £50,000 has been spent on the works in question. This, argues Mr Hill—and most people who have the interests of the colony at heart will be inclined to agree with him—is quite an unsatisfactory state of things. He goes on to argue from the amount paid in taxation by the settlers on the Coast, as to their right to demand the aid they need. "We do not," he says, "want wealth for the few, but we do want competence for the many, and I am convinced it is as much the duty of the State to foster and develop goldmining by means of public money as to help and assist our woolkings to become rich. What we want is water brought to a given point and a means of conserving water during dry periods, so that parties of miners from one end of the Coast to the other may get access to the soil and win at least a living if not a fortune." Mr Hill recommends to the support of the people of the West Coast the newly formed Association—by means of which they can more expeditiously and effectually make themselves heard. We may add that the provision announced by Mr Ward in his Financial Statement for giving aid to the mining industry may serve to show the Association that the present Government is willing to lend them a sympathetic ear.

One of the latest stories from the smoke-room of the House of Commons (says an English contemporary) is attributed to a well-known Irish member, and for subtle humour it is hard to beat. Some Australian friends of a brother M.P. were boasting of the superiority of the Australians to the people of the mother-country, when the Irish member quickly retorted, "Well, the Australians ought to be superior to us, as most of their ancestors were sent over by some of our very best judges."

Writing on woman suffrage in practice in the *North American Review* for June, Governor Waite, of Colorado, speaks thus:—"In Utah the rights of women to vote under the Territorial laws did not injuriously affect polygamy, but polygamy there was a tenet of the Mormon religion, and a large proportion of the female voters were polygamists by faith or practice. In Wyoming and Washington to my knowledge, no extraordinary progress has been made in the line of political reform that can be traced to female suffrage, and in Colorado sufficient time has not elapsed to speak understandingly of the result." "By way of comparison," says Governor Crouse, of Nebraska, "it may be remarked that the Nebraska laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors are far more thorough and far-reaching and are better observed than they are in the sister and adjoining State, Wyoming, where woman suffrage has obtained for quarter of a century." Governor Crouse quotes, without answering for its truth, the following extract from a recent number of the *Chicago Record*:—"At the capital city of the State (Wyoming) gambling-houses are abundant and open saloons are as frequent as any other kind of stores, and the charge is made that 'n't a single act of legislation aimed at the betterment of the human race has been passed through woman's influence.'"

In a notice of Mr Wilfrid Ward's "Witnesses to the Unseen," contributed by Mr W. S. Lilly to the *Nineteenth Century* for June, the writer describes the *Zeitgeist*—the intellectual tone—of the age as scepticism. This scepticism, he explains, arises in great degree from an intense devotion to physical science, and the use of its methods in departments where they can produce only a negative result or no result at all. "Physical science," he goes on to say, "is not the only science, nor are its facts the only facts. There is without its sphere a vast number of facts of which it can give no rational account. Among these are two great facts of human nature, the sense of the Absolute and the sense of sin. If we want an explanation of these facts, —and who does not!—we must go for it elsewhere than to the professors of physics." Mr Lilly, in effect, sends inquirers to the clean of heart—to those who think like the saints.

The report received here some weeks ago about the loss of a steamer at Westport is explained as applying to the capsizing of a fishing boat carrying harvesters from Achill. The boat was over-loaded, and in trying to jibe about was struck by a gust of wind and went over. Boats from a steamer waiting in Westport dock for passengers to Glasgow rescued 75 of the unfortunate people, and 35 were drowned. As every one who is acquainted with Clew Bay knows, sudden squalls and gusts of wind make it very dangerous.

The same tactics as those employed for the rejection of the Home Rule Bill are now being made use of to throw out the Bill for the relief of the Evicted Tenants, which has passed its second reading in the House of Commons. It is being blocked by amendments in committee. Its summary treatment by the Lords is also confidentially predicted. Whether the Government will patiently submit to this repetition of contempt and insolence remains to be seen. But if the country puts up with another display of arrogance by the House of Lords, the meaning of the democracy of the period will be plainly visible.

A cablegram recently received here relative to some slight departures in Fiji from Christian methods—such, for example, as a return to cannibal tastes—takes credibility from certain details, as to the nature of Protestant Christianity among the natives, given in Eng-

land, at the recent Anglican Missionary Conference, by Lord Stanmore—who had been for some time Governor of the Islands. Strict Sabbatarianism and a wearing of European clothes, said the speaker, seemed the principal Christian ordinances. "According to Lord Stanmore," says the *Catholic Times*, "the native clergy are the worst offenders in this respect. They devote all their energies to the senseless aping of Western habits, go about in greenish-black swallow-tail coats, and inhabit woolen hats mal: hideous with pretentious antimacassars and gaudy china ornaments. In certain villages visited by the Governor it was punishable by fine and imprisonment to wear native garments or garlands of flowers, to smoke tobacco, to drink the native beverage kava, to play at ball, or to bathe on a Sunday. All these offences, so the natives are taught to believe, are infractions of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. As a result these naturally joyous and childlike people go silently and listlessly about their occupations, wearing on their faces an expression of sullen discontent." These details may also be usefully read in connection with a recent case of libel in which a Methodist missionary came off, on a technical point, victorious—most undeservedly so, the Chief Justice said—and of which we have heard something in this colony. There is nothing, we say again, to surprise us if Fijians have actually returned to their pagan practices.

It is to the credit of the French Academy that M. Zola in his recent candidature did not receive a single vote. The learned body also have evidently placed him upon an *index expurgatorius*. Their decision should have weight where that of the congregation at Rome must fail. Possibly they perceive that M. Zola writes trash as well as filth.

We are unable to see how Mr Walter Bentley, who is a strong supporter of the moral bearings of the stage, consistently chose "The Silence of Dean Maitland" for the purposes of the drama. The play we have not seen, but with the book we are acquainted. It is a nightmare story, false to life, slanderous towards religion, unwholesome on the whole, and not particularly well written. Mr Walter Bentley is a clever man and a good actor, and we have no doubt that the one part of his work has been well done, and that the other is ably carried out. But so much the worse. Moliere's apology for bringing upon the stage the character of the hypocrite was, in effect, that he would defend religion against those whose interested mockery disgraced it. Ridicule was the means he chose, because, he said, men were willing to be wicked, but not to be ridiculous. We may claim it, perhaps as an improvement on the former age that now-a-days what is wicked and detestable has a deterrent influence as well as what is ridiculous. But this story to which we allude is ill-chosen for the purpose. Its plot is wholly improbable—nay—almost impossible. In the particular matter treated of, moreover, no such warning is needed. At the present day but little temptation offers itself to religious hypocrisy. As to the treatment of religion in this book, it is insidious and insulting. Moliere chose for his *tartuffe*, the more plainly to separate religion from its false professors—a man of criminal life, who made a ridiculous counterfeit of piety. The hypocrite in this book is a man brought up among religious influences—among the pure and happy surroundings of a pious home. He is the son of an English clergyman; he himself becomes a clergyman. Religion has entered into the very essence of his being—he has been wont to protest, and, no doubt, sincerely, against freethought as expressed by the man who becomes his victim. Yet, in cold blood, for a long succession of years—and still, without intermission, under the influences of religion, he plays his detestable part. Where, then, is the class on whom the lesson of this case, which is at least unique, and which we may claim as impossible, is to produce a moral influence, or who need the warning to be derived from it? As to the affront offered in particular to the Church of England, that is hardly our concern. Still, from a Catholic standing point, an institution whose influence, so far as it goes, is for good, which in many respects preserves a knowledge of Catholic truth among the people, and teaches Christian doctrine, and whose ministry as a body are men of eminent virtue and distinguished merit, deserves more respectful usage. We had lately occasion to protest against the representation here of a play that was an outrage on the Catholic Church. The book to which we allude—for as we have said, we have not seen the play—is scarcely less offensive to all forms of Christianity. Mr Bentley, therefore, we repeat, however ably he may have done, or may still do his part, has not acted consistently in the choice made by him.

The *Dunedin Star* continues to ornament its columns by publishing the letters of its beauty at Keokuk. But the synagogic element seems to have carried the day. Even Protestantism now is thrust aside in favour of unbelief. The German people, we are told, have all the virtues though their country is "simply saturated with infidelity." To the credit of Protestantism we may hail it as due to the jascendancy of the atheistic synagogues that the letter in question contains the following—a gross assumption, at least, if we must call a spade a spade. Alluding to certain advocates of a religious education, "Further," writes this correspondent, "nearly all those people in American cities whose infidelity and irreligiousness are deplored by Dr Terry and his co-thinkers were educated in creed schools, and not in the American public schools." But with the utter unscrupu-

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