

whom devolved the granting or refusal of the boon evidently felt that the responsibility was too heavy to be borne; and learned pundits saw, or thought they saw, in the advent of Government inspectors on Catholic educational domains the germs of awkward and most undesirable possibilities." Our contemporary, who quotes from the address—of whose ability he speaks in the highest terms—its salient points—arrives at the following conclusion:—We in New Zealand already know what are the merits of the Catholic schools by their practical results and difficulties which have greatly hampered the operations of their managers. We shall soon also know what these schools are made of, in the estimation of the public inspectors, as the outcome of the new departure—a departure which, we are bound to say, will do more than anything else to assist the Catholics in obtaining something in aid of their schools out of the fund to which they contribute and from which the cost of maintaining the education system of the colony is derived.

Our contemporary the *Waimca Plains Review* has also a sensible word or two to say on the subject. Our contemporary takes exception to Father Lynch's reference to the quality and value of the education given in the public schools, but admits that otherwise the points at issue were stated by the very rev speaker, in a straight-forward practical manner. The *Review* refers as follows to the objections raised—that is, an adverse effect on the status of the education system and the behaviour of Catholics towards the inspectors' reports: "With regard to the first objection, it is so ill-considered as to be unworthy of serious attention. In what way, we would ask, could the inspection of Catholic Schools possibly affect the present system? We cannot suppose the objectors are so unreasonable and selfish as to protest on the score that the addition to the inspectors' duties will sacrifice their interests, or those of the public schools in any way. This will not be allowed to happen by the Boards authorising the new regime. No; the objection is puerile, though much has been made of it, and the intactness of the system will not be affected by the change in the slightest degree, one way or the other. As to the cry raised, anent the hostile reception by the Roman Catholics, in case of an adverse report by the inspector, such doubts exist only in the minds of intolerant pusillanimous spirits. For our part we have not the least fear that having asked for, and obtained, public inspection, the Catholic body will abide the issue, without fear, or hope of favour." "As to the original question of the right of Boards to object to the application," says our contemporary, "we apprehend they have not any such right. The application was made by the Catholic bishops under a clause in the Act which empowers the Boards to grant it, and the request is at once reasonable and legitimate. We hail with satisfaction the fact that it has been granted in the majority of instances, as possibly it may prove the first step towards the solution of this vexed question, Denominational v. State Education. It will have one good effect, at all events, of clearing many misconceptions on both sides, and by uniting the children of all classes of the community under a common standard, each will start with an equal show, and we shall hear less, let us hope, of charges of partizanship."

The part of a Timour in his captive's cage was played the other day in Paris by the new President. On arriving unattended, it would seem, at his official residence, he was unable to give the password to the sentry, and in consequence was arrested. The situation no doubt was a novel one, but the soldier only did his duty. If the incident is typical of the discipline and general condition of the French army, better things for France may be expected of the next war.

The young Czar appears to have chosen King Roboam as his model. He has assured his nobility that he will firmly uphold the autocracy—denouncing as absurd Liberal pretensions among the populace. The nobility have shown their delight by assembling in the Kasan Cathedral, where they sang a "Te Deum." But where at the same time, did the Nihilists assemble to sing a *te diabolium*? Some assembly of the kind was certainly held by them. As for the Czar he, of course, retires into the gilded prison of his late father.

A wreck has occurred in the North Sea, whose horrors surpass even those of the Wairarapa disaster. A German vessel named the *Elbe* and carrying emigrants to America, was run into and sunk by a steamer, which proves to have been the *Craithie*, of Aberdeen. Over 300 people were lost—and the few survivors, who escaped in boats, suffered terribly from the cold. If it be true, as charged, that the *Craithie* made no effort to save the drowning, her captain deserves severe treatment.

It is much to be feared that the crowing of the Tories and Unionists generally over their victories at Forfar and Brigg is not without some foundation. It may probably be too much to say, as is said, that a sufficient proof has thus been given of the disposition of the country generally towards the Lords. Some indication, nevertheless, is to be discerned that a stronger fight than many people had hoped for, remains to be fought. Discouragement no doubt is bad, and should be avoided—but, on the other hand it is not well to be over-sanguine. The true spirit to court is that of resolute men who look the worst straight in the face and are determined to meet and overcome it.

And, by the way, was not that Aldhelm of Sherborne, of whom Dr Wallis spoke the other day at Wellington, as the first English predecessor of the Bishop of Salisbury, one and the same with St Aldhelm, an Anglo-Saxon bishop of the seventh and eighth centuries. But St Aldhelm was one of Rome's most devoted sons:—"In vain," he wrote, "of the Catholic faith do they vainly boast who follow not the teaching and rule of St Peter. For the foundation of the Church and ground of the faith laid primarily in Christ and then in Peter, unrocked by the stress of tempests, shall not waver, the Apostle so pronouncing; other foundation no one can lay beside that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But to Peter has the Truth thus sanctioned the privilege, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.'" It would seem, therefore, that the Bishop of Salisbury has varied somewhat widely from the allegiance, not only owned, but insisted upon by his predecessor.

Our contemporary, the *W. A. Record*, comments severely on the treatment given to the northern aborigines. "Two battues of natives, in retaliation for the murders recently committed by them (says our contemporary), have now been officially reported; and in the latest seven according to one account, seventeen according to another, have been slain. How many of these men have been guilty of any crime deserving of death? One official says that four of them were escaped prisoners while another declares that two of them were accessories after Richardson's murder. Let any whiteman try to realise what his feelings would be if he were made liable to be shot down at sight on such vague charges as these! But the miserable slaughter is seemingly not even yet at an end. 'I intend leaving here to-morrow,' says the leader of one of the police parties, 'to proceed up the Margaret River, to operate on the natives there.' Unhappy natives of the Margaret! Too well do we guess the meaning concealed under the brutal euphemism in which their doom is told. No man not utterly callous, who knows the ways of West Australia, can hear that the troopers intend to 'operate upon the natives' in any remote part of the colony without dreading the result. Technically the treatment meted out to the aborigines in these cases may be crimeless; but what of its moral aspect? It is time that the din of those who cry out unceasingly Blood! Blood! was stilled, and that calmer and humaner counsels were given due weight. West Australia is making a pitiful mistake, of which the odium will not soon be wiped away."

Among rumours prevailing at Home is one to the effect that the Cabinet are divided on the Irish Question. Sir William Harcourt and Mr John Morley it is said are strongly in favour of having the matter settled at once, and propose to deal with it during the approaching session, while Lord Rosebery and other members of the Government desire to have it postponed. This is a report which seems to be confirmed by the speech of the Prime Minister to which we recently referred, and from which all mention of Irish affairs had apparently been omitted.

Mr Gladstone, meantime, remains steadfast. In receiving, on January 7, a deputation who made him a presentation on behalf of the Friendly Sons of St Patrick—an Irish-American Society—he declared that his interest in Ireland was unabating. He also spoke of the existing disunion among Nationalists, warning them as to the injury their cause must suffer from it, and insisting on the necessity of reconciliation and agreement.

If the gossip of the fashionable world be founded on fact, prudence is a quality hereditary in the noble house of Grosvenor. The late Marquis of Westminster, enormous though his wealth was, was no able also for his saving habits. People there were who went so far as to call him the meekest man in London. His son the Duke, we are told, has been outwitted by H.R.H. the Duchess of Teck, in haggling as to the amount of the dowry he should give his daughter in marrying her son. His Grace wanted to do the thing a little more cheaply, but H.R.H. insisted on £300,000 as the lowest figure, and has gained her point. The sum in dispute was £100,000, and it must be admitted that it was worth a haggling—even to a poor princess.

Lord Rosebery's sense of the ridiculous is given as a reason for the absence of peerages from the New Year's honours conferred by her Majesty the Queen. It is said to be too keen to allow of his adding new members to the House he means to abolish. It will, nevertheless, be most probably by means of an addition of members that any change in the constitution of the House takes place. There is no intention, besides, of abolishing the class, and a title has more glories connected with it than those derived from a seat in the House of Lords. If the gossips be right, then, Lord Rosebery's sense of humour seems rather overdrawn.

A report published by the *Morning Post* to the effect that John Daly, imprisoned as a dynamiter, is about to be released and will be returned to Parliament for Limerick at the next election, is, of course, intended to stir up popular prejudice and fear against Irish nationalism. We hope, nevertheless, that the report may be true so far as it refers to Daly's release. The justice of his sentence is more than doubtful, and, in any case, he has been sufficiently punished.

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