

A CORRESPONDENT draws attention in another column to the apparently perennial tract nuisance. It appears that his little girl was returning from church by train on Saturday and happened to leave her prayer book in the carriage. It was sent to its destination all right but it was found on opening it that a typical specimen of the tract pedlar's wares had been placed within its pages. This "gem," as our correspondent calls it, professes to deal with the subject of prayer, and contains a covert attack on the whole devotional system of the Church. It is one of those puerile productions that have done so much to make tract literature nauseous even to the majority of Protestants. We have no hope that anything we could say would be likely to induce the tract pedlar to mend his foolish ways. The pedlar, like the poor, will be always with us. Nor would we object very much to his ministrations if they were confined to grown-up people. Our people, for the most part, are quite able to defend themselves and their faith in fair argument, and if argument is useless they can fall back on the apostolic injunction and do their best to "suffer fools gladly." But with children the case is different, and to attempt to take advantage of their helplessness and simplicity is both mean and cowardly. We can only endorse our correspondent's caution, and advise parents, especially those who have children travelling regularly by train, to keep a careful watch over their children's reading. If these tract distributors had any manly feeling or sense of honour at all such a caution would never be needed, but experience has shown only too clearly how foolish it would be to rely on their possession of either of those qualities.

Professor Harnack who enjoys the highest authority in Germany as a Protestant divine, in a recent address delivered before a coterie of his co-religionists gives expression to the fact that Protestantism in the Fatherland is tending towards what he calls Catholicism. "The old, narrow, doctrinal form of Protestantism," he says, "is disappearing; the old relation, between theology and Church no longer exists, the ancient system of religious instruction has proved insufficient, there is a tendency towards extending, remodelling, organising, while the clear conception of the fundamental condition of Protestantism is vanishing." The learned Professor very seriously warns his countrymen and co-religionists against this movement. Such a development and organization of German Protestantism, would, he thinks, lead to a weak and ineffectual species of Catholicism, having none of the safe-guards and advantages of Roman Catholicism. "*Roman Catholicism*," says Harnack, "*has the Pope, it has the saints and the monks*," (the italics are Harnack's). These we cannot obtain. The monastic tendency towards the formation of saints, the self-sacrifice, contempt of the world and devotions in the Catholic Church form a mighty barrier and corrective against worldliness and formalism which we do not possess. In the papacy on the other hand, lies the power of adaptation to circumstances, personal authority as against the authority of the letter, the firm conviction that the Church of God in the highest instance is not to be governed by a tradition, but by living men guided by the spirit of God. But Protestantism, if it should continue to develop on the lines of Catholicism, could not reach these ideals for they are excluded from its first principles." The only logical advice for Professor Harnack to give his Protestant fellow countrymen would be to submit to the Pope and the "monks and the saints" would soon be forthcoming from the now sterile soil of German Protestantism. Strange, that an historian and divine of such broad and liberal views should shrink from this conclusion. But stranger still that a rationalist, to whom Christ is a merely human being and the Christian religion is merely human work, should be so eager to preserve in the Fatherland the rigid forms of Lutheranism and be so shy of the slightest symptom of Catholicism.

Mr. Lipton, who recently made the magnificent donation of £25,000 to the Princess of Wales' Poor Dinner Fund, is an Irishman, hailing from the County Monaghan. He was born about four miles from Clones in that county, and after many vicissitudes commenced business in Glasgow some twenty years ago as a provision merchant. In the comparatively brief space of time which has since elapsed he has built up his present enormous business, which is now known all over the world. Mr. Lipton is a Home Ruler, but takes no active part in politics. His subscription, however, is always forthcoming when required, and indeed there is no good case whatever that appeals to him in vain. He is unmarried, and lives at present at Sandgate. He has travelled all over the world in connection with his business, and has just returned from a trip to Ceylon, where he entertained the Marquess and Marchioness of Breadalbane. Mr. Lipton is a tall, thin man with a pleasant face and very charming manners. He has made his huge income by his marvellous organising capacity, his great industry, and application to business. He is practically a teetotaler. Singular to say it is generally believed that since the death of his father and mother, he himself has no

relative left, so that if he were to die intestate his huge property might very easily revert to the Crown. He has, however, it is to be hoped, a long life before him, as he is a comparatively young man. Some time ago he had a very narrow escape owing to the result of an operation which was not at all successful. For some time his life was in critical danger, and on one or two occasions it is said his servants were called in to see him breathe his last. He has now, however, entirely recovered, and is devoting himself with renewed energy to his great undertakings. Mr. Lipton has been constantly pressed for many years to convert his business into a limited liability company, but he has steadily refused all offers to this purpose. He is a great believer in advertising, and his ingenious advertisements in the early days contributed greatly to his success.

A letter from M. Léon Harmel has just appeared in the *France Libre*, a journal published in Lyons in the interests of Christian democracy, in which the writer plainly expresses the conviction that the future is with it. He places all his hopes for the reign of justice and solidarity in the action of a democracy permeated with the Christian spirit which will, by a recognition of mutual rights, bridge over the chasm that sunders the strong from the weak. He spoke of rights before duties because it was from rights that duties sprang. If the father of a family had no rights over his children he would have no duties. The very reason of the depression of the French people was that citizens were no longer taught their rights. Fathers would never have tolerated the monstrous laws which robbed them of all say in the education of their children if they had only known the imprescriptible rights which belonged to them. The same cause lay at the root of the law of divorce that disgraced the home and the law that deprived those dying in hospitals and on the field of battle of the last consolations of religion. Individual rights were often the safeguard of the respect due to the rights of God and the family, and so they were trodden under foot by the Government of France which was made up of Jews and Freemasons. Boys should be taught at school that when they were men they would have the inalienable right of honouring and serving God and of driving away the enemy who tried to insinuate himself within the home. Such rights were also God's, a part of man's dignity and freedom, which should not be allowed to be violated even at the sacrifice of life itself. Such language seemed strange at the present day, yet it was the voice of Christianity that had steeled the martyrs. There was no longer such a thing as fierce hatred of wrong, and so there was no love of right. Injustice stalked boldly through Parliament, and abroad over the nation, without raising anything more formidable than a mere empty parade of indignation. The victims of the Panama scandals were ready to be the defenders of the thieves. Whence came such degrading cowardice but from men's ignorance of their rights, which carried with it the betrayal of duty. Every struggle was denounced as a revolt. If it were not for the Christian democracy, which, echoing the voice of Leo XIII., claimed justice for the lowly and the oppressed, the last day would have dawned on the nation.

The scientific spirit, for better or worse, has invaded even polemics. Father Herbert Thurston, S.J., has laboured conscientiously through forty-nine volumes of the mammoth Dictionary of National Biography for the purpose of comparing the men who entered the Church between the years 1600 and 1800 with those who embraced Anglicanism during the same period. No name appears in the Dictionary, of course, which has not attained to a certain degree of celebrity—a fact which makes the test all the more interesting and conclusive. The result is that of the 178 notable men who changed their religion during that period, 106 are set down as sincere converts to Catholicism, only 22 being classified as "outwardly respectable converts to Anglicanism." It is to be remembered, too, that whatever inducement there might have been to tempt men to adopt the Anglican form of belief, there was none to tempt them into the Church. In accepting Catholicity they had nothing to gain and everything to lose. And it is a notable fact that "among the handful of outwardly respectable converts to Anglicanism there is an absolute dearth of men who seem to have impressed their contemporaries by their singleness of purpose or by any remarkable degree of personal holiness."

A writer in the (Anglican) *Church Review* says: "A correspondent in Rome assures me that it is perfectly true that dispensations for non-fasting communion can be purchased in Rome. It is said that the Pope alone can dispense, and he requires a certificate from the applicant's bishop to the effect that ill-health requires the privilege being granted. Rightly or wrongly, I have heard of Anglican priests sanctioning a little food to great invalids before communion, but I never heard of their making any charge for this." The above paragraph (says the *London Tablet*), is a curious mixture of truth and untruth. Dispensations for non-fasting communion are sometimes granted by the Holy See in cases of sickness, and when the privilege is recommended by the applicant's own