

"I don't guess it's more than three hundred yards," said one, quietly.

"I reckon its most five hundred," said the other, as if he were discussing the weather.

The prisoner was running like a deer, and rapidly approaching the undergrowth around innumerable little huts, where he would be safe.

"Call it four hundred," suggested the first Tennessean, in a conciliatory tone.

They adjusted their sights, aimed, and fired. The escaping convict fell, and the two Tennesseans went out to bring in what was left of him.

"If he's hit in the head, it's my shot," said one.

"I aimed low, acco'din' to a'my regulations," drawled the other.

The convict was found with one bullet through the back of his head and another through the lower end of his spine. They know how to shoot in the mountains of Tennessee.

THE TRIBULATIONS OF THE PULPIT.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the priest has things all to himself when he mounts pulpit or altar to divide the word. Here and there and now and then he has to count with the screams of fractious babes and the horse-coughing of inconsiderate adults. The buzz of a blue-bottle fly would stampee a herd of elephants. And seven pounds weight of sprawling, mewling, kicking, palpitating, human infancy would stop the highest flights of Cicero or Demosthenes, or Bossuet, or Massillon, or Tom Burke, as effectually as if it were a fog-siren or a circus band or a quartz-crushing battery. Only one person is calm, collected, and undisturbed in the face of the profane din that is attracting all eyes and ears and leaving the preacher silent, nonplussed, and as solitary-looking on his perch as a sparrow on the housetop. And that is the fond mother of the arch-disturber. The little bundles of lungs are likely to maintain their ground until the crack o' doom. Why? For two chief reasons: (1) Because no system of logic has yet been devised, or is likely to be devised, which is capable of convincing the materfamilias that the screams, screeches, whoops, yells—or whatever else they may be termed—of her darling could, by the wildest stretch of insane imagination, be disagreeable or disturbing to anybody. And (2) because the priest whose sermon has been knocked all topsy-turvy in his head, and the long-suffering congregation know full well that it would be nothing short of a Bulgarian atrocity to hint, ever so delicately, the desirability of giving the little cooing cherub a little fresh air. Josh Billings wrote: 'When I see a snake in a hole, I say: That hole belongs to that snake. And I moves off to the left.' Preachers who have a wholesome fear of the tomahawk and scalping-knife of feminine eye and tongue, will, on occasion, do likewise, and leave His Majesty the Baby quietly in possession of the church.

Coughing on the part of adults may become, on occasion, as effective a sermon extinguisher as the lungs of a squalling infant. It usually betokens, or causes, broken attention to the discourse—for every medical man knows that in the vast majority of cases of people who are well enough to attend church, the coughing habit is largely controllable by the will. For want of something else to do, the owner of some mind that is a-wool-gathering gives and repeats a few times a sonorous and emphatic 'hem,' or, perhaps, a round, full cough. The epidemic travels like a fit of yawning—and much more rapidly than the whooping-cough or measles. The preacher raises his voice in vain, and, perhaps, wastes the sweetness of his finest trope and happiest illustration upon the desert air. The professional sermon-cougher would cough his harmful and unnecessary cough if the sky were to fall. He would cut in two the thundering period of a Bourdaloue, or the most impassioned sentence of a Peter the Hermit, with the same calm serenity as he would hack at one of those meandering discourses in which, as Whately says, 'the preacher aims at nothing and hits it.' And with throat and lungs as sound as those of Stentor, he will cough, cough, cough at the preacher—like the stroke of an axe falling on a tree—be it summer, with a hot wind that gives a hard, metallic rustle to the totara-leaves, or winter with its honest dry frost and snow, or its damp, dank, raw winds that search like X-rays into your bone and marrow.

The great pulpit orator, the late Mr. Spurgeon, found a tolerably effective remedy for the coughing nuisance. Many years ago, while preaching at his Tabernacle in London, a number of his audience started coughing. The epidemic passed swiftly around the mighty audience until the coughing rose to a storm. Spurgeon paused in his discourse. When the storm had somewhat subsided he said: 'My dear friends, I have a cough; you have coughs. But I think we can stop them if we try. So let us have a cough, a good cough, and a cough altogether. Now—!' 'The result,' says one who was present, 'was terrific. But, after half a minute's uproar,

Spurgeon concluded his sermon in perfect silence.' Our hard-wrought clergy throughout New Zealand will be grateful for the hint.

THE CROMWELL CENTENARY.

The wildest and worst vagaries of human character and conduct will find a fat-witted apologist here and there. Cranks are not few, and religious, racial, and political bias disturb and warp and twist and fuddle the judgment after the manner of strong spirits—sometimes to the extent of causing a sort of mental *delirium tremens*. In the midst of an apparently rational conversation a man so affected will see troops of his particular pink snakes and blue devils—just as, for instance, Dr. Horton sees 'Jesuits in disguise' (male and female) at every corner down the street, and even in the *sanctum sanctorum* of his neighbours' kitchens and the lofty pulpits of the English Protestant Church. Such mental warp will read revolution and massacre in the wink of a passing eye. It will, on the other hand, be ready to find lofty virtue in the greatest crime. I am reminded of all this by the fact that the third centenary of Oliver Cromwell is on; that the English Nonconformists are celebrating it on a large scale—as they are fully entitled to do; that a 'graven image' of him has been erected at his birthplace in Huntingdon; and that strenuous efforts are being made in various quarters to whitewash—or gild—his conduct in the Irish campaigns. We have had a faint-hearted and apologetic endeavour of this kind in Dunedin. In the course of a lecture on the Protector, a Baptist clergyman is reported to have said that too much was made of the Drogheda (Ireland) massacre against Cromwell, because, as Froude says, 'the Drogheda garrison suffered no more than the letter of the laws of war permitted.' Cromwell would not allow any outrage or cruelty to be committed upon women and children. He even forbade pillage, and only those were to be put to death that had taken up arms against him.

Here we have—in Froude—a conspicuous example of religious, racial, and political bias driving a man to mental *delirium tremens*. It was a moral impossibility for James Anthony Froude to pass a consciously sane verdict on anything that was Catholic, and especially if it were at the same time Catholic and Irish. Dr. Freeman—Regius Professor of History in Oxford University—referred in scathing terms (*Contemporary Review*, March, 1878) to Froude's 'fanatical hatred' of the Catholic Church, his 'constant inaccuracy of reference and quotation,' his 'endless displays of ignorance,' etc. A rather startling evidence of his insane hatred of Catholics is furnished by Lecky in his *Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*. In 1723 a Bill was brought in by the Irish House of Commons ordering all unregistered Catholic clergy to depart out of the kingdom before March 25, 1724, unless they had in the meantime taken the oath of Abjuration of Popery. The penalty for non-compliance was the same as for high treason: that is to say, the offending cleric was to be hanged, cut down, *disembowelled* while still living, and then quartered as a butcher quarters a carcass of mutton. 'By another clause,' says Lecky (i, 164), 'it was provided that all [Catholic] bishops, deans, monks, and vicars-general found in the country, should be liable to the same horrible fate, and in their case the *Abjuration Oath* was not admitted as an alternative.' Lecky tells us in the same work (p. 165, note) that 'Mr. Froude warmly supports this attempted legislation.'

So much for Froude's animus against Catholics. The work of his referred to by the Dunedin clergyman-lecturer is his *English in Ireland*. Lecky tells us (i, 13, note) that it 'is intended to blacken to the utmost the character of the Irish people, and especially of the Irish Catholics.' In another place he tells us that Froude's book 'has no more claim to impartiality than an election squib.' Other respectable and responsible authorities might be quoted by the dozen in the same sense. But enough has been said to discredit the sole authority on which the Dunedin apologist of Cromwell relied for a vindication of the massacre perpetrated at Drogheda in 1649.

And now as to the facts of the massacre and sack of Drogheda. It is certain that quarter was promised to the gallant garrison by Cromwell's officers. It is equally certain that when the promise had effected its purpose, the order of 'no quarter' was given by Cromwell himself. An authority on the subject says: 'The refusal of quarter is a terrible aggravation of the horrors of war, and is only at all justifiable towards an enemy who has been guilty of atrocious cruelty himself, or of some flagrant breach of faith.' No such accusation could be laid to the charge of either the garrison or the people of Drogheda. Neither had any connection with the so-called massacre of eight years previously (1641), nor was any breach of faith on their part even hinted at. The whole bad business was, in fact, a gross violation of the laws of war, even as understood in those wild days. The Irish Protestant historian of the Civil Wars (ii, 21) says that 'though quarter had been promised by his officers, Cromwell refused to ratify the agreement, and ordered the garrison to be put to the sword.' But not the garrison alone. Unarmed men, women,