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Current Topics

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A GREAT SPEECH.

IN another place we publish the first instalment of a speech recently made by the Archbishop of Dublin on the question of a Catholic University for Ireland, and to which, as well as to the instalments of it still to come, we would direct the particular attention of our readers. The Archbishop not only deals exhaustively and ably with the special subject under consideration, but also touches on the whole question of Catholic education. It is difficult to see what answer can be made to his Grace's arguments by those who are bound to oppose them. Nothing can surpass the strength and clearness of his reasoning, and it would certainly seem that in the eyes of any fair-minded, unprejudiced man, it must prove conclusive. What, moreover, must obtain for the Archbishop's arguments additional consideration from every such man is his moderation and the respect shown by him towards those who differ from him. Even his humour is free from any caustic taint, and distinguishes him as possessing a heart as kind as his brain is clear or his intellect powerful. Among the points proved by the Archbishop's speech, and we cannot pretend to examine them in detail—which, however, is not necessary, as our readers will have an opportunity of themselves reading them—is the complete failure of the concessions so far made with a view of meeting the claims of Catholics, and the impossibility of their being accepted. His Grace also shows beyond all power of contradiction the right of the Irish Catholic people to consideration in the matter of education arising from the great success of the efforts independently made by them. He does not appear to place very much reliance on the promise, or the semblance of a promise, lately made by Mr. Balfour as to the fulfilment of the Catholic desires, but the finest passage in his speech is that with which he repudiates all possibility of the purchase by the Tories of political concessions to their party by any grant of the kind referred to. In this connection the Archbishop quotes a clause from *Magna Charta*, pledging those from whom it was exacted to refrain from selling justice. Speaking in his own name and that of his brethren of the Irish Episcopacy, he says, "I give you this assurance, that, whilst we claim justice, we shall never stoop to purchase it, and, least of all, could we even harbour the thought of purchasing it at the sacrifice, or even at the risk, of the rights of the Irish tenants or of the Irish nation." This speech of the Archbishop's, in fact, is not only a masterpiece of reasoning and eloquence, forcible, lucid, and excelling in beauty of style and language; it is also the utterance of the Christian who thoroughly enters into the spirit of his holy faith, and of the patriot who recognises and at all costs maintains the rights and just claims of his country. We again recommend to our readers the careful study of this great speech.

OPPOSITION to "Clericalism," then, may, after all, SHOWING THE be somewhat suspiciously associated. Even the CLOVEN HOOF. more advanced minds of the day, if they be sincere in their pretensions to advancement, and have not, as may, perhaps, be occasionally the case, motives a little mixed, must be staggered at finding a combination to overthrow a government formed between those who are opposed to Clericalism and those who are devoted to slavery. Such has been the case, it seems, in Brazil, where the men who would emancipate mankind from the control of Christianity have received valuable aid in overthrowing the government of Dom Pedro from the slave-holders, enraged at the emancipation of their slaves, recently carried out by the Princess-Regent during the absence in Europe of her father, the Emperor. The advanced spirit of the age, therefore, would appear to be placed in something of a quandary. If it holds Clericalism in detestation, can it give its approval to slavery? Is it not, indeed, its pretence that the opposition it offers to Clericalism springs from its devotion to freedom? It might have been thought that the advanced spirit of the age would even itself make so much of a concession as to acknowledge that the Pope was to be applauded for the efforts recently made by him for the total abolition of slavery throughout the

world, and that, in particular, it would have supported his Holiness in the approbation expressed by him of the action in this matter of the Princess Regent of Brazil; may be remembered that the Holy Father, in recognition of her Imperial Highness the golden rose. But as to the coloured population emancipated, what, under the circumstances, is to be their fate? May we judge in any way, for example, by the disposition shown towards such a population in the United States. We honestly confess that we, for our part, should expect more Christian behaviour from a white population consisting of members of the various Protestant sects, such as that among which the negroes of the Southern States are scattered, than we should from white men perverted from the Catholic faith into enemies of Clericalism. But what do we find in the United States? A condition of things that seems destined to develop into a war of races. The hatred felt by the white men towards their coloured neighbours is manifested whenever the opportunity offers in murderous attacks and massacres. We had recently received details respecting outbreaks of the kind that were full of disgrace for the States concerned, and which indeed in some degree formed a blot upon the whole Union. How, therefore, can the unfortunate coloured men in Brazil hope to fare, exposed as they will be to vindictive usage by people who have thrown off the restraints of Christianity? The deposition of Dom Pedro has apparently paved the way for cruel times in Brazil. Fonseca and his followers, who, without cause, without even a show of reason, expelled the Emperor, a man of a most liberal and progressive spirit, shared to the full by his daughter and heiress, have entered upon a course of bloodshed, shooting without remorse all those who ventured to dissent from their usurpation, and the probabilities are that they themselves will in turn be put to death. The future of the country, in short, which seemed assured, and for which there was abundant promise, has been made doubtful, and at least a period, of more or less duration, fraught with evil, may be expected to ensue. So far, then, nothing good can be discerned in the revolution that has taken place. On the contrary, a great deal that is bad has already occurred, and there is every reason to fear the occurrence of much more. It is decidedly a case in which the anti-Clerical fury is associated with misdeeds that cannot be concealed or palliated, and where it is seen in open opposition to the principles, in support of which it is supposed to be evoked.

A SUSPICIOUS CASE.

THIS divorce case, trumped up, most probably, to discredit Mr. Parnell, is an undertaking that pays a remarkable homage to the morality of Ireland.— It is, meantime, an undertaking that seems completely in keeping with the nature of Mr. Parnell's antagonists and those of the Irish cause. Sir Robert Peel, for example, the other day referred to their most refined section as "filthy witches," stigmatising them for their foulness in attacking his moral character, as a method of defeat. We find again Mr. Labouchere, in *Truth* of November 7, speaking of them as "Primrose Jezebels" and "back-biting shrews." But, since both Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Labouchere are habitués of high society and know what is due from men of any respectability to women, we may be convinced they have not spoken in this manner without good cause. The charge brought against Mr. Parnell, therefore, seems to be quite characteristic, and only in keeping with what we might expect. There is a special necessity, moreover, for something of the kind just at present. The Tories are compelled to bring forward something of an exceptionally sensational kind and as disgracefully so as possible. The Irish leaders have announced that Pigott's diary has come into their possession and that they are determined to enliven the next session of Parliament by revealing its contents in the House of Commons. Against this it is absolutely needful for the Tories to provide, so far as possible, and they can evidently find no more suitable steps to take than this one of the divorce case. If they can only bring out a little scandal to divert the public mind, and, if possible, to blacken Mr. Parnell's reputation, so much the better. Although, as they must recognise, the measure is wholly inadequate to the effect they desire to produce. The chief suggestion of the case, however, is that of the homage paid to Ireland, for it is there, after all, that they must hope for their principal gain. Accusations, in fact, of the kind they now make can do little, even if proved true, generally to damage the career of a public