

security at 6 per cent.; with it anyone would advance it at 2½ per cent. Can anything, therefore, be more absurd than to say that the guarantee is nominal?

But the scheme for the congested districts is even more scandalous. The land, for agricultural purposes, is, generally speaking, worthless. Irishmen live on it because it is their home, and because they have built their houses on it. Mr. Balfour proposes to immigrate or emigrate a portion of the population, and to throw several holdings into one. As the residential value would thus disappear, he asks that the landlord should be paid for the existing residential value from funds belonging to the public. This is much as though the ratepayers of the metropolis were told that they must pay landlords of insanitary rookeries the value of their rookeries, based upon the rents that they have derived from herding human beings in styes like animals. The houses that are to be pulled down belong, be it remembered, to the tenants. They are to receive nothing for them, for evidently a tenant-right in a house to be pulled down is non-existing.

Mr. Balfour explained that several principles must be laid down in a Land Purchase Bill for Ireland. Here are those which alone would make such a Bill acceptable to Liberals:—1. It must involve no use of Imperial credit. 2. It must involve no use of Irish credit without the assent of the Irish people whose credit is pledged. 3. It must be approved by the Irish people through their representatives.

WELL SPENT.

(From *Truth*, March 27.)

"GENERAL" HAIG (presumably an officer of the Salvation Army) was recently sent by the Irish Church Missions Society to inquire into what was doing in Ireland, with a view to convert Catholics into Protestants. The "General" has discovered that there is "comparatively little to show in the shape of direct and openly-confessed conversions," and he therefore feels inclined to doubt "encouraging reports." "But," somewhat illogically continues the "General," "for the sake of the poor people themselves we are obliged to be silent about results." Under those circumstances what does he suggest? "That the older Missions should be closed in the West, where the people have heard the Gospel for thirty or forty years, and that the staff employed there should be sent to evangelise other parts of Ireland." The report winds up with the usual demand for funds.

The Irish Church Missions have spent about £200,000 in the last ten years. They have no converts, for *de non apparentibus et de non existentibus* is one and the same thing. This vast sum of money has been expended in salaries and travelling expenses in the West of Ireland. Failure having resulted there, they have now the impudence to ask for funds to try elsewhere. The society appears to be little more than an association for collecting funds to secure salaries to officials, and it is to be hoped the public will not be so silly as to part with more money for this purpose. It may be desirable that Jews should become Christians, and that Catholics should become Protestants. I see no reason, however, why large amounts should be subscribed to enable persons to make a living by not converting Jews or Catholics, and yet this is really the outcome of the Society for the Conversion of the Jews and the Irish Church Missions Society.

ARCHBISHOP KIRBY AND THE BRITISH ENVOY AT ROME.

(The *Nation*, March 29)

We are glad to be able to lay before our readers full and authentic details of what transpired at the St. Patrick's Day dinner in the Irish College, Rome, between the British Envoy to the Vatican and the Rector of the Irish College. Sir John Simmons has, since he entered Rome, been seeking for the recognition of the Irish representatives there. He went so far on the occasion of the celebration of the festival of St. Thomas at the English College as to publicly ask the Rector of the Irish College, Archbishop Kirby, for an invitation to the St. Patrick's Day celebration. We ventured at the time to express the hope that it would not be given. The motive of the extraordinary departure from the lines of official etiquette was too plain. Manifestly it was simply an attempt to get the Envoy-Extraordinary for the affairs of Malta accepted as an Envoy-Extraordinary for the affairs of Ireland by the Irish representatives at Rome. We wished to see the attempt defeated. Archbishop Kirby has, however, accomplished our desire without going the length of meeting discourtesy with discourtesy. He invited the English Envoy as an ordinary guest, but he made it plain that neither at Rome nor at home is the party which sent Sir John Simmons to Rome likely to be accepted as the friends and exponents of Irish Catholic feeling. The veracious correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* was, of course, equal to the occasion. He telegraphed home his own version of what happened on the occasion. The banquet was described as one given in honour of the English Envoy, and Monsignor Kirby was represented as having made a fulsome speech of admiration for English authority. We did not need our Roman correspondent's contradiction of this stuff to correctly estimate its truth. In order to effectively dispose of the story and to allay all the needless apprehensions to which it gave rise, he forwards us to-day the full report of Archbishop Kirby's speech. It was delivered in presence not only of the English Envoy, but of the Cardinal-vicar also; and it made clear that the courtesy extended to the Envoy was of the most purely formal character. He pointed out that if the sons of the Church established by St. Patrick had been retained in allegiance by the laws of conscience and morality preached by that Church, England has special reason to be grateful. Besides that allegiance for conscience sake, declared Dr. Kirby, there was sometimes another which arose from the love and

gratitude of a people who have the good fortune to be under a Government whose laws and administration are animated by a spirit of justice, equity, and of impartiality, and of paternal solicitude. "Whether the Catholics of Ireland ought to feel themselves bound by these latter motives of submission to their Government is a point which it is not expedient for me to discuss, and much less to affirm on this festive occasion, devoted to the joyous memory of St. Patrick." Unpalatable truths were not made for festive occasions. But Dr. Kirby indicated pretty clearly his own view by expressing the hope that "He, in whose hands are the hearts of kings and the rights of nations," may yet "effect that the political power which England exercises in Ireland shall be based, through the justice and wisdom of her statesmen, not on the terror of material force, but in the hearts and affections of a grateful and generous people." Our correspondent speaks of the excellent effect produced by those words. It is the aim of the enemies of Ireland at Rome to spread the belief that everything that need be done has been done for Ireland, and that it is Irish unreasonableness and turbulence that cause all the present troubles. The venerable Rector of the Irish College has made it clear that such is not his belief, and that such is not the belief of the episcopate whose agent he is in his present position. If the British Envoy knew that his presence at the Irish College would have elicited these declarations he would probably have found himself engaged elsewhere on the occasion. Whatever himself and his attendant, Captain Ross, of Bladensburg, the author of the blood-curdling article on Irish secret societies which appeared in *Macmillan's* a couple of years ago, and represented Ireland as honeycombed with secret organisations—whatever they may be engaged in plotting one thing their plots cannot accomplish and that is the misrepresentation of Irish Catholic opinion. It repudiates them. It looks upon their work with suspicion. They hold no warrant from any authority in Ireland. They are simply, as far as Ireland is concerned, the agents of the political party which attempts to maintain English power here on the basis of material force. What the moral standing of that party is Archbishop Kirby has defined with sufficient clearness, and his definition is the definition that would be given by the Bishops of Ireland. The aged prelate has rendered his country a signal service by his timely words, and their effect will not be lost at Rome.

IS THE SUN BLUE?

ONE of the shining lights of astronomical science has this to say in regard to the colour of the sun:—

It may be asked, "What suggests the idea that the sun is blue?" My own attention was directed this way many years ago, when measuring the heat and light from different parts of the sun's disc. It is known that the sun has an atmosphere of its own which tempers its heat, and, by cutting off certain radiations and not others, produces the spectral lines with which we are so familiar. These lines we usually study in connection with the absorbing vapours of sodium, iron, etc., which produce them; but my own attention was particularly given to the regions of absorption, or to the colour it caused.

In these investigations I found that the sun's body must be of a deep bluish colour, and that it would shed deep blue light, except for the solar atmosphere, which is usually spoken of as being colourless, but which really plays the part of a reddish veil, letting a little of the blue appear on the centre of the sun's disc, where it is the thinnest, and staining the edge red, so as to appear to a delicate test as being a pale aquamarine in the centre and a deep garnet around the edge. The effect I found to be so important that, were this all but invisible solar atmosphere diminished only by a third part, the temperature of all temperate zones would rise higher than any torrid zone, and make the greater part of the world uninhabitable.

These studies directed my attention to the great practical importance of studying the action of our own terrestrial atmosphere on the sun, and the antecedent probability that our own air was also, and independently of having the effect of making a really blue sunshine and sun appear as white when it should appear of a cerulean hue.—*St. Louis Republic*.

Mr. Cobb, the sturdy Home Rule member for the Rugby division of Warwickshire, had Mr. Henry Mathews up again on Thursday (says a London paper, March 25), to answer a question about some money the notorious forger, Richard Pigott, received from the excellent Mr. Soames of the *Times*. Mr. Cobb asked the Home Secretary, amidst Irish cheers, whether he would now give the respective dates in August and September, 1888, upon which the £10 note and the £5 note, which formed part of the remittance received from the late Richard Pigott by his housekeeper on the 23rd February, 1889, were drawn from the bank by Mr. Soames, and the number of such notes; and whether he could ascertain and would state to whom Mr. Soames paid such notes, and on what date or dates. Mr. Mathews replied that he had no better means than the hon. member of ascertaining on what dates Mr. Soames drew money from his bankers or paid it to his witnesses; and, therefore, he had not traced the notes in question. Mr. Cobb—Have the police traced them? Mr. Mathews—Not that I am aware of. Mr. Labouchere—As the right hon. gentleman is responsible to this House for the action of the police, will he be good enough to make inquiries? Mr. Mathews—That is not in the original question. Mr. Labouchere—Will the right hon. gentleman ask the police whether, in their investigations, they discovered when these notes were drawn and to whom they were paid?—Mr. Jesse Collings took it upon him to give a decided negative, whereat there was laughter loud and long. Mr. Cobb again asked his questions on Monday; but the Home Secretary could only lamely say that the police had learned that the £10 remitted by Pigott to his housekeeper had been issued on Mr. Soames's cheque, but they had not ascertained when or to whom Mr. Soames paid the notes.