

cause of their belonging to some sect, to relieve the State by putting their hands into their own pockets for the education of their children, if the scholars so referred to were examined by the Government inspector in the same subjects as taught in the State schools, there should be a contribution made to them. The capitation to the public schools was £3 15s per child. Now it would be simply a matter of strict abstract justice to give them a part of this capitation. In his own early life in India he was much impressed with the manner in which a nation of different castes and creeds was ruled by a handful of men, who administered level-headed justice where the difficulties were so great, and at times so alarming, that a man might consider his nearest road to Paradise was by chopping off the head of a next-door neighbour, and where the sword and dagger were unceasingly at work. To carry out his plan would strengthen education, by removing a feeling of injustice that existed, and old sores would be healed, instead of festering till they became less curable. In seven sessions of Parliament he had never spoken on this question, but if a measure like Mr. Pyke's Bill came up for consideration he should vote for private schools being aided in the way stated."

ACCORDING to the cable, Mr. Gladstone must have changed his mind on the road between Edinburgh and Dalkeith. One day, speaking in Edinburgh he justified the resistance of the Irish people to the hateful laws. The next, speaking at Dalkeith, he condemned the Plan of Campaign, the most effective method of resistance that has been found, and pronounced it unnecessary. Is Mr. Gladstone dotting, then, or is the cable—romancing?

"SIR C. GAVAN DUFFY, in a letter to Archbishop Croke, declares that if the Land Purchase Bill introduced into the British Parliament by Mr. Balfour was submitted to an Irish Parliament it would be received with an outburst of enthusiasm, and he advises its prompt acceptance by the Irish party." Sir C. Gavan Duffy can speak for himself—few men better, and therefore we shall not venture to excuse him.

ANOTHER victory in the shape of a by-election has been obtained. Mr. Buby, a Home Ruler, has beaten Colonel Egerton for Eccles by 4901 votes, against 4691, or a majority of 210. The tide still flows in the right direction.

IRISH navvies are men of spirit. A number of them engaged for Australia, we are told, refused to start and returned penniless to Dublin. On reaching the port of sail they no doubt learned that they were to be brought out as "black-legs."

MR. BALFOUR and Mr. Gladstone, we are told, are both agreed as to the necessity of making a settlement of the Irish question, if only to remove the block it effectually offers to all other business. We may gather that the right hon. gentlemen have severally expressed their opinions, and we know that they are widely divided as to the methods of settlement.

MR. BALFOUR has actually proved his right to the epithet "brave." He has travelled along Connaught railways and driven along Connaught roads in the broad daylight and without any one nearer than the next police barrack—a couple of miles off at most—to protect him from being shot. We hope Mr. Balfour may recognise a bad potato when he sees one, and reward the Connaught men for not shooting him by supplying them with something instead of it. Meantime, nothing could be more astonishing, as Mr. Balfour no doubt knew very well, than that anyone on either side of the Shannon should have a slap at him. His epithet of "brave" is cheaply earned. It would be well if he had as easily earned that of "bloody."

MR. WILLIAM HURCHISON announces himself as a candidate for the representation of the Dunedin electorate.

OWING to an oversight we have hitherto omitted to announce the marriage of Miss Mary Hill, daughter of Mr. Charles Hill, Kai-korai Valley, and niece of Mr. Edward Carroll of Mornington, which took place at St. Joseph's Cathedral on September 24th, to Mr. Luke Mullany, son of Mr. Mullany of Merton. It is never too late to mend, however, and we are happy now to correct the fault, wishing, besides, to the young couple, a long and prosperous career.

Messrs. Smith Brothers are holding an obligatory sale at their establishment in Gorge street, Dunedin. The stock must be sold, and prices are fixed accordingly.

The Zealandia boots, manufactured by Messrs. Skelton, Frostick and Co., Christchurch, are highly recommended. They are pronounced in every respect first-class.

Mr. J. McKay, of Cookham House, Princes street, Dunedin, has purchased the City Foot Palace, corner of George and St. Andrew streets, which he will conduct in a manner deserving for his establishment its title. Mr. McKay will personally supervise the business and his high reputation and well known experience are a sufficient guarantee for the excellence of the goods offered to the public.—Attention also is given to moderate prices.

A TRUE GHOST STORY.

(By the REV. FATHER EDMUND, C.P., in the *Ave Maria*.
No doubt, there are ghosts and ghouls. I am no more a believer than the widest of my readers in such goblins, as the nursery-maid frightened us withal; or, again, in phantoms of the kind we heard about in "creepy" tales at school. But the word "ghost" properly means *spirit* or *soul*; and I do believe that departed souls are allowed now and then, and for some good reason, to visit friends on earth, and under the same appearance as to form, sometimes even as to dress, which they wore in this mortal life. I believe this because there is far too much evidence for the *fact* of such apparitions to leave it an open question with any unprejudiced mind.

But those who defend the existence of ghosts are generally under the disadvantage of not having seen one themselves. They can only speak from what they have heard or read. This enables the sceptic to jeer; and it is easy to raise a laugh on such a subject without either the wit or the amiableness of Byron's lines:

"Grim reader, did you ever see a ghost?

No; but you've heard—I understand; be dumb.

And don't regret the time you may have lost,

For you have got that pleasure still to come."

I deem it, then, no small gain to my own belief in these apparitions that *I have* seen one myself, and without further prelude I proceed to the narration.

It was on the 11th of February, 1887. Our community here in Buenos Ayres, though smaller than usual at the time, was bravely carrying out our rule of rising at night to sing Office in choir. We follow here the custom of our North American province as to the hour of rising, viz., at two o'clock in summer and at half-past one in winter. February being a summer month in this part of the world, we had risen at two on the morning of the 11th, and had finished our Office at three; but, according to rule, we had to remain in choir meditating till half-past three—then back to bed.

Now, here I must make a confession, since my story positively requires it. Our chief superior, or provincial (as we call him—though the province, as such, is not yet formed), had been away several months—having gone first to Rome and then to the United States; and we were eagerly awaiting his return. There was much disquietude among us about certain matters, and on this particular morning my own mind was unusually perturbed—so that, indeed, I had great difficulty in attending to the Divine Office. In fact, if the truth must be told, I had experienced for the first time (since becoming a religious) a severe temptation against continuing in community life; and had partially entertained it.

Well, when Matins and Lauds, with the regular prayers which follow according to our custom, were over, I judged it a good move to go into the garden for a few minutes, to see if the fresh air would not calm me. As our house was then (it has been added to since), the choir was close to the garden—being at the end of a corridor which led out into the garden. So, forth I went.

The night was clear, though some light clouds were in the sky. No moon, but light enough to distinguish the trees and the plots for some little distance. (Be it remembered we have no twilight here, as in the North.) I was closing the door behind me, my hand still on the knob, when I perceived with some surprise the figure of a Passionist standing bareheaded about six yards from me, and on a patch of ground which had remained grassless, the stump of an old tree having been extracted there. This spot was round, and completely covered by the habit of its occupant. It struck me as singular that he had chosen that particular spot to stand on, since he must have wetted his feet in crossing the grass to get to it. Besides, was it not Brother E., who was too ill to rise for choir? He was the only religious not in attendance that night, and I knew that none had left the choir but myself. It was the time of the "greater silence," or I should have remonstrated with him for thus exposing himself to further illness.

But now, looking at the figure more closely, I saw that it was not Brother E. It was not tall enough for him, neither was the head his. The hair was of another colour, and the outline of the face, as far as I could distinguish it, was very different. Besides, I reflected, Brother E. could not have gone into the garden without passing the choir door, which was wide open; so that we must have heard him.

Then . . . *who was it?* Here a feeling of awe came over me. Could it be my dear friend the provincial? Was he dead, and was this apparition meant to tell me so? (We had not even heard from him for an unusually long time, and were wondering what could be the reason.) The figure stood facing westward, away from me; and I caught but the profile of the face, and that too indistinctly to be sure of the features. But, for a minute, I thought it did look very like the provincial; and would have spoken but for feeling tongue-tied. The next minute, however, I reflected that it had not his height, and looked more like Brother A., who had died in Buenos Ayres two years before, and for whom I had prayed a good deal. Then, again, had it been a priest, I should have noticed the tonsure (the head being in a position to show it).

Well, I shall never forgive myself for not speaking. The apparition seemed waiting for me to do so, but I was too long in summoning courage. However, I did not retreat into the house. *He* was the first to move. With a motion like that of a bird taking wing, the figure *shook itself out*, dissolving from the head downward; and the last thing I saw was the black rim of the habit vanishing off the ground—off the bare spot of earth, which gleamed out under the starlight.

I walked down the steps and along the path for a couple of minutes before entering the house, and when I got back to the choir my feelings had indeed calmed down. I felt how very foolish I had been to let myself become so upset, and I spent the remainder of the time until half-past three in fervent prayer and renewal of confidence in our Blessed Lord and Lady; resolving to go to confession without delay, and never again to entertain for an instant the thought of giving up my religious vocation.

A few days after came a letter from the provincial, explaining his long silence, and gladdening us with the news that he was just