

about to sail from New York. So that it certainly was not *his* ghost I had seen—unless he had met with death on the voyage. But this possibility did not trouble me at all; for the more I thought on the question, the more sure I became that the spirit was that of Brother A.,—a persuasion which gathered confirmation in my mind from the happy arrival of the provincial in due time. Moreover, the tranquilizing effect of the vision made me attribute it to the goodness of our Blessed Mother, who had sent it, I felt sure, as a warning in a moment of doubt and anger.

Now, if anyone consider what I saw the result of "heated imagination," I answer that my imagination was not working at all at the time I first saw the apparition, and that it became chilled rather than heated. Equally at fault must be the theory of "optical illusion" in the case. Moreover, the way in which the phantom disappeared—*withdrawing deliberately and reluctantly, rather than vanishing—made me certain beyond doubt that I had seen a spirit sustaining for a moment the appearance of a body. Probably I shall never know for sure who my visitant was until I die, but his presence has left upon my memory an indelible impression while this mortal life shall last.*

ON THE BRUTAL TELLING OF THE TRUTH.

(By MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN in the *Ave Maria*.)

TRUTH is held by the Protestant English to be their inheritance. Queen Elizabeth, the most successful and accomplished liar of her time, according to Green, the historian, preserved it to them when she defeated the Spanish Armada. English literature since her time is full of the repeated assertion that foreigners are liars, and that truth is an English virtue exclusively. And yet, like the jewel in the toad's head, it has been well hidden at times. Our friends the English Protestants have always been sticklers for the exact telling of the truth in small matters. The Puritans would never forbear to utter an unpleasant truth to their neighbours, if the advantage of the utterance were on their own side. But if it were necessary to plunge Truth deeper into her well, that she might not illuminate a sharp bargain with an Indian for a bit of land, the Puritan could do it with serenity.

The doctrine that it is as great "a sin to steal a pin" as to defraud the widow and the orphan was cherished by these fierce truth-tellers, and flaunted by them in the face of the lax Papis, who held that some sins were greater than others. This unreasonable Puritanical confusion is helping modern Protestantism to say, with Benan, "I drop sin out altogether."

Experience has shown that the truth in the hands of people who consider themselves to be entirely truthful, is a weapon more destructive than a knife controlled by a Malay running a-muck. To love truth is a precious virtue; to speak it in season and out of season is a detestable vice. To say, "It is truth," after one has ruined a neighbour's reputation may sound noble to the man or woman with a hard heart and a Puritanised conscience; it is *not* noble; it is base. To tell the truth unseasonably is often a crime against charity. Truth-telling is often the keenest and most poisonous weapon of the envious. Indeed, it is generally the envious who condemn their brutal uncharitableness by the cry of "the truth, the truth, and nothing but the truth!"

It is true that Jack Stripling was in gaol ten years ago for spending his employer's money for candy and dime novels. He was thirteen years old then, and the affair was bad enough; he was punished; he repented; he is a man now, honorable, honest, respected; nobody knew of it in his new neighbourhood until the other day. His youngest boy came home in tears, broken-hearted, in a world that had suddenly become as gloomy as night. A dear old lady—a pious, conscientious old lady—had considered it her duty to tell the truth, the plain "unvarnished truth," about poor Stripling to a few friends. There are men serving out life sentences in the penitentiaries with purer souls and less to answer for than that veteran truth-teller—who, by the way, is not a Puritan, but a constant attendant at all the services of the Church. She seems to have everything but charity.

A brutal truth-teller does more harm than a liar. The words of a liar soon pass for what they are worth; but truth is truth after all, and it can be made a heavy weapon—a bludgeon to crush the heart out of those who are trying to live down the past—a dagger to poison hope—an extinguisher for reverence and respect. A brutal truth told without warrant has been known to weaken faith itself. There is no doubt of the fact that whenever you meet a man or woman who protests his or her devotion to the truth at all times and seasons, you meet a malicious and uncharitable man or woman, an envious and bad-tempered man or woman.

If truth in our daily life serve charity, and kindness, and cheerfulness, let it be told a hundred times a day. But the just man who blurts it out on all occasions probably falls as often as he blurts it out. Frankness, which our Puritan friends protest they cherish above all things, is detestable unless tempered by tact. When two friends begin to examine each other's consciences, relations are becoming strained, though they may both love the truth.

If some of our Pharisees—there are Catholic as well as non-Catholic Pharisees—had the opportunity of telling some home-truths to St. Mary Magdalen before she found Our Lord, she would probably have gone back in despair to her sin. There are more crimes committed every day in the name of truth than in the name of liberty. Calumny may be lived down, but who can live down detraction?

Readers of the funny column in the papers are familiar with stories of the meanest man. We think the record is broken by the story of the seizure by the Dublin Castle authorities of the manuscript of William O'Brien's novel written during his confinement in Galway gaol. The gaolers seized it on the ground that "as it had been written on prison paper it was the property of the Government."—Our wit-and-humour editors will find it hard to beat this.

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL, DUNEDIN.

ON Friday evening, at 7 p.m., the stations of the cross recently received from Munich, were canonically erected by his Lordship the Bishop, assisted by the Rev. Fathers Lynch, Adm., G. Ilden, and O'Neill, in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin. We have already spoken of the stations as admirable samples of the particular branch of art. Some further details, however, may not be uninteresting to our readers. Each station, framed in a Gothic arch of white and gold, supported on pillars, and surmounted by a cross, forms a group in relief, the prominent figures standing boldly out—those of less interest seen behind them not being quite so much raised from the back-ground, which is painted so as to suggest the surroundings among which the particular event took place. The first station shows us our Divine Lord led away from Pilate's judgment seat. His is a sublime and beautiful figure, clad in a white vestment, with a mantle of red, and wearing round his head the crown of thorns. The figure of the Saviour, we need not say, occupies the chief place in every group, and the identity both of person and dress is well preserved all through. Pontius Pilate is shown discharging his responsibility by washing his hands in a basin presented to him by a page. He is arrayed in a robe of light buff colour. His air is imperious and grand, and suitable to the position he occupies. The low-standing of the guard, or executioner, into whose keeping the Saviour has been committed, is shown by his semi-nude condition. He, however, wears a kind of tunic, green in colour. In the second station two of these low officials are seen placing the cross on Jesus' shoulders. In the back-ground, under a blue sky, the buildings of a stately courtyard are represented. In the third station the Saviour has fallen to the ground, looking pathetically out upon the people. A half-naked guard raises a scourge to strike him, and two Roman soldiers are seen in the back-ground—that of a street. In the fourth station the Blessed Virgin meets our Lord. She wears a snow-white veil, a mantle of blue, and an undergarment of pale purple; her feet are bare. The artist, as also in the case of the Saviour, has succeeded in giving her a face and figure of sublime beauty, delicate and pure in an extreme degree. In the back-ground, at the foot of a tower, one of the holy women is seen, clad in a red mantle. There is also a soldier and the guard or executioner. In the fifth station Simon of Cyrene appears, a quaint figure clad in a purple tunic. In the sixth, Veronica, kneeling at the feet of Jesus, presents him with a white cloth. Her attitude is graceful. She wears a turban of pale yellow and blue; a white handkerchief is round her neck, her mantle is green with gold stripes, and her under-dress dark pink. Simon of Cyrene, with an effort, holds up the cross, but the executioner is impatient, and plies his scourge. In the seventh station the Saviour has fallen the second time: the executioner again plies his scourge. The back-ground is a rickety pretty, with white clouds in a blue sky, feathery trees, and far-off hills—but the sinister figure of a Jewish elder is also seen there, dark, lowering, and sardonic. In the eighth station, a woman in a green dress, with a half-naked child, kneels at the Saviour's feet. He holds up his hand in blessing. Another woman, in a blue mantle, is seen behind the cross, appealing by her attitude to heaven. In every station one or two of the executioners is close beside the Saviour. In the ninth station, the Saviour has fallen for the third time—now completely exhausted. Simon of Cyrene, still holding the cross, also appears fatigued. The executioner clutches the Saviour's vestment roughly, and drags him up, also plying his scourge. A Roman soldier, with drawn sword, stands in the back-ground. In the tenth station two executioners strip the Saviour of His vestment, while His face is turned upwards in mute protest. In the eleventh station the Saviour is stretched on the cross, to which His feet have been nailed. His hands are still free, but two executioners grasp His arms. Two figures of Jewish elders are seen in the back-ground, both imposing in a high degree. One, with a flowing black beard, wears a turban and robe of buff, and carries in his hand the paper on which the letters, I. N. R. I., are written. The other is clad in purple, and his beard is grey. Farther back stands a Roman soldier. The twelfth station shows the Saviour dead upon the cross. The Blessed Virgin stands on His right, St. John on His left, and the Magdalen clasps His feet. The figures, beautiful and pathetic beyond description, are well thrown out by a back-ground, in which the blue of the sky has been obscured, suggesting the supernatural darkness that occurred. The thirteenth station is also sublimely pathetic and beautiful. The dead Christ lies upon His mother's knees. A speechless agony is written on the Virgin's face. The dead body lies as pure and peaceful as that of a little child asleep, but the right arm hangs lifeless down, and in the hand is the print of the nail. The mark of the spear is also in the side. In the fourteenth station the body of the Saviour is laid in the sepulchre by two disciples, the one an aged man, representing Joseph of Arimathea, the other young and handsomely attired, representing Nicodemus. The Blessed Virgin, comforted by St. John, stands in the back-ground. We do not pretend, however, to have described the stations in full detail. To do so, would need more time and space than we have at our disposal. We think, nevertheless, we may claim to have given such particulars as will furnish our readers with a fair idea of them.

Mr. P. Burke announces that he has taken a long lease of Barrett's Hotel, Christchurch. The house is well known as conveniently and agreeably situated, as well as affording ample accommodation of the most approved kind for a very large number of guests. It will now be renovated and rendered still more deserving, if possible, of a high reputation. The culinary department, which Mr. Burke is particularly well qualified to superintend, will be especially attended to, and will leave nothing to be desired. The house will in every department be among the first in the colonies.

Mr. Davitt has sent half a million cabbage plants to districts in Ireland most affected by the potato blight.

Chinamen who passed through Montreal in bond lately spoke very bitterly of being treated with such indignity, and said their Government would be likely to retaliate.