

as we know, fond of big things—the demonstration took the shape of a piano playing time-contest, in which a lady-player was pitted against a gentleman-player—not a moment's pause being allowed to either. The lady held out for 16 hours 52 minutes—talking all the time—and then gave in, with her right wrist swollen, and her finger tips blistered. The gentleman completed the 17 hours, and got off with swollen thumbs. In London the case came before the Court. The musical carrying on of one neighbour had proved too much for the neighbour next door. The piano began in his house early in the morning, and left off late at night, and there was a violoncello that filled up the intervals of misery. The aggrieved family next door at length in desperation set up a band of their own and tried to play the others down. The responding concord of sweet sounds did, in fact, prove too much for the aggressors but they were not silenced, the magistrate deciding in their favour. The trial, although apparently a trivial one, occasioned a good deal of interest in London, where musical neighbours are not uncommon. Report tells us nothing of the neighbours in the New York case, but even to read of the contest is a trial to the nerves.

A statue of the late Mr Peter Lalor has recently been erected at Ballarat. It is the gift to the city of Mr Oddie, an old citizen, who had been a personal friend of Mr Lalor. In the course of a speech delivered by him at the unveiling of the statue, Sir Graham Berry said that Mr Lalor had once been proclaimed a rebel, with a price set upon his head, for doing the work that the people enjoyed to-day. He said he had been a real man, who did his duty fearlessly in the face of the strongest opposition. In the future of the colony would be remembered all he had done and suffered for its benefit. But Mr Peter Lalor was of the tribe of "Irish rebels." Such had been his father before him, and such contemporary with him were his brothers. We may conclude that, had the occasion offered, he would have done in Ireland what he did at the Eureka Stockade. The day is approaching, we have no doubt, when men who did play such a part in Ireland, but against whose recognition and reward during their lifetime obstacles intervened that Mr Lalor did not encounter, will be vindicated and also recognised publicly and authoritatively as champions of the right, as true men and benefactors of their country. Under their circumstances Peter Lalor, being still as true a man and as real a benefactor, would have been hanged or transported.

The deference paid to the nobility, and, owing to which it enjoys the more considerable part of its privileges—even the House of Lords relying almost wholly on it for their existence, bids fair to run some risk from the imbrolio which has occurred in the family of the Duke of Sutherland. The late Duke, as is known, under somewhat ugly circumstances, made a second marriage. His wife had been dead only a few months, and the lady he married was the widow of a man who had come to a suspicious end, possibly through suicide. This lady has published a pamphlet explaining her case, and even on her own showing, she is a woman who deserves but little sympathy. She appears to have taken mortal offence at the very reasonable dislike shown by the Duke's family at his marriage with her, and to have done all she could to embitter his mind towards them, and foster the disagreement. The consequence was that the Duke left her a very large portion of his property, impoverishing his son and successor for the purpose, and on this point litigation is about to ensue. On the other hand, in defending the present Duke of Sutherland some of his friends adopt a tone of insolence towards the middle classes as such, stigmatising the Dowager Duchess as belonging to them, and being no better than the daughter of an Oxford professor. But, as it would seem, the times are gone by for this. The assertion has become general that "a man's a man for a' that." No one now-a-days hangs his head because he is not a lord, and a honest man's daughter, if she is cultured and well behaved, has as much right to rank as a lady as if she were a Princess of the Blood. The whole foundation of rank lies in sentiment, and sentiment has changed. The House of Lords themselves, if they are unwise enough to allow the question of their existence to become a matter of public discussion, may live to learn this lesson. If the Duke of Sutherland permits his family affairs to be thrown open to the public view, and to become the subject of common gossip, he risks a still swifter breaking down of the remaining barriers, and a more sensible falling off of the deference, on which, as we have said, the privileged position of his class in chief measure depends.

We read in a Melbourne paper that a policy of retrenchment is imperatively demanded for Victoria. The Premier, therefore, we are told, "should for the benefit of the many have no bowels of compassion for the sufferings of the few." "He should be an iron man, in fact," says our contemporary. "Is Mr Patterson a man of this type?" But how could he? Mr Patterson is an Orangeman; therefore a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Iron does not enter into the constitution of such articles. The Premier may, nevertheless, retrench. Orangism and retrenchment, in fact, may very well go together. Is not a fitting symbol of the craft the brass farthing? and what, at the same time, could be more symbolical of retrenchment?

Here are fruits of civilisation. A battle has taken place on the Clarence River, N.S.W., between two tribes of blacks. The occasion was the stealing of a pair of trousers by one black fellow from another. Had the noble savage been left to his native attire, it is obvious there could have been no fight. Much misery, however, attaches to the improper wearing of breeches. Let those households, testify in which they have been transferred from the master to the mistress—a state of things, nevertheless, now sought to be extended to the whole sphere of human affairs. There is a moral, therefore, to be derived from that fight among the blacks—Let every one stick to the habit that becomes him, and let even civilisation have its limits—especially where blacks, or women, are concerned, if its extension involves mischief.

"Three more shocks of earthquake have been experienced at Zante, and the members of the Greek Royal Family, who are on a visit to the island, felt the full force of them." What is to be noted here? The fact that the earthquake did not respect royalty, or that royalty had the feelings of ordinary human nature?

"It is estimated that when Ireland obtains the government in her own hands she will contribute in revenue three millions less per annum than she does at the present time." This estimate is, of course, made for the alarm of the British taxpayer. Meantime, who made it?

"Bob," too, has had his finger in the pie, and has pulled out a plum! Here is a cablegram under date Washington, February 8:—"A committee of the House has ascertained that Mr Ingersoll received £1,000 for promoting the Panama Canal scheme." There is, then, something worth living for besides preaching atheism and doing good to your neighbours. Bravo! Bob, good boy.

The announcement that a number of Jewish refugees from Russia had been provided with passages to Australia has occasioned some consternation in the colonies. Among the rest, the New Zealand Government has cabled to Mr Percival, directing him to oppose anything of the kind. This has excited the indignation of the Hon Mr Shrimski, who has taken the Premier severely to task for it. It is impossible not to admire the pluck with which Mr Shrimski has come forward in defence of his people—and otherwise also we sympathise with him. These Russian Jews are paupers owing to circumstances, but they are not of the stuff of which paupers are made. Indeed it is said that a chief cause of their persecution has been the greater industry and capacity for business shown by them. In any case, the agitation against immigration, now characteristic both of these colonies and America, is altogether out of keeping with the Liberal pretences of the day. Mr Shrimski is quite right in pointing out, as he does, to Mr Ballance his inconsistency as an advanced Liberal. Radicals and Liberals have no more right to limit the benefits they claim for the masses than have aristocrats to shut these masses out altogether. An attempt to prove that they have such a right must result in destroying the principles on which they base their position and their claims. And, indeed, it is a piteous thing to see a persecuted people driven out from their own country and repulsed from every shore towards which they turn their faces.

The *Southern Standard* publishes some specimen extracts from a translation of Dante's "Inferno," by Mr Francis Philip O'Reilly. The translation is closely literal, notwithstanding that the *tersa rima* is maintained. There are not, indeed, the majestic sonoroussness and beauty of the original—reminding us of Milton's curfew—

"Over some wide-watered shore
Swinging slow with sullen roar."

But these it is impossible to reproduce in the English language. If, nevertheless, Mr O'Reilly continues and finishes his work as well as he has begun it, he will earn for himself a high place among translators.

Orange spouter: "Brethren, we must uphold the 'Glorious, pious and immortal memory.'" Truthful Pat (in the crowd): Of course ye must. Sure it has not a leg of its own to stand on."

Owing to the refusal of the Land Commissioners to sanction the agreements to purchase entered into by the tenants on the Ponsonby estate, and which were considered by the Commissioners as based on prices too high to justify an advance of the money, the terms have been reduced. The landlord, through his solicitors, has now offered to sell on the terms fixed by the Commissioners, in addition to the promissory notes given by the tenants for arrears due before their eviction, and which Sir James Mathew appears to suspect as a breach of the Land Act. Some of the tenants have signified their acceptance of the offer.

The London *Tablet* of December 24 announces, "with pleasure," that Dr Logue is about to be created Cardinal. Never was there a more impertinent exhibition of *mauvais gout*. Every one knows that the "pleasure" with which the *Tablet* makes the announcement is not at the elevation of Dr Logue but at the exclusion of Dr Walsh. The *Tablet* would be more respectable if he had the common decency to hold his tongue concerning the matter. Meantime, the news of Dr Logue's elevation has not been confirmed here by the cable, and we, therefore, still look upon it as doubtful. Others besides the London

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