

ment for the reform of our crazy orthography has begun in a rose-colored atmosphere. 'From the point of view of the publisher,' says the 'Sydney Morning Herald,' Henry Holt, a member of the executive committee of the Board, said that millions of dollars could be saved by simplified spelling. "It is estimated," he said, "that the saving would be 15,000,000 dollars (£3,000,000) a year in this country. I think this is a conservative estimate. The next step of the Board probably will be to make a definite estimate of the saving which can be obtained. I do not think the proposed changes will startle the people. Last fall I published a new edition of a well-known German grammar. In the English part I used the twelve spellings adopted by the National Educational Association. I have not heard a word from anyone about it. I am ready to go as far in the use of simplified spelling as the Educational Association recommends. I do not think it would do to change words which appeal to the emotions or reason. If I were writing a letter of condolence I would not spell death 'deh.'"

That 'Outrage'

Falsehood is sometimes a good imitation of truth. But the 'Irish agrarian outrages' that are from time to time described by the cableman are usually, clumsy counterfeits of fact. Labouchere's sensational exposure of the methods by which these 'outrages' were manufactured and catalogued during the Coercion regime of the eighties, convulsed the House of Commons and surrounded even the official returns with the halo of suspicion that attaches to 'missionary tales' and 'snake-yarns.' That antecedent doubt naturally fell like a cloak over the following cable-message that appeared in the New Zealand daily papers on July 10:—

'A moonlighting outrage is reported from Dumroney, in Westmeath. A farmer's house was twice attacked, and many shots were fired, the farmer's two sons being nearly shot while in their beds.'

The story (as we pointed out at the time) was almost a verbal transcript of the bogus 'agrarian outrage' that did NOT take place at Boyle a few months earlier. There was the same double attack; the same powder-blazing fusillade; the same valiant defence; the same escape from being 'nearly shot.' Since the date of that cable-message (July 10) our eyes have been wandering over the columns of our Irish exchanges and other Irish newspapers for an account of the 'agrarian outrage' in Westmeath. But we have not yet alighted upon it. And yet our exchanges date up to July 28; and they devoted a vast deal of space to the bogus 'agrarian outrage' at Boyle, even before its fraudulent character was established by police investigation. It really looks as if this latest 'agrarian outrage' is (like so many of its predecessors) what the 'Book of Common Prayer' would term 'a fond thing vainly invented.'

Backsheesh

'He who serves queens,' says Darkush in Disraeli's 'Tancred,' 'may expect backsheesh' (gratuities). And he who serves a royal 'reformer' who believes in reforming 'the other fellow,' may as confidently expect plunder, whether the 'reformer' be a Henry VIII., or a Philip of Hesse, or a Victor Emmanuel, or the ruling clique in a French Republic. The Roundheads in their day sanctified plunder by the facile principle that dominion is founded on grace. They limited the right of ownership and authority to 'the saints' and 'the elect'—that is, to themselves.

'Now saints themselves will sometimes be,
Of gifts that cost them nothing, free.'

And so were the Roundhead ones. When a man was deemed by them to have fallen away from grace, he had

no longer any right to lands, goods, or chattels—the dominion thereof passed to 'the saints.' They proceeded, wherever the circumstances favored them, to put in force 'the good old rule'

'The simple plan
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.'

In England the nobles, and in France the proletariat were offered substantial bribes as the price of acquiescence in the spoliation of the Church and of the patrimony of the poor. But (says the Paris correspondent of the London 'Tablet') 'the populace is still vainly seeking for the milliard of the religious congregations which M. Waldeck-Rousseau promised should go to found the nucleus of a fund for old-age pensions. Instead of the milliard, law expenses are swallowing up the miserable returns from the sale of such property as the liquidators have been able to get off their hands by public sale, and the townspeople are beginning to realise what a loss has been entailed upon them through the eviction and banishment of the religious.' This last result has been well illustrated in a letter sent by a shopkeeper at Auxerre to the "Bourgogne." The writer explains that during the last four years the following establishments in the town have been closed: the College of Saint-Germain, the boarding-schools of the Holy Childhood and of the Augustinian nuns, and a house of the Sisters of Providence and of the Ursulines. As these institutions spent at the very lowest calculation at least 255,000 francs (£10,200) a year, it is clear what a loss their departure must have caused to the tradespeople of the town. And the correspondent of the "Bourgogne" complains that the Government with one hand lays heavier taxes upon them, and with the other deprives them of their best customers.'

Direct State aid to ministers of religion apparently tends to ossify lay generosity. France, however, despite its aggressive atheism in high places, has been an example to the world in the multitude, variety, and energising activity of the charities which depend for support upon voluntary gifts. The great-hearted Catholic population in the Republic follow the 'wisdom' enunciated by 'Mr. Dooley.' They don't let their generosity remain idle too long. 'Don't run it every hour at th' top iv its speed,' says the Philosopher of Archey Road, 'but fr'm day to day give it a little gentle exercise to keep it supple an' hearty, an' in due time ye may injye it.' The 'Bloc' papers forgot the history of French Catholic charity when they foretold that, after the abrogation of the Concordat, the people would decline to support the clergy, and that the abomination of spiritual desolation would settle down upon the land and leave it an easy prey to the propaganda of official atheism. The wish was father to the thought. The prophecies have gone agley. 'The collections undertaken through the parishes,' says an English exchange, 'prove that the parishioners recognise the duty of supporting their pastors more fully than was expected. Not only professed and practising Catholics have contributed, but even men who are indifferent in matters of religion have appreciated the difficulties which have fallen upon the clergy, and have given them assistance. The collections being thus successful, there would appear to be no reason for anticipating that the Church will find it hard to carry on her work in practically all the country parishes. And should she be able to do so the Separation Law may prove to be a blessing in disguise. The fervor of the Faith will be stimulated among the people, who will come to value what they pay to support. After all, France gains an independent episcopate, absolutely free from State control, and this ought to put new life into the dioceses which hitherto had to be governed with an eye to the pleasure of the Minister of Worship in Paris. This freedom of action may have been purchased cheaply by the loss of precarious stipends.'

"A LIGHT purse makes a heavy heart." Buy Cook o' the North, and save your siller!

"A E guid turn deserves anither." You are delighted with Cook o' the North; then tell your friends.