

freely. It has been aptly said of the 'new' theology that what is new in it is not true, and what is true is not new. Private judgment, left to itself, is pretty sure to box the compass of variable opinion. In the early ages of the Church, for instance, the tendency of heresy was utterly to exclude from the hope of pardon those who committed certain sins. Some modern creeds have gone to the other extreme and more or less lost the sense of personal sin and of the need of reconciliation to God. From the first, the Church of God followed the safe and true middle course—the one that lies between the old rigorism and the new laxity. 'She excludes none from pardon', says a theological writer, 'whatever his guilt, provided that he is penitent; she insists on penitence as well as upon a humble acknowledgment of personal guilt'. And now one of the rare new things in the 'new' theology declares, in effect, that sin is really a striving after perfection! One of the old heresies of the 'new' theology meets with a strong rebuke from so unexpected a lay quarter as 'Dagonet' in the London 'Referee'. 'The new theology', writes he, 'with its denials, its confusions, and its explanations, will pass. But Easter, in all its glorious significance of the Dawn that follows the Darkness, of the risen Sun that bids the shadows flee, of Joy after Tears, of Hope after Despair, of Life after Death, will soothe the troubled souls of men for ages yet to come.'

It is a sad jumble, this 'new' theology, of diluted biblical lore, vapory indefiniteness, and odd notes from the discordant tin gods of the sort of destructive theorising that is 'made in Germany.' But it is not Christianity that is placed before the bar by the 'new' theology—it is the principle of private judgment, as opposed to the principle of authority, in religion. In the sixteenth century, 'reformers' employed the principle of private judgment to make a fetish of the Bible. Some lesser 'reforming' lights of the twentieth century employ the same principle of private judgment to make a football of the Bible. On that principle, the right to deny is as great as the right to affirm even the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Moreover: once the principle is accepted, the denial must be considered as sound doctrine as the assertion—the negation and the affirmation of the same thing may both be doctrinally true. Which is absurd. The 'new' theologian (who has now thrown in his political lot with agnostic socialism) is merely pushing the 'right' of private judgment towards its natural and obvious conclusion. Sic transit the Reformation. Meantime (as we said a few months ago) Catholics—like Uhland's Knab' vom Berge—sit serenely in the blessed sunlight of God's faith, on the hill-top on which the Holy City (the Church) is built; and with sympathetic interest, but without fear, they view the clouds and storms and mists that befog and dismay the less fortunate dwellers in the valleys far below.

### A 'Rescue' and its Sequel

The typical novel usually ends just where (for those whose lot is the common one) life seriously begins—in the merry clangor of the marriage bells. The sequel oft belies the smiles and sunshine of the wedding day. But these are things that, for the novelist, are not to be told in Gath. There are other stories a-many upon whose sequel the story-teller rings the curtain down. The Melbourne 'Tribune' of May 11 has been raising the curtain upon one of these. It is the story of a 'victim' who was rescued from 'convent tyranny' 'by heroic benefactors'. Here is the sequel—which, as the reader will perceive, is 'wrote sarcastic':—

'A certain victim of convent rapacity and cruelty escaped and took up her abode with a good, kind man who made a bulwark round her of champions of liberty and truth, against which the baffled hosts of priesthood and conventdom hurled themselves in vain,

and from which the imps of the local Inquisition slunk back discomfited. While the hero stood in the limelight and the mighty press was busy with his fame, it went well with the distressed damsel, who had nothing to do for all the favors she received—and more especially all she was promised—except to cultivate her imagination and restrain her memory. But after a brief season the press switched the limelight off, and turned itself to some other temporary sensation. Then the hero went metaphorically insolvent and hopelessly bankrupt in regard to his promises. When the public had ceased to look that way the interesting victim was hustled off to a "situation" in a family that feared God and paid 5s a week wages, less fines, which were minutely regulated and scheduled. And the balance remaining was paid, not to the poor ex-victim of convent rapacity, but to her chivalrous rescuer—doubtless to recoup rescue and succor expenses. The sequel shows a broken-hearted girl weeping at the convent gates, and imploring to be taken back. In order to protect readers from a possible wrong judgment, it might be added the above happenings occurred in Kamschatka or some other place.'

If our readers believe they can identify the parties, we have no objection. But (with the 'Tribune') we are not responsible for their conclusions. When 'kind' men 'rescue' 'distressed damsels' from 'convent rapacity', the deliverers (with W. S. Gilbert) commonly

'Strike the concertina's melancholy string,  
Blow the spirit-stirring heart like anything'

and, generally speaking, make the welkin also ring. The untold sequel is usually disillusion and sobering though tardy wisdom. And the 'kind man' finds himself the distressful butt of all the 'kind friends' who 'told him so'. Those of our readers who have not short memories can easily recall cases in point. According to Coleridge, Satan's

'Darling sin  
Is the pride that apes humility'

If he has another 'darling sin' it is probably the sort of 'charity' which (unlike that of the Apostle) is neither patient nor kind, which envieth, and dealeth perversely, and rejoiceth in iniquity, and thinketh evil without investigation or due cause—and (so to speak) goes around spitting at its neighbors. Even well-meaning but over-precipitate enthusiasm often plays strange pranks before high heaven.

### Forces that Count

There are in the French episcopate and clergy a serenity and a vast but quiet power of resistance which recall the well-known lines of Addison:—

'The soul, secured in her existence, smiles  
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.'

They stand in firm and immovable defiance of proscription, plunder, and persecuting laws that were meant to destroy the life of the Church in France as truly as the assassin's lifted dagger-point is meant to destroy the life of the intended victim's body. They

Argue not  
Against heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and  
Steer right onward'.

The high courage, the simple dignity and restrained self-control with which the French bishops and clergy have met the grave crisis of the present persecution have baffled the rulers of France and deeply impressed many thoughtful and fair-minded people who are not of our Fold. One of these is the Countess de Franqueville, in whose house the French bishops held their memorable meeting four months ago. The Countess is described by the London 'Catholic Weekly' as 'English by birth and education, and a Protestant'. In the course of a recent lengthy letter in the London 'Daily Telegraph' this broad-minded Protestant lady writes as follows of the simple heroism and the springing hope of the Catholic episcopate of France:—

'The meeting of the French episcopate in this house, January 15 to 19, brought me for the first time into the midst of the clerical part of the French Church.

**HOUSEWIVES** are surprised at the strength of Pure "Hondai Lanka" Tea. It's a perfect eye-opener in economy.

**"DON'T be Humbugged!"** Insist on "Hondai Lanka" Tea, and you'll get it! Kept by leading grocers and storekeepers.