

tains very little tangible evidence as to the amount of the actual revenue of the Irish Church Mission Society, or as to the manner in which it is being expended. We are told that "The committee are much concerned that the ordinary income, apart from the uncertain revenue from legacies, falls short of the expenditure by nearly £9,000 a year." We are heartily glad of the fact, and we trust that the announcement made in the words just quoted may be regarded as evidence of the growth of common-sense and of ordinary discrimination amongst the class who have been for fully half a century fleeced by the Society. Later on, we are, however, afforded another glimpse of the financial methods of the Society, when we are told that its "expenditure is, in round figures, £20,000 per annum, and the ordinary income, exclusive of legacies, is under £12,000." Assuming that the figures quoted may be regarded as representing the average expenditure of the Society, it follows that a sum of, at least, £200,000 has been expended, during the last ten years, on the work of securing the "conversion" of benighted Irish Papists! We shall, probably, not be far wrong if we assume that fully half of the Society's expenditure of £200,000 has been employed in Dublin. It would, therefore, appear that the 246 "convert" families secured during the last ten years have cost the Society no less than £160 apiece. We doubt if the article purchased was worth the cost.

A New Zealand Colonist's Experience of Castle Rule.

—A 'Returned Colonist' has contributed a series of interesting articles to the *Tuapeka Times* on what he saw in Ireland during a recent visit. He had an unpleasant experience during a visit to a town in Connaught, where a public meeting, which was to have been held, had been 'proclaimed.' He says:—True enough the meeting was held in the centre of the little town, but before two sentences had been spoken there was a rush of about two hundred police armed with batons through the assemblage of people, and then followed the most unmitigated piece of brutality I have ever witnessed or almost read of. Men and women, many of them not improbably attracted by a feeling of curiosity to the gathering, were felled to the ground stunned and bleeding, whilst the speaker and his friends were hustled and struck and carried away in the rush, battered and dishevelled but still protesting and unyielding. The writer, who was present as a spectator on the fringe of the crowd, was viciously struck at once or twice, but managed to escape without carrying away any more serious memento of the incident than a feeling of contempt for the statesmanship that makes such things possible at the close of the nineteenth century. It all recurred many times to me when I read of the parallel brutality of the Boers in suppressing meetings of the Uitlanders when they attempted to give public expression to their grievances at Johannesburg. One of the chief complaints of the Uitlanders was that they were bludgeoned and maltreated when they attempted to ventilate their grievances, and this formed one of the charges in the bill of indictment which the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain formulated against the tyrannical Boer oligarchy. Well, personally I would much rather be a Uitlander citizen of the Boer Republic than a citizen of Connaught under the rule of Lord Salisbury's Government.

The Irish Parliamentary Party.—A cable message received last week states that Mr. J. E. Redmond has issued a manifesto appealing for funds to conduct the Irish campaign and combat in the House of Commons. The manifesto indicates that Home Rule and compulsory land purchase will be the chief issues of the campaign. The message does not say whether Mr. Redmond is acting on behalf of the whole of the Nationalists, or only that party of which he has been the leader for some years.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society.—At the beginning of last year there were in Ireland 155 relieving branches, or 'conferences' as they are called, of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, with 2500 active members. These conferences meet weekly, they are spread over every county in Ireland, and several exist in each of the large cities and towns. In fact, there are no less than 33 conferences in Dublin city and county. In Cork there are four such branches, in Limerick city four, in Waterford city three, in Galway city two, in Belfast 14, in Derry city three. Besides these, 92 conferences flourish in other Irish towns, too numerous to particularise here. The families visited and relieved at their abodes by the members were, in 1898, 15,018; number of individuals comprised in those families, 56,894; number of visits by the members, 78,286. The society aims at assisting chiefly, not chronic mendicants, but persons in temporary distress, whose condition there is some hope of permanently improving by timely assistance. The cost of relief in kind given to the poor in their homes amounted to £739; relief in money, £1578; total expenditure in relief of the poor in their homes, £40,317; pensions paid for children placed in orphanages, £1128; total cost of relief, 1898, £11,415. Conspicuous among the auxiliaries to the relief work of the conferences is the Orphanage of St. Vincent de Paul at Glasnevin, where 120 boys were maintained last year at a cost of £2552. Several patronages and night schools for boys and adults are carried on in Dublin, Belfast, and Cork. With stunted funds the society is doing most valuable work for Church and State, without making the least parade or ostentation, for such would be a violation of one of its primary rules.

The Late Captain Connor.—Her Majesty the Queen has written to Mrs. Connor, whose son, Captain H. B. Connor, of the 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers, died from wounds received at Glencoe, expressing sympathy with her in her bereavement. Her Majesty also said she would like to have a photograph of Captain Connor.

Mr. P. LUNDON, Phoenix Chambers, Wanganui, is still busy putting people on the soil. He has also hotels in town and country For Sale and To Lease. Write to him.—"

THE MUSIC OF THE MASS.

A SIGNIFICANT CRITICISM.

THE London correspondent of the *Melbourne Advocate* writing on the musical setting of Masses says:—

There was recently a discussion in one of the London papers as to who set the finest musical setting of the Mass, and from the general tenor of the correspondence, it is evident that Gounod's 'Messe Solennelle' was far and away the first favourite in the competition. If any proof were wanting of the extraordinary popularity of this melodious composition, it was supplied on Monday last, Christmas Day, when, according to an inquisitive calculator, it was sung at 11 o'clock in no less than 135 London churches, chiefly Roman Catholic and Anglican, of course, but with a fair sprinkling of minor Protestant places of worship as well. It is not difficult to discover the reasons for this remarkable partiality towards Gounod's famous Mass. The combination of dreamy mysticism and sensuous sweetness that is the predominant feature of Gounod's musical style, is carried to its highest point in the 'Messe Solennelle.' Gounod was an ecclesiastical student in Paris, and was on the point of being ordained a priest when his ideas were diverted to a different direction. Both sides of his character and experience, the religious and the secular, are illustrated in his music, which consequently appeals to two very different classes of people.

In the opinion of some French Bishops some of Gounod's Masses are positively dangerous, and one of them denounces them in very strong terms indeed. The particular Mass under notice produces a considerable effect on highly nervous and sensitive people, more especially on women of a hysterical temperament; but it is doubtful that the sensation so produced is healthy, still more doubtful that it is religious. It produces for the time being an elevation of mind, but that condition is evanescent. It passes away very quickly and then there is a reaction, the relaxing effect of which on mind and body leaves the person subject of it in a condition not at all likely to be receptive of sober religious influence. Dr. Walsh, the Archbishop of Dublin, does not, I believe, allow the 'Messe Solennelle' to be sung in the churches of his diocese, but he does sanction the singing of another of Gounod's Masses, that of the Sacred Heart, which is certainly the most devotional, and, from the strictly religious point of view, the best of all his settings of the words of the Mass. But although Gounod's 'Messe Solennelle' is, and probably long will be, the prime favourite with the crowd, both Catholic and Protestant, by reason of its richness and melody and unique combination of the sacred with the voluptuous, there has never been any doubt in the minds of cultured musicians that Beethoven's in C is the finest Mass that ever was or ever will be composed.

Mozart's 12th, which once held a high place in this connection, is now generally discredited, and is rarely heard in this part of the world. It has been conclusively established that Mozart had no hand whatever in its composition, and it is now boldly classified in the catalogue of the British Museum under the heading of 'Spurious.' It is something to be thankful for that this style of Mass is going out of fashion, with its wearisome repetitions and the 'Amen' at the end of the *Gloria* and the *Credo* strung out to a degree that is little less than grotesque. There is a French composer named Louis Niedermeyer whose Masses are much admired on the Continent and in England, but I do not remember ever having heard one of them in Australia. I would commend his sacred compositions to the colonial choir-masters. His Masses are wonderfully impressive, what the musical critics call ear-haunting. I frequently hear them at the Italian Church, Hatton Garden, where we have a full choir and orchestra all the year round, the latter drawn from the ranks of the best instrumentalists in London. One of Louis Niedermeyer's Masses in particular, as performed at Hatton Garden, is absolutely awe-inspiring in its effects. I do not know any Mass that goes so straight to the heart and the conscience. Whenever I hear it on a Sunday, its sublime strains linger in my memory for the whole of the week. Niedermeyer is also the composer of a splendid setting of the *Pater Noster*, which is in frequent use here as offertory piece for a bass voice. He is really a composer who ought to be much better known in the colonies than he is.

AN UNGRATEFUL SAMOAN.

MALIELOA TANG of Samoa is very ungrateful for what has been done for him and his people by the missionaries. In a letter by him in the *London Times*, of January 4, he says the position of Samoa is a gross violation of the treaties, and also a crime against the law of nations only equalled by the dismemberment of Poland, Denmark, and France. He thinks, if it is for the Great Powers to promote wars and annexations and distract the minds of the people, the Hague Conference was the greatest farce of the century. The writer also asserts that the civilisation in the South Seas, Africa, and elsewhere is inferior to the primitive state of the countries stolen, leading to war through breach of faith on the part of the Government officials and to the decimation of the people by contagious diseases and spirituous liquors. He continues:—'Missionaries who graced our country with their holy and unholly presence introduced the same religious influences and hatreds against each other which pertained at the hour in civilised States. The missionaries live in palatial concrete houses, with all the luxuries the countries can afford, and charge us for Bibles and Prayer Books, which we understand are sent us as a free offering.' Malietoa further charges the missionaries with extracting all the money possible from them, in return for which they receive a Bible and Prayer Book. A Wesleyan missionary is charged with collecting £27,000 pounds at a single meeting at Tonga, adding, 'Missionaries aroused a great spirit of emulation by telling the natives the largest giver would be the most acceptable in the sight of God, and thus reversing the spirit of the widow's mite.'