

We had not intended to commence a collection of stories illustrative of Irish wit, but the latest to come under our notice—a story from the seat of war—is so good that we cannot refrain from adding it. It is told by 'The Flaneur,' the genial and entertaining contributor to the Sydney *Freeman*. In the last number of the *Freeman* to hand 'The Flaneur' says:—

Amongst the items of war from 'the front' to-day is a good one which tells of a raw recruit, one Tim Murphy, who joined the Rangers, although the only horses he ever had any experience of were the saw-horse and the clothes-horse his mother owned. Along with the rest of his awkward squad Tim was taken out to drill one fine day, and as luck would have it he was allotted one of the worst 'buckers' in the whole regiment. 'Now men,' said the sergeant, as the crowd was lined up, 'remember this—no man is to dismount before he receives the order from his superior officer—mind that now.' Then off they went for a jaunt, but Tim was 'off' first of all; in fact, he had barely thrown his leg over his vicious brute before he was shot aloft like a rocket and came down with a sickening thud that shook every bone in his body. Presently the sergeant came along to where Tim was dusting his clothes, and shouted: 'Hello, Murphy, you've dismounted, I see?' 'Yes, sir,' said Tim dejectedly. 'And did you get an order to do so from headquarters?' demanded the officer. 'No, sir,' replied the ready-witted Irishman, 'I got my order from the hindquarters, and, by gannies, I never obeyed an order half as quick before in all my born days.'

### Lessons from Catholic Canada.

Mr. Robertson James, an eminent American student of sociology and a brother of Prof. William James, of Harvard, has recently been studying the political and social life of the people in the great Catholic Province of Quebec and has just published in the Boston *Transcript* some of the results of his investigations. Mr. James's articles are, to Catholics at least, specially interesting reading, furnishing as they do a complete vindication of the Church from the charge—which ignorant and ill-read Protestants are so fond of levelling against her—of being the necessary and deadly foe to freedom and good citizenship. So far from this being the case Mr. James shows, what historians before him have often shown, that the Church is the true champion and friend of freedom and social order, and he declares that in no country in the world is there a higher level of civil liberty and good citizenship than in Catholic Quebec. Here are his own words:

'It would be difficult to find evidence in French Canada to substantiate the claims sometimes made by moralists that Rome keeps a nation in material and political servitude and blinds the ignorant to what to-day is called civilisation. Probably in no country under the sun can a greater measure of political privilege be exercised than is to-day exercised by the most obscure citizen of the Province of Quebec; and it would be difficult to find a million and a half of people elsewhere who exhibit a like degree of thrift, content, courage, and respect for laws. At Quebec and Montreal there will naturally be found a body of police, but it does not appear that the vocation of a constable is an arduous one. The statistics of the Recorder's Court in Montreal, just published, show an extraordinary decrease in crime during the last 10 years, especially in the particular of drunkenness. . . . And yet Montreal, which may be said to exhibit largely the fruits of Catholic influence, governs itself without either the aid of Dr. Parkhurst or Mr. Croker, and looks not for gifts from Carnegie or Rockefeller.' And Mr. James does not hesitate to plainly ascribe the credit for this happy state of things to the Catholic Church. If the American traveller, he says in effect, desires to know what the spirit is which has developed this stubborn democratic and apostolic civilisation, let him investigate the lives and teaching of the clergy and he will derive certain knowledge which establishes the fact that Canadian political freedom is due to the influence of the priests.

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Still more weighty and important is the lesson taught by Mr. James's investigation into the educational system of Quebec. In Quebec there are separate State-paid schools for Catholics, and Mr. James gives the following valuable testimony to the successful working of this system

'Above all,' he says, 'does the history of French Canada illustrate the fact that it is not dangerous to the stability of a State to commit the religious education of its future citizens to the religious teachers. In the Province of Quebec, with an enormous majority of Catholics on the Board of Education, the right of a Protestant child to benefit by the State fund applied to a Protestant education is most zealously and most jealously guarded. Indeed there appears to be no religious rivalry of any kind.' An ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory, and this one solid fact from Canada, given on the authority of a disinterested non-Catholic investigator, disposes once and for all of the silly political parrot-ery which we hear so often in this country that it is 'not safe' and 'not feasible' to make provision in our education system for separate State-paid schools

for the Catholic portion of the community, though it is both 'safe' and 'feasible' to tax Catholics for the maintenance of the secular institutions.

### The Real 'Reign of Terror.'

Even the most ardent believers in the Conservative policy for Ireland might well feel ashamed of the Coercion system as it is at present being carried out in that most distressful country. It is the simple truth to say that the system which is now in full swing in Ireland is a mere travesty of justice and a disgrace to any civilised nation. Never before has coercion been applied with so little shadow of justification or excuse. In spite of the 'faked' yarns, spun by newspaper correspondents, about 'murders' and 'outrages,' it is a well-known fact, admitted by all who are acquainted with the state of the country, that Ireland is to-day practically crimeless. Ordinary crime is entirely absent, while even agrarian crime has all but disappeared. Yet in face of all this, in order to conciliate the landlord interest, the hateful Crimes Act has been revived and is being administered in a spirit of bitter and savage vindictiveness. Not only so, but in cases where the evidence is not sufficient to secure a conviction under the Crimes Act an obsolete Statute of King Edward III. is resorted to and the accused is required to give bail for good behaviour as being a person of bad character, or if he declines to accept the stigma implied in this he is promptly sent off to gaol. Here is a typical instance, taken from the Dublin *Freeman*, of the actual working of the system:

'Eleven United Irish Leaguers were prosecuted in Clare for illegal assembly. The Removables could find no evidence against them. But the statute of Edward III. proved more elastic than the Coercion Act. Those men, against whom the evidence was admittedly insufficient, were required to give bail for good behaviour as persons of bad character. Refusing to accept the disgraceful imputation implied in the order, they were sent to prison for three months.' By every principle of law and justice these men were undoubtedly entitled to an acquittal; but the emissaries of the Castle, by straining the law to suit their own purpose, managed to secure a conviction of some sort and thus helped to still further swell the records of Irish 'crime.'

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A still more recent instance, and one which admirably illustrates the ridiculous way in which obviously trumped-up charges are made to serve as an excuse for sending innocent people to gaol, was referred to by Mr. Asquith in one of his latest speeches. It is reported by the London correspondent of the Melbourne *Age*, a source which very rarely supplies information at all favorable to Ireland, and is quoted by our contemporary the Melbourne *Advocate*. The extract is as follows:—

'A story told by Mr. Asquith in his latest political speech illustrates in a rather grimly humorous fashion the sort of low-court justice that is thought good enough for Irish people. In England if a man is charged with conspiracy or unlawful assembly he goes before a grand jury. In Ireland he can be taken before two local magistrates, who may be—often are—grossly ignorant as regards the law they have to administer, and summarily dealt with by them. Mr. Asquith's instance—one of recent date—was as follows:—"A couple of persons gave information to the police to the effect that they were being boycotted. Thereupon a summons was taken out, and the case brought before two resident magistrates. The complainants, when they came into the witness-box, withdrew the statements they had previously made, and said that they had not really been boycotted at all. Therefore they were committed for contempt of court. The defendant was acquitted of the crime with which he was charged, but was required, upon no evidence whatever, to find a surety to be of good behaviour, and, not being able to get the surety, he was sent to prison for three months at once."

Coercion of this sort is most palpably a blunder as well as a crime, and it is only to be expected that such petty and glaring persecution should, in the words of the Dublin *Freeman*, prove now, as it has ever been, a tonic and stimulant to more vigorous agitation.

Visitors to Auckland will find first-class accommodation at Newtown Hotel, Karangahape road. Mr M. Treston, the proprietor, pays special attention to catering for the comfort and convenience of his patrons. The Newtown Hotel is up to date in every respect, the bedrooms, lavatories, etc., being on the most approved modern principles.

NEVER FORGET: Prevention is better than cure.—A dose of TUSSICURA administered when a person is suffering from a bad cold or a harassing cough, will not only give instant relief, but will also strengthen the organs affected, thus preventing more serious trouble in the future. No household should, therefore, be without a bottle of this mixture, as its timely administration will obviate suffering in after life and preserve the constitution from disease. One feature of this preparation should not be overlooked—namely, that it is applicable to both the adult and infant, all that is necessary being the adjustment of the doses to the circumstances, according to the directions.—Kempthorne, Prosser and Co., Agents.—\*.\*