

A REMARKABLE SIGN.

SOME short time ago I was struck on reading a letter in 'Lloyd's London Weekly Journal,' by the editor, on the claims which the religious society of Catholic ladies, 'The Little Sisters of the Poor,' had on the support of the Protestant public. No Catholic pen could possibly have shown off the minds of those pious ladies, nor advocated their cause better than was done by the popular and radical Protestant writer. His paper has a wide circulation among the working men of England. The English, after all, are a just and fair-dealing people, when you once get to the right side of them, and where they see real honesty. The letter, it is true, was somewhat of a sensational kind, and the Dickens style. The writer painted, in a very graphic and artistic manner, the heroic charity of these good Religious and servants of the poor. They made no distinction of creed or country; the Jew and the Christian were equally the objects of their tender care. They are organised for the purpose of lodging, clothing, and feeding the very aged poor of both sexes, and sick and destitute children. They have no regular money income. They beg for their clients—go out daily to collect food for them from the houses of the rich, or seek to get what is left from the table, and carry it home. They have a regular large commissariat establishment for this purpose, and they manage it all themselves. I once visited one of their houses in London; it was a fine establishment. On my expressing some astonishment at the size of the place, and asking where the funds came from, seeing the Catholics in England are so few and poor, the Lady Superior said, "Oh, we beg; for our poor we go everywhere; get much in Ireland, and all creeds help us. The rich Jews in the city are among our most generous patrons. Of course, they do not care for our religion, but they admire our humanity." It is by acts such as these that Protestant prejudice is disarmed and the Catholic Church triumphs. Charity conquers all.

LAIC.

THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR.

THE following letter, written by Blanchard Jerrold, son of the celebrated Douglas Jerrold, a Protestant gentleman, and editor of 'Lloyd's Newspaper,' bears testimony to the marvellous labours of those ministering angels, the Little Sisters of the Poor. The house established in London is an offshoot of the parent house in Paris, which has won general commendation:—"To the Editor of the 'Morning Post.'—Sir, Will you grant your sometime 'London Poor' and 'Poor of Paris' commissioner a little space in your journal to plead the cause of the intrepid Little Sisters of the Poor, whose lives are spent in daily heroisms? It was in your columns that I was privileged to describe the house in which these sisters are perpetually nursing and feeding some 200 old men and women, depending for food and clothing on the *restes* which they are able to collect from house to house. Many of your readers must have noticed two sisters hastening through London streets in a covered cart. These are the messengers from St. Joseph's House, Portobello-road Bayswater, who collect the broken victuals and bear them home to feed the old men and women whom they have taken under their care. Be it known that the Little Sisters of the Poor eat only after their wrinkled *protégés* have feasted. Not the crumbs from the rich man's table are theirs, but the odd crusts and bones which remain after Lazarus, stretching his legs, has said, "Enough." I remember it was with eyes brimming over with tears that I looked upon the Little Sisters' refectory. Pitchers of pure water, mounds of unsightly morsels of bread, scraps of cheese, these furnished forth the banquet of the Christian heroines for whom I ask you space to plead again to-day. They are in debt for their house. A heavy mortgage is rotting the holy roof-trees they have raised over a crowd of grey heads, that but for them would not have even Chatterton's shelter, a slat between them and the thunder-cloud. Patient comforters in the vestibule of death to successive hundreds of forgotten and destitute old men and women—comforters, whose angel hand smooths like the pillow of Jew and Christian—they have turned to me, because it was my privilege to help them through you years ago; and they have begged me to interpret the prayer they address to the many tender-hearted people whose eyes fall upon your columns. Not for themselves, who eat from the outcasts' plates, but for age and helplessness sheltered in their holy arms, they plead; and to none who will take the trouble of visiting St. Joseph's House will they, I am quite certain, plead in vain. If a few ladies would undertake a bazaar, or would collect among their friends, the Little Sisters of the Poor would soon have a house free from debt.—I have the honor to remain, Sir, your faithful servant, BLANCHARD JERROLD. Reform Club June 26."

IRISH AFFAIRS.

FROM the admirable letter of the Irish correspondent of the 'Boston Pilot,' we clip the following:—

People generally look out for a calm; and were we to take the advice of our English neighbors, we would be in a dead calm at the present moment. National politics, we are told by the English Press, must be buried for ever, if this unhappy country is to become prosperous. We are told to get sense, and commence attending to business; to give up "Home Rule illusions," and become practical. I believe it is a generally understood fact, that no nation in the world is "better up" in the preaching line than England; and we cannot blame her newspapers if, for the purpose of teaching us the way we should go, they have diverged from the path of truth, which, as a rule, is not trodden by the British Press. Our members are now recommended to attend to business. A short time ago a complaint was made in the House of Commons, that the Irish members were "monopolising the business of the session." In no previous Parliament for the last thirty years have the Irish members been so active, or attended to their duties so faithfully; yet they are told to mind their business. They should also, to make things plain, and to save trouble, be told what

their duties are, and the Government might also mention what measures they would support, and those they would oppose. This would be legislation-made-easy, and would take a vast amount of trouble out of the hands of our Irish representatives.

Public people were almost beginning to forget that the cross-beams at the end of Sackville street marked the spot where, ten years ago, the foundation-stone of the O'Connell monument was laid. I am happy to be able to announce that the statue is now almost finished, and will be erected early in the coming year, which will be the centenary of the birth of the Liberator. It is singular, too, that our Lord Mayor for 1875 will be same gentleman who, in 1864, laid the foundation-stone of the monument. This is Alderman Peter Paul M'Sweeney, who has followed, in an unassuming way, in the footsteps of the 'Tribune,' and on whom the duty of unveiling the statue will very appropriately fall. It is said that the statue is the grandest work of Foley's life, and the masterpiece of his genius.

Intemperance has this week led to the commission of a crime which was thought by all would have placed an unhappy father in the position of murdering his own daughter. Indeed, it is not certain yet but that he will stand in the dock charged with that heinous offence. On Saturday evening, a man named Anderson, a shoemaker, who had been incessantly drinking for a fortnight, told his daughter he wanted a pint of porter. There was no money, and nothing to raise money on, except an old metal pot. Anderson told his youngest daughter to go out and sell the pot for twopenny. The mother, who was intoxicated, wished to send instead an old cloak; but the elder sister would not let the younger out at all, saying she was too shabby to go out into the street. She locked the door, and endeavored to take the pot from her mother's hand. The father now procured a knife used in his trade, and stabbed the daughter in the neck. She was immediately conveyed to the Hospital, and it is understood that her life is in imminent danger. The unhappy man, when brought up at the Police Court, expressed great contrition, and avowed that the stabbing was accidental. The mother was also charged with being drunk, but was discharged by the magistrate, who doubtless was of the opinion that the pangs of conscience will be far greater than any punishment he could inflict.

I regret to say that there is no occasion for congratulating the Irish farmers on the harvest prospects. The hay crop has been a miserable failure, and wheat, oats, and barley will certainly be deficient in yield, owing to the dry weather. Potatoes are quite up, if not beyond the average, and as yet are in excellent quality. Horses have become extremely cheap, owing to the scarcity of fodder.

ANNEXATION OF THE FIJI ISLANDS.

MR W. M'ARTHUR then moved—"That this House is gratified to learn that Her Majesty's Government have yielded to the unanimous requests of the chiefs, native population, and white residents at Fiji for annexation to this country, so far as to direct Sir Hercules Robinson to proceed to those islands with a view to the accomplishment of that object." The motion was seconded by Mr Baillie-Cochrane, but opposed by Sir C. Dilke, who moved, as an amendment—"That this House consider that, having regard to the existence in the case of Fiji of difficulties caused by the necessity of 'subjugating' and removing 20,000 ferocious mountaineers, and by the fact that domestic slavery is pronounced by Commodore Goodenough and Consul Layard, in their report, to be 'the foundation of social order' in Fiji, it is necessary that great caution should be used in approaching the subject of annexation." Sir F. Goldsmid seconded the amendment, contending that no proof had been adduced that there was anything approaching to a unanimous desire on the part of the chiefs, native population and white residents for annexation. Mr Gladstone having expressed his regret that the Government had not at once stated their views on the subject, observed that the motion, if carried, would commit the House to annexation—not at the instance of the responsible Ministers of the Crown, but by the voluntary and gratuitous act of a private member. He objected to this, and he also demurred to being called upon to express his gratification when, on the contrary, the animating sentiment of his mind was one of vexation at what he regarded as an unwise proceeding. The question was in many of its aspects surrounded with difficulty, and possibly might lead to financial and other complications similar to those which we had already encountered in New Zealand. Mr J. Lowther stated that the Government could give no sanction to the motion, and consequently recommended that it should be withdrawn. The question was one which properly belonged to the responsible Ministers of the crown, and he assured the House that under no circumstances would the Government undertake the administration of the affairs of any country in which slavery was allowed to prevail. If the cession of Fiji should ever take place it must be on virtually unconditional terms. If, however, the cession of the Fiji Islands ever took place, it would be determined by the Government on their own responsibility, and without any attempt to make Parliament responsible for their acts. At the same time the House might rest satisfied that the utmost caution would be exercised. Mr Knatchbull-Hugessen was satisfied with the assurance of the Under Secretary that the Government would proceed with caution, and recommended that the question should be left in their hands. Sir W. Lawson, in an amusing speech, protested against the House of Commons being called upon at such a moment to consider such a question. The House was worn out with a session the first portion of which was devoted to the discussion of a bill to regulate public-houses, and the second portion to a bill to regulate public worship. Under these circumstances they were asked to annex a country in which there were 20,000 ferocious hill cannibals and 150,000 converted cannibal Methodists, between whom an issue would be raised as to whether the 20,000 hill cannibals were to eat the 150,000 converted Methodists, or the latter were to destroy the former. After a few words from Mr Mundella in favor of the motion, Mr M'Arthur expressed his willingness to withdraw it, but to this Sir C. Dilke objected. Eventually the House divided, and the amendment of the hon. baronet having been rejected by 81 to 28 the original motion was negatived without a division.