

CHANGES INDEED.

OLD MANNERS REVIVE.

A GRUFF, reserved, and morose disposition is the characteristic of modern Englishmen. In Catholic or ancient times it was different. Then England was "merrie England," and, of course, the English were a merrie people. It was the Lutheran heresy which changed the English from a merry to a morose race. The Puritan meeting-house, and the "Union," or Poor Laws, produced a sad change for the worse in the manners and habits of the English nation, and, consequently, exerted a most injurious influence on the temper of the people. They did much to alienate the rich from the poor. The revival of the Catholic religion among the noble and wealthy in England is bringing back those manners and feelings which tended so much to promote a good understanding between the rich and the poor in ancient times, ere the diabolical and selfish spirit of the Lutheran heresy had infected the hearts of the English people. A writer in a recent number of a widely-circulated American journal describes what he saw during the extensive and innocent festivities carried on for several days to celebrate "the coming of age" of the heir of one of the noblest and most ancient families among the aristocracy of England. The head of this noble house some years ago renounced the Anglican heresy, and returned to the faith of his ancestors—to the faith of St. Augustine and Alfred the Great. After describing at great length the various "merrie" doings in which the rich and the poor took part during this festive occasion, the writer comes to the principal event—the High Mass offered in the family chapel to implore the blessing of God on the young heir. "Here," he says, "we are reminded that we are among those who have returned to the faith of Old England. Many not of our faith were there, joining reverently, and as far as they could, in the beautiful Service. The domestic chapel, almost in size a church, looked very fair in the pale morning light that streamed through its pointed windows." He winds up his description with the following reflection in allusion to the great numbers of the wealthy, noble, and titled among the guests, united with the farmers and humbler classes, who joined in these princely festivities on this auspicious domestic occasion:—"What strikes us even more is the beautiful picture here displayed of the revived spirit of the olden faith, quickening the pulses, guiding the lives, and hallowing the pleasures of a new generation of Englishmen. Here are the senators, the law-givers, and soldiers of the future, assembled under the auspices of the Old Church, putting into practice her ideas of ample hospitality and unquestioning charity. The Catholic Church now stands in a high and proud position in England. A social conqueror, on the same soil she conquered once already, by the splendour of her learning and the resources of her material energy. The land which her monks reclaimed from barrenness—the universities her friars adorned with their matchless genius—after having been torn from her by violence, are virtually now holding out their arms to her again; and the Gothic chapels that crown the abbey demesnes, of new and wealthy converts, are but the practical translation of that better wealth poured back into her bosom by the converts of the schools and universities."

In presence of such conquests as these, we need not break our hearts for grief when we witness the puny efforts of such men as Mr Barton, and the editors of the New Zealand newspapers, to "run down" the Catholic Church, by representing her clergy as the enemies of liberal studies, of every kind and of all manner of social and scientific improvements. For three centuries the Catholic Church has been under a cloud; her glories have suffered an eclipse; wealth and power have been in the hands of her enemies. But a change has come, and she is now putting forth her ancient energy and power everywhere, even in New Zealand. In vain do her enemies or false friends seek to arrest her progress or cripple her energies by establishing godless or secular schools, or by any other means whatever. They are but kicking against the goad.

NORTH ISLAND.

RELIGIOUS REVIVAL AMONG THE PRESBYTERIANS IN EDINBURGH.

THIS appears to be a rather important and extensive movement; a violent religious commotion, in fact. It has, however, all the appearance of a wild and barren fanaticism at present, though it may issue in something good in the end. Even religious fanaticism is preferable to religious indifference or actual impiety. If men be honestly bent on being good Christians, and if they pray for light and direction, with humility and perseverance, as they ought, we may be sure that God will be with them and guide them into the right path—that he will conduct them into the Catholic Church. Any religious "revival" therefore among Protestants, more especially educated and intelligent Protestants such as most Scotch Presbyterians are, promises well for the Catholic Church in those times. We know that the Catholic heaven is working strongly in Scotland, and has long been doing so. It is a somewhat remarkable fact that two men from America set this Protestant religious "revival" on foot in Scotland. One of these men is a convert from Unitarianism, and is now a Congregationalist. The other, his fellow-labourer, it is said, "sings the Gospel." It is a pity we have not a religious "revival" among the Presbyterians in Dundee and other parts of the Colony. It might stir them up to examine the most of them, are at present in a state of utter ignorance; or rather is worse, they are very imperfectly acquainted with it. At the same time they fancy they know all about it, and that it is a system of rank idolatry. Such a thing as a religious "revival" among Catholics is not unknown, and is often much needed. But then it cannot well degenerate into fanaticism. It must be sober and rational, however fervent. The confessional secures that. Such a revival is usually the fruit of "missions" among Catholics. Many instances of it are to be seen in Ireland and America. On such occasions many Catholics of both sexes are often brought back to the Church, and their duty, after years of irreligious and vicious living, and who, but

for such missions would in all human probability have continued to lead a reprobate life, and die in their sins. Religion is usually the grand lever which moves the feelings and directs the actions of men, in every relation of life private or public. When this lever is in the hands of those who know how to use it well, and who have authority to use it, great and good results, and visible results, must follow. Yet they who have no authority to use it, may get hold of it and abuse it, to the injury of many. How often is this seen, and the present "revival" in Edinburgh is an illustration of it. It was when the princes and people of Europe were under the influence and direction of the Catholic Church, that the foundation of modern civilization and the British Constitution were laid, so favorable to true liberty. Then progress was safe and salutary. Europe has progress now, but progress detached almost entirely from any connection with the Church. We have seen to what hurtful consequences, in a moral and religious sense, such modern progress is tending. But we have not seen the end, and men are now instinctively returning to the Catholic Church as to the only safe harbour from the political storm that they see impending. Those outside the Church are merely struggling against each other for supremacy. Parties the most incongruous, such as Continental Infidels and English Nonconformists, are uniting their forces if only they can destroy the Catholic Church—the foe at once of heresy and infidelity. Well may Lord Salisbury call this a "monstrous" confederacy. Both in America and England, the two most progressive countries in the world, it is universally admitted that Infidelity and Catholicism are the two great powers which now divide Christendom; and that Protestantism is a power utterly inadequate to cope with either. The temporal power of the Pope is not yet destroyed. The root of it still remains in the Vatican, and ere another generation pass, it will again spring up and extend its branches as of yore, no doubt.

THE IRISH IN SCOTLAND.

I MAY relate an incident which, many years ago, fell under my notice in my native town in the south of Scotland. I was one day present in the Circuit Court, at a certain trial for murder. A party of poor Irishmen were quietly making their way back to Ireland, after the reaping season, with their little savings. They were assailed, as they were crossing the river, by some malicious Scotchman. He began to pelt them with stones, as the 'Otago Times' is now pelting poor Biddy with his types and printing press. On their remonstrating, this Scotch ruffian struck one of the party to the ground, and killed him with a heavy stake. At the trial, an attempt was made by the prisoner's counsel to shake the evidence of the chief witness, the comrade of the murdered man, by some broad insinuations that Irishmen in general had little respect for truth. On this the Judge—Scotchman though he was—indignantly remarked, addressing the counsel, that he would not sit there to listen to any such unjustifiable reflections upon the character of any class of H.M. subjects. After the witness had finished his evidence, and before he left the court, the Judge said to him: "An attempt has been made to throw suspicion on your evidence by the counsel for the prisoner in a very unjustifiable manner, and I cannot allow you to go without saying I never, in the course of my judicial experience, heard testimony given with more fairness and evident honesty and truthfulness than you have given in this case. Notwithstanding the provocation you had received from the prisoner you have not shown the slightest animosity against him, nor any attempt to exaggerate the circumstances of the atrocious crime which he has committed, in depriving one of your comrades of his life in the cold-blooded manner he did." An attempt was made to prove the prisoner insane, but that would not avail him, and he met the doom he justly deserved, and he was hanged. The only excuse the ruffian had for his crime was, that some one had told him, as it appeared truly, that the Irishmen had been ill-using his nephew, a young lad. It is much to be feared he was prompted to the infernal deed chiefly because his victim was Irish, one of the natives of that country against whom Scotchmen, and Englishmen too, are led almost from their cradle to cherish an ungenerous antipathy. The bigotted, the prejudiced low-bred and low-born Scotch and English may indulge in such feelings against Irishmen, yet there are many among them who, like the Scotch Judge referred to, are superior to such prejudices, and judge and treat Irish men and women with justice. The Government and those in high station, as a rule, are now well-disposed to them. Not so the Press. Strange that any ill blood should exist between the Irish and Scotch. They are of the same stock—Celtic in their origin, and possessed of many fine virtues in common.

Had it not been for that foul revolt from the Church in the sixteenth century, the people of the two countries might have lived in peace and friendship at this day. But good and evil, justice and injustice, truth and error, will ever remain in conflict till the end comes. What we Catholics of all nationalities have to do is to look well to our own ways; to see that we are faithful and loving to our Holy Mother the Church; obedient to the voice of her pastors. Then we may bid our bitterest enemies—the 'Otago Times' included—do their worst. To use the words of Archbishop Manning, "We fear them not."

Of this we may be certain, that the more faithful we are to our own creed, and the more we practise its duties, the more will Protestants of all kinds respect and trust us. No small amount of the prejudice existing against Catholics arises from some being practically unfaithful to their Church.

SCOTCH CELT.

P.S.—I should have said that when an attempt was made to prove the murderer in the above case insane, the Judge resented it as something like an affront to the majesty of the law, so barefaced was it. The man was, no doubt, insane in a certain sense, his mind being possessed with national and religious prejudice to an insane degree. The 'Otago Times' shows a similar insanity, though in a milder form, when he attempts to destroy poor Biddy's prospects, if not her life, by a savage attack on her in its paper.