

small confidence. "To become a Roman Catholic and remain a thorough Englishman are, it cannot be disguised," says the 'Times,' "almost incompatible conditions." This is sheer clap-trap and nonsense, unworthy of the 'Times.' The 'Times' knows that some of the most eminent patriots, sovereigns, statesmen, scholars, warriors, and philosophers whom England has ever seen have been born and brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, and that the foundations and most solid and enduring portions of that glorious temple of liberty, "The British Constitution," were constructed by Catholic, and not by Protestant, hands. Talk of Catholicism being "un-English," indeed! The 'Times' consoles, or tries to console, himself and friends with the reflection that, after all, Lord Ripon is but one—a "stray peer"—who has gone over to Rome. His conversion presents but "a melancholy spectacle" at best, and nothing more. It indicates something like an aberration of mind. If the editor of the 'Times' had ventured on such a foolish and ill-bred remark in the House of Lords, or at any public meeting, he would have elicited loud cries of "Oh! oh!" But if the Earl of Grosvenor and the Duke of Leeds have since gone over to Rome, as reported in the NEW ZEALAND TABLET of last week, what will the 'Times' then say about "stray peers." I was confident, when I heard of Lord Ripon's conversion, that many other members of the English aristocracy would soon follow his example. We have, in fact, only seen the beginning of this Catholic movement in the English peerage. The 'Times' had better give in with a good grace at once, and not talk any more stuff and nonsense about "stray peers," Catholicism being "un-English," and conversions indicating a disease of the mind. The thunder of the Vatican is stronger than the thunder of Printing-house Square after all. What will the hunchback national jester, Mr Punch, say to all this? The creature's venom will overflow, and he will slaver with passion and grin more broadly than ever. But these wonderful conversions are no fit subjects for jibes and taunts by Roman Catholics at the expense of their Protestant neighbors. They are the fruit of God's grace, and not of men's power. It is gratifying to Roman Catholics doubtless to see men of wealth, high rank, and commanding abilities like Lord Ripon giving in their adhesion to the Church in spite of many obstacles; yet we do not require to be told that the soul of the humblest of the people is of as much value, in the sight of God, as the soul of Lord Ripon or the Queen herself. The Church has, of late, made signal conquests among the Anglican clergy and the English peerage. I confess I would like to see her conquer some of the eminent members of the Fourth Estate—the editor of the 'Otago Guardian,' for instance. Their turn will come next. Come it will, for they, I believe, are men of good-will, and it is quite possible that Lord Ripon at one time may have felt and spoken against the Catholic Church as strongly as ever they have done. The Catholic Church in England has long been poverty-stricken and crippled in her operations from want of funds; but now she is likely to be relieved from her wants so far as money can supply them. When the Church has rich sons and daughters she will never be poor; but riches are dangerous even to the Church. The Church in England knows that to her cost, and is likely to make a better use of her riches in our day than she did in times past. I notice Lord Ripon has just given £3,000 as a donation to the new Catholic College at Kensington. Good Catholics are liberal to God's Church and his poor, not only in life but also in death. Lord Dunraven is a remarkable instance. His religious and charitable bequests were princely. When Queen Victoria, whom God long preserve, is called away to exchange an earthly for an heavenly crown, I question whether she will leave as much for pious and charitable purposes, as Lord Dunraven did. In reading the "Probates of Wills," I have often been struck at the very small amount which the owners of all the millions of cash bequeathed in these wills have left for religious or charitable uses—a sum, which, taken collectively, is not worth naming. Yet the pauperism of England is a national scandal, and so is the want of the means of religious instruction for the English poor. Now that wealthy Englishmen are becoming Catholics, these scandals, it is hoped, will be removed by degrees. That cannot be done of a sudden, for these scandals are the growth of three centuries—co-evil with the birth of Protestantism. In no country in the world probably, Christian or pagan, does pauperism appear in a more forbidding form than in England, and nowhere does it trust so much to popular demoralisation. Yet "the poor law system" is eminently Protestant and English. The Archbishop of Westminster lately mentioned that since he formally placed his diocese under the patronage of the Sacred Heart he had received for his people most liberal gifts in money. There may be, who knows, some connection between this pious act of the Archbishop and these recent gratifying conversions among the "Barons bold" of England. For myself, I may say that these conversions are specially gratifying to me who often repeat Cardinal Wiseman's "Litany for the Conversion of England," which I hope many others besides me in New Zealand recite and will continue to recite.

A DEADLY SPRING.—A writer in the Colusa (California) 'Independent' says:—"About half a mile over a mountain from Bartlett Springs there is what is called the Gas Spring. This is probably the greatest curiosity of the mountains. The water is ice-cold, but bubbling and foaming as if boiled, and the greatest wonder is the inevitable destruction of life produced by inhaling the gas. No live thing is to be found within a circuit of 100 yards near the spring. The very birds if they happen to fly over it drop dead. We experimented with a lizard on its destructive properties by holding it a few feet above the water; it stretched dead in two minutes. It will kill a human being in twenty minutes. We stood over it about five minutes, when a dull, heavy, aching sensation crept over us, and our eyes began to swim. The gas which escapes here is the rankest kind of

WHAT IT COSTS TO BE A CATHOLIC.

PERHAPS there are few Catholics who live in peace under the United States, who ever stop to consider the sacrifices the people in many European countries have to undergo, simply because they profess the Catholic Faith.

In Russia, to become a convert to the Roman Catholic Church, entails forfeiture of all estates, and prevents promotion in the civil or military sphere. In like manner, in other countries, pains and penalties await all who dare to cast aside the perplexities of Protestantism and take up the Cross of our Divine Saviour. Even in America, with all its boasted toleration, the man who openly professes the Catholic faith is in a measure ostracised by those who are imbued with the spirit of Puritanism. The world, in a word, hates the Catholic Church, as her teachings are repulsive to those who follow the world, the flesh, and—as a consequence—the devil. Worldlings cannot reconcile to themselves the teachings of that spiritual mother who tells all her children there is a spiritual law which is far more imperative than the law of Mammon; nor can it endure that Church which places the Cross of Christ above and beyond the sceptre of Cæsar. In the creedless churches men learn that to be rich, powerful, and independent of religious scruples is the acme of perfection, and thus they intuitively are taught to hate the teachings of the Temple of the Holy Ghost, which tells us that the poor are the people of God, that the number shall be exalted, and that self-abnegation is the solemn obligation of every Christian.

The world tells its votaries that the religion of Dives is the true method by which to gain happiness, whilst the Catholic Church tells her children that to be good and perfect Christians they must be like Lazarus in spirit so that that the Son of God may take pity upon them and raise them up to the glory He has promised all who love and serve Him in faith, hope, and charity. For these reasons and for others fully as potent, the worldly-minded look upon practical Catholics as men who are beneath them in intelligence, who are blinded to their own best interests because they believe in the teachings of the Church by which they are prevented from committing nameless crimes whose very mention pollutes the lips that gives them utterance, and who, moreover, are so circumscribed by the laws of God, that they turn away in disgust from what the world is pleased to call its pleasures.

This is the spirit which in our days has cast the beloved Bishops and pastors into prisons where they are treated as the vilest criminals. Men whose heads are covered with the snow-white locks of age, whose blameless lives have been passed in performing those deeds of charity peculiar to the Catholic priesthood, are torn from the altar of God and thrust into prison because they have the courage to obey God, rather than Cæsar. For the libertine, the infidel, and the robber, there is freedom and justice; but for the humble priest of God, the highest reward for fidelity to his faith is to wander an exile from his native land, or dwell in a dungeon within her borders.

Nor will this persecution stop here. From the Bishops it will descend to the priests, and from them to the people, who ere long may expect to feel the iron-clad hoof of the hellish miscreants, who, under the name of progress and liberty, are re-enacting Pandemonium in Europe. Nor must we in America expect to be free from this scourge of Lucifer. It will come sooner or later, and it behooves us to be ready for the conflict, by nourishing our faith, by reliance on Divine Providence, by prayer and penance, as these are the arms that God has proposed for our defence in every battle against the legions of hell—come in what shape they may. When heroic David went forth to face the huge Goliath he did not encase himself in the armour of this world, but he placed his sole reliance upon the power of God. In like manner should Catholics place implicit reliance upon the power of heaven to release them from every toil the enemies of God may seek to cast around them, and to keep in memory at all times the important truth it is better to obey God than man.—'Catholic Sentinel.'

The 'New York Freeman' says:—"It is announced, in a public telegraphic dispatch to the European papers—whether correctly or not we do not know—that the Duke of Norfolk, First Peer of the British realm, and by hereditary title Grand Marshal of the Court of England, is about to renounce all his worldly titles and to enter the Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, at Brompton—purposing to enter Holy Orders. The Duke is about twenty-seven years of age, and has been marked, all his life, for his devotion as a Catholic. His hereditary titles and estates will pass to his brother, Lord Edward Bernard Howard, who has just reached his majority. The mother of the Duke of Norfolk is a sister of Lord Lyons, who some time ago was British Minister at Washington.

The following are the professors appointed to the Catholic University College at Kensington:—Rector: The Right Rev. Mgr. Capel, Domestic Prelate to his Holiness Pope Pius IX.; Classics—F. A. Paley, Esq., M.A., Camb.; Mathematics—E. Butler, Esq., M.A., F.C.D.; Oriental Languages and Hebrew—C. Seager, Esq., M.A., Oxon.; Astronomy—R. Proctor, Esq., F.A.S.; Chemistry—F. Barff, Esq., M.A., Camb., Professor of Chemistry to the Royal Academy; Natural Theology—Rev. R. Clarke; Natural History—St. George Mivart, Esq., F.R.S.; Literature—Dennis Florence McCarthy, Esq.

The present may be a fitting moment to note down the progress of Catholicism in Great Britain within the last hundred years. Here are the statistics collected with great care:—In 1765, there were 60,000 Catholics in England and Scotland; in 1821, there were 503,000; in 1842, they numbered 800,000; in 1870, the number was 3,380,000. There are now in England 1,093 priests, 1,353 churches, 70 monasteries of men, 268 convents of women, 1,200 Catholic Schools. The house of Peers number 33 Catholic; the Lower House 87; among the Privy Counsellors there are 6 Catholics; the nobility