

New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

SATURDAY, MAY 22, 1875.

GERMAN PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH.

A RECORD.

At the end of last year, the German Government had imprisoned five Bishops, viz., the Archbishop of POSEN, the Archbishop of COLOGNE, the Bishop of TREVES, the Bishop Coadjutor of POSEN, and the Bishop of PADERBORN. Fines had been imposed by the Imperial Government upon all these Bishops, and also upon the Bishops of MUNSTER, HILDERSHEIM, BRESLAU, CULM, ERMUND, and LIMBURG. In addition, the property of these Prelates has been plundered or confiscated. As an example, the Archbishop of POSEN was fined, till his funds were exhausted, and then his private effects were seized, and sold. The Government of Prussia despoiled him of his revenue, cast him into prison, where he now lingers, and then, as far as it could, deprived him of his See. But this is not all; it now calls on him, in prison, to pay income tax on the revenues of which it has despoiled him, and on account of the See from which it has declared him disposed.

Since the beginning of the FALCK Laws, up to the 3rd of last December, 1400 priests, in Prussia, had been either sent to prison, or fined on account of these laws; 100 had been banished from their homes, and some who had returned to their flocks, had been transported to the Island of Rügen. In some of the prisons, such for instance as Düsseldorf, and Cleve, the persecuted ecclesiastics were kept in the same room with criminals, and treated like them.

Besides the 1400 imprisoned and fined, about as many more—that is, 1400—had been forbidden by the Government to say Mass, or perform any sort of priestly function; and if they dared to do so, they were compelled to leave their own country.

The private houses of the laity had been visited by the police, and their drawers searched.

Catholic lay gentlemen had been cast into prison for speaking according to their consciences.

On the 16th of last December, a member of the German Parliament, Herr SOUNNEMANN, who is a Jew, and a Democrat, charged BISMARCK, to his face with having ordered, within a short time, no less than 784 persons to be summoned before the Judge, to be punished for having offended him, chiefly in the Catholic newspapers.

No one escaped the ruthless persecutor. For example, a poor needlewoman had the misfortune to speak an incautious word, as to the treatment Catholics were receiving from their Government, and BISMARCK had her brought before the Judge to be punished, although in a letter to him she had begged his pardon.

Catholic newspapers dare not reproduce foreign news displeasing to him. The 'New Free Press' of Vienna, a Jewish newspaper, stated that BISMARCK had held back letters of the Austrian Imperial Family, to Queen AUGUSTA. This statement was published in a Prussian Catholic paper, accompanied with the remark that "it could not be believed." And what was the result—BISMARCK had the unfortunate Editor sent to prison for three months.

Since the beginning of the present year, the persecution has not only continued but increased.

Nothing is now wanted to raise BISMARCK and his associates to the infamy of NERO, but the actual shedding of blood, and this appears to be near at hand.

And why all this folly, wickedness and cruelty? What have the Catholics done? There were no more loyal citizens than the German Catholics; none more industrious, laborious, and law-abiding; none more devoted to every good work; none more enthusiastic in their patriotism, as was well demonstrated on many a hard-fought field during the late war between France and Prussia. In fact it was to the Catholic troops in the service of Prussia, that the chief glory of that terrible struggle was due. It was they who bore the brunt of the fight—they who, for the most part, held the post of honour. They were ever foremost in the field.

But on the morrow of their great victory. Germany, which was so much indebted to them, showed her gratitude for so much devotion and loyalty, and for so great and

many sacrifices, by enacting infamous laws, which no man could be bound to obey, and which Catholics must not obey, even though their refusal should cost them the loss of property, liberty—even life itself. In his deadly hatred of the Catholic Church and Catholics, BISMARCK has persuaded the great German Empire, to cruelly persecute fifteen millions of her best subjects.

Here, then, we have notorious facts, and yet the newspapers in England, America, and the British Colonies, with the exception of such as are Catholic, have not a word of censure for this ruthless persecution. In fact they almost ignore the facts altogether. They withhold from their readers the state of the case, and not only that, but rather insinuate that the Catholics of Germany are now receiving their deserts. On the part of these papers there is no sympathy for brave men suffering persecution for justice sake, because they happen to be Catholic. On the contrary, the tone is "serve them right." With them BISMARCK, with two million soldiers at his back, is a man greatly to be admired for the stand he is making against unarmed priests and Catholic laymen.

Were a vile calumny against Catholics, or huge lie, to be published in a corner of Germany, such as the forged speech of Bishop STROSSMAYER, or BISMARCK's false statement as to KULLMAN, it would be inserted in every non-Catholic newspaper, and rapidly circulated throughout the Empire with an evident relish. But the gross injustice done to Catholics, and the fearful persecution to which they are subjected in Germany, Switzerland, and elsewhere are scarcely noticed by the newspapers.

THE CORPORATION AND THE RATEPAYERS.

THE very unmistakable expression of public feeling exhibited at the meeting of ratepayers held on Monday evening last to protest against the awards made in the matter of widening Princes street, should be pretty conclusive evidence to the Corporation of the way in which the delicate negotiations are regarded by the citizens. It is seldom that there exists such perfect unanimity as prevailed at the meeting called for the ventilation of the subject, and although a few of the speakers were anxious, if possible, to keep faith with the Provincial Government, and that the honor of the citizens should be maintained by adhering to the compact of 1862, all were unanimous in denouncing the outrageous terms of the awards, and the manner in which they had been arrived at. To those who will view the matter in an impartial spirit, it does certainly seem strange that the citizens' money to the extent of £40,000 or £50,000 should be needlessly thrown away, when by the postponement of the contemplated improvements for another year, the object sought can be effected at less than one-fifth the outlay; and taking that and other facts into consideration, there would appear to be some grounds for the charge that the public money was sought to be recklessly squandered for the benefit of the few. In substantiation of this assertion it has been stated—and the publication of the terms of the awards has placed it beyond contradiction—that a tenant in Princes street, who pays at the present time from £50 to £60 per year, the lease under which the tenancy is held expiring eleven months hence, has been allotted £8000 for his share of the compensation. With facts such as these before us we must come to the conclusion, either that the arbitrators were totally unfit for the task for which they were appointed, or that the matters of dispute were not properly defined. During the evening Mr. E. B. CARGILL took occasion to refer to the complaint of many who live in the higher portions of the city, who naturally feel indignant that so much of the rates towards which they are called on to contribute, should be thus appropriated wholesale, while streets are unformed, without gas, and unprotected. Notwithstanding Mr. CARGILL seemed of a contrary opinion, we think it will be admitted there is much justice in the complaint. In many portions of the higher parts of the city, where ratepayers are called upon to pay a considerable quota to the municipal revenue, the conditions of the roadway—pathways there are none—is simply a disgrace, in many instances entry and exit having to be effected by the means of planking laid upon a bed of mud. It is but a few days since an unfortunate man came by his death under circumstances which left no doubt that, were the dangerous place sufficiently protected, the sad accident never would have occurred. The unfortunate victim was unknown and friendless, and further than the