

"We have ever claimed for every man the free exercise of his religion, untrammelled by the State."

The 'Evening Star,' says "But according to the TABLET, the Roman Catholics do claim more than their fellow countrymen consider sufficient for themselves—they claim to live under a different code of laws from those enacted for the common weal of the State." Not at all, the TABLET never made any claim of the sort. The TABLET claims nothing but the right and liberty to be a Catholic, that is all, and that is all the Prussian Catholics demand; and this is exactly what BISMARCK denies them. And in claiming this, we only ask as much as other religions and churches demand. Take, for example, the Free Kirk, does it allow the State to make laws for its guidance, as to the mode of appointing its pastors, of regulating its Church Courts, the deposition of its ministers, &c., &c. What folly in a public writer to put forth such crude expressions. No Church, except such as is the creature and slave of the State, would allow, or ever did allow the State to make laws as to its doctrine or government, as to its worship, or its discipline, as to the appointment of its ministers, and the administration of its sacraments. The TABLET claims for the Church the right and the liberty to govern itself, and no more. But this is what Prussia denies her, and it is for doing this that BISMARCK persecutes her so terribly. It is for refusing to yield that which cannot be abandoned, without denial of Catholicity, that Prussia inflicts pains and penalties on Catholics. In fact, what Prussia asks of Catholics is, that they should turn Protestants at once. This, however, they are not likely to do, though the 'Evening Star' considers them rebels for not doing it.

The 'Star' says "It is the TABLET's doctrine of the justifiableness of rebellions that has led to the troubles of France, Spain, &c." The justifiableness of rebellion is not our doctrine; but we take the liberty of asking the Editor of the 'Star' to examine his conscience in reference to the deposition of JAMES II. of England, of the revolt of the United States, and dethronement of the Italian Princes. We have never advocated rebellion; but we refuse to obey laws made for the purpose of destroying the Catholic Church, because, in reality, such are not laws at all, but iniquities which must be repelled.

THE WAR CLOUD.

THE clouds which have overhung the political horizon of Europe, assume a more threatening aspect as time rolls on, and the storm which has so long been delayed, seems ready to burst forth at any moment. Success is often fraught with more disastrous consequences than defeat, and conquerors can push their victories too far. It must be confessed that at the close of the struggle which clipped the wings of the eagle of France, and trailed her standards in the dust, the terms exacted by the victors over the vanquished, would appear to be far from galling. For this clemency, however, France has to thank an under estimate of her recuperative powers on the part of her victorious adversary, rather than a dislike to cripple her resources. The astonishing vitality exhibited by her Gallic foe, and the ease with which she loosed the bonds which it was hoped had bound her for years to come, has been a matter of much trouble to Germany, and the German Chancellor has lost no opportunity to goad his antagonist to exasperation. Experience, however, is a good tutor, and France, taught by the bitter lessons of the past, has put the curb upon the desire to avenge the stain upon the national escutcheon, and carefully nursed her hatred of her conqueror. Foiled and baffled in his offensive designs on France, and goaded to desperation by his utter inability to crush out Catholicity, or bend the spirits of the heroic bishops and priests, the despot next seeks to extend his iniquitous and unjust suppression of freedom of thought to the Kingdom of Belgium. To his disgust and chagrin, however, he received a check to his designs, which uncomfortably reminded him of the fact that he was but mortal. The cowardly and tyrannical treatment of the German hierarchy naturally called forth the indignation of the Catholic Press of Belgium, and the result was that "the man of blood and iron," being unable to see his own acts in the glare of the noon-day, a threatening menace was despatched to Belgium, that the strictures passed upon Prussian policy by the Belgium Press were highly displeasing to his sensitive mind, and requesting that the audacious organs should be suppressed. The answer returned to

this menacing command was not calculated to smooth his ruffled plumage, or restore his equanimity, being informed that the Belgian Government, while carefully guarding against a breach of any international law, would never deny the Press or the people freedom of speech. Having a pretty good idea that Belgium was under the protection of a power which would preserve her integrity at all risks, the German swaggler pocketed his wrath, and pardoned the offence he dare not punish. The dictatorial tone assumed by the German Empire since the Franco-Prussian war, has created a feeling of jealous watchfulness in the minds of European powers, and the slightest attempt on her part to assume an aggressive policy for further aggrandisement would be the signal for letting slip the dogs of war. In such a contingency, England could not, without losing her prestige as a first-rate Power, avoid fighting. Indeed, the Ministerial Press of England has already assumed a martial tone. The 'Standard' declares that "war may break out at any moment," and in such case it is almost impossible that England could avoid joining in the struggle, and the utterance of the Premier on the Belgium question was to the effect that the "English Government will do its duty." In prospect of the threatening aspect of affairs which presents itself at the present time, an article in a recent number of the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' which we publish elsewhere, will be read with interest. The writer gives his ideas of the fighting capacities of the different nations of Europe in a thoughtful and intelligent manner. He commences his survey of the status of the various nations by selecting France, and after admitting the burning desire which fills the hearts of all Frenchmen to retrieve the lost fortunes of their nation, he is of opinion that four or five years must elapse before France will be in a position to enter the field with any prospect of winning back the laurels which were torn from her brow at Metz and Sedan. The writer, however, admits, that while England took twenty years to re-organise the ravages on her military system in the Crimea, France could recover its former effectiveness in one-fifth the time. These are opinions, however, uttered early in the present year, and circumstances have since transpired which might materially affect the view then maintained. Emboldened by his conquests in the field, and the successful persecution of unoffending prelates, BISMARCK, like the frog in the fable, has distended himself to such an extremity that it is but natural to expect a collapse. The indignities and persecutions to which the Catholic dignitaries, clergy, and people of Germany have been subjected for the past eighteen months could of course be perpetrated with impunity. The voice and pen of Mr. GLADSTONE, once so powerful in exposing supposed horrors of Neapolitan dungeons, are both silent and still when the victims are the members of that Church he is so anxious to confound. But a retribution is not afar off. Belgium has been menaced, Austria has received a broad hint, Italy a complaint, and Switzerland a warning. Notwithstanding the disclaimer of Mr. DISRAELI, England had a threat flung in her teeth; and the consequence of all this is, that what justice and humanity had failed to secure, a feeling for the common safety will accomplish. A day of reckoning is not afar off!

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE adjourned annual meeting of the shareholders in the TABLET Company took place on Tuesday evening last: his Lordship the Most Rev. Dr. Moran in the chair. The directors' report and balance-sheet were received and adopted, and the following gentlemen elected to serve on the directory for the ensuing year:—Rev. W. Coleman, Messrs Downey, Connor, F. Meenan, and Reynolds. The retiring auditors, Messrs M. Meenan and Columb, were re-elected, and after a lengthened discussion regarding matters of the Company, a vote of thanks to the chair closed the proceedings. The balance-sheet will be found in another column.

THE proceedings at the special meeting of the Waste Lands Board, on Tuesday, were of rather an unusual character, culminating in the Chief Commissioner (Mr. J. T. Thompson) vacating the chair, and leaving the Board in high dudgeon. It appears that 7,000 acres of land in the Heriot Hundred had been gazetted to be sold on the deferred system payment on the 6th instant, but at the eleventh hour an injunction of the Supreme Court was obtained at the instance of a number of run holders in order to restrain the Superintendent in proceeding with the sale. The Provincial Secretary issued a memo. to the District Land Officer, at Dunedin, warning him against refusing any applications which might be made to him; but in contradiction to this, however, the Chief Commissioner had telegraphed to the District Land Officer prohibiting the sale of the sections. This, Mr. Donald Reid, considered to be an unwarrantable proceeding as the in-