

account it should not be lightly adopted, unless it could be clearly shown, either by *a priori* reasoning, or better still, from the lessons of actual experience, that the benefits which the community would derive from it would more than outweigh its disadvantages. (b) Now the practical question arises: Are the benefits likely to accrue from Prohibition clearly greater than its disadvantages? Our Prohibitionists fall back here exclusively on the lessons of experience. The Clutha district in New Zealand, Mildura in Victoria, and Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maine, etc., in America are set before us as evidences of the advantages of Prohibition. But it so happens that these very same places are also brought forward as melancholy examples of the more or less disastrous failure of Prohibition by large bodies of people of various creeds and classes, who are at least as independent, reasonable, and competent eye-witnesses as the advocates of Prohibition. They assert quite as positively as Prohibitionists deny that this expedient is no real remedy for the drink evil, that it positively aggravates it, and that it introduces in its train worse evils than those it is intended to remove. It is not for me to decide which set of witnesses is right, or whether either is wholly right or wholly wrong. But I may here state that my personal opinion is that the weight of evidence, taken all in all, appears to me to be against Prohibition. I may be wrong. Yet, under such circumstances, I, for one, am not prepared to advocate a measure that interferes so closely with personal liberty, and yet is, at best, of extremely doubtful benefit. Even if it were conclusively shown—which it is not—that Prohibition is a real remedy for the evils attendant on the drink traffic, I should only deem it just to accompany its adoption with a fair measure of compensation—as in Victoria—to those whose livelihood would be unfavourably affected, or whose property would be suddenly depreciated in value by a chance majority of the voters in their districts.

Secondly, as to the

METHODS OF LEADING PROHIBITIONISTS.

So far as I can gather, the Prohibition movement in this Colony, is partly political, partly religious. The political leaders of the party, so far as I am aware, have not succeeded in gaining the confidence of their fellow-colonists. As regards the clergy: it pains me much to state that many of those who are intimately associated with the movement throughout New Zealand are notable for the violence and frequency of their attacks, either in the Press or in the pulpit, or in both—and even at recent dates—on all that we Catholics hold dear and sacred. This remark, I am glad to say, does not apply to Waimate. If I were convinced of the benefits of Prohibition—which I am not—such proceedings would not alienate my support and sympathy from the movement, even though it would make it difficult for me to meet on the same platform, or work cordially on the same committee with those who make it a practice to revile the faith that is dearer to me than life. But I cannot get away from the conviction that certain writings, speeches, and political actions of those that are prominent in the Prohibition movement have done much to cause it to be viewed with suspicion, if not with downright aversion, by many who might otherwise have given it their sympathy and support, just as they would to any other political expedient on which people of any creed, of all creeds, or of no creed, might, in a friendly way, agree to differ. In conclusion, allow me to quote the following words of Cardinal Manning. They are to the point. In his address to the Holy Family Confraternity of Commercial Road, 1875, he said: 'I will go to my grave without tasting intoxicating liquors; but I repeat distinctly that any man who should say that the use of wine or any other like thing is sinful, when it does not lead to drunkenness, that man is a heretic condemned by the Catholic Church. With that man I will never work.' Now, I desire to promote total abstinence in every way that I can; I will encourage all societies of total abstainers. But the moment I see men not charitable, attempting to trample down those who do not belong to the total abstainers, from that moment I will not work with those men.—I am, my dear Mr. Graham,

Yours sincerely,
P REGNAULT, S.M.

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE VICARIATE OF NATAL.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago (says the *Missionary Record* of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate) there were six priests in all the vast territory of the old Vicariate of Natal entrusted to the Oblate Fathers; to-day there are 114. Then there were three religious Brothers; now there are 284. Then there were eight nuns, and at the present time there are 867. The churches in that vast territory—which was half as large as all Europe—numbered five; at the present day the churches in which Mass is said total 81. The churches and chapels built during those 25 years were 92; the convents built for works of mercy—such as orphanages and sanatoria—might be numbered as 14. Twenty-five years ago there was not a Catholic boarding-school in the Vicariate of Natal; now there are 46 boarding-schools.

A COSMOPOLITAN TOWN.

Johannesburg was, prior to the outbreak of the war, perhaps the most cosmopolitan town in the world considering its population. At the High Mass on any Sunday at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, in the Gold Reef city, the following nationalities were represented: English, Irish, Scotch, German, French, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Malay, Chinese, Indian, Zulu, Basuto, Afrikaner.

OUTLANDERS IN THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

A 'Channel Islander,' writing to a Home exchange, points out that French persons resident in Jersey do not enjoy the privileges

that are being demanded for the Outlanders. Shortly stated, they have no rights whatsoever, can give no vote, fill no office, and hold or convey no real estate. This (exclaims the writer) is English liberty and fair play to the Jersey Outlanders—two hours' steam away from Southampton!

GENERAL BULLER'S RECORD IN IRELAND.

It is not generally known that General Redvers Buller, who is now in chief command in South Africa, held a civil position in Ireland during the stirring times of the Land League. It was after Parnell made the compact with Lord Carnarvon, the Irish Viceroy (says a well-informed correspondent), the latter promised to grant Ireland a Parliament in Dublin, with power to frame a Customs law, with the view of promoting Irish industries. At the next general election, acting on the advice of Parnell, the Irish electors in England voted for the Tories, with the result that they had a majority over Gladstone. The Tory Government, however, did not keep faith with Parnell, as the extreme Orange representatives in the North of Ireland threatened to break away from the ranks. These extremists could not tolerate the idea of Lord Salisbury coquetting with Parnell and Home Rule. This led to a rupture between Lord Carnarvon and Parnell, and the latter disclosed the compact entered into, to the amazement of the Liberal party. In the disturbed districts of Kerry the evictions were at this time carrying on their fell work; people were evicted wholesale, and their homesteads in many instances were either razed to the ground or burnt by the landlords. In order to placate the Irish party, General Sir Redvers Buller was sent to Killarney to find out the true state of affairs as existing between landlord and tenant. Buller found in most cases the tenants willing to pay, but unable owing to adverse seasons and the low price of produce, and where the landlords in these cases applied for the assistance of the police and military to evict, General Buller declined to accede to the request. Without the aid of the military and police, of course, there could be no evictions. The landlord garrison in the House of Commons stormed and threatened, but Lord Randolph Churchill, at the time one of the Cabinet Ministers, who backed up General Buller's action, stated he was merely 'bringing pressure on the landlords within the law.'

A PECULIAR CABLE MESSAGE.

A peculiar cable message was received in New Zealand on Thursday of last week. It ran thus:—'A Reuter's telegram states that the Rev. Father Matthews was made a prisoner at the same time as the Royal Irish Fusiliers after the battle of Nicholson's Nek. On his arrival at Pretoria he was released by the Boers, and left for Delagoa Bay, where he now is. Upon being interviewed, the rev. gentleman declared that after the mules stamped the British troops were left entirely unsupported by any artillery, and were in consequence very hard pressed. The men, although they did not become insubordinate, impulsively hoisted a flag of truce.' The latter part of the message showed the absurdity of the whole. Had the men done as was imputed to them they would have been guilty of mutiny. It was evident to the lay mind that Father Matthews must have made a mistake or that the cable man had bungled his words. It was not likely that Father Matthews, who is an old army chaplain, and who had been stationed at Alexandria as Catholic chaplain, prior to his departure for South Africa, would have made such a statement. On the following day a correction of what was purported to be Father Matthews's remarks was received here. It was as follows:—'It now transpires that the Rev. Father Matthews merely repeated, in his interview, the rumour current at the moment of the surrender of the troops to the Boers at Nicholson's Nek. This rumour was to the effect that a young officer, thinking his ten men were the sole survivors, raised a white flag. The Irish Fusiliers were furious, and freely alleged that the officer's action was a huge blunder.' It is apparent that Reuter's agent had blundered also.

AN ESTIMATE OF MR. RHODES.

I might burden my letter (writes a Transvaal correspondent) with many more instances of like pestilent maladministration, but the interest is not sufficient for those who may read it in print, except as throwing a light on the reason why Cecil Rhodes's name now rouses most thinking men here, as did Dan O'Connell's in Ireland when I was very young. When I came out here most surely I was not prepared to say one good word for him, unless under unavoidable compulsion. After six months' residence, and without the magnetism such a personality often exerts on one (for I have never seen him but in England long ago), the compulsion is put on me to say not one but more good words for him than my space permits. While other politicians have been scheming small schemes and jockeying each other at the colonists' expense, he has pierced Rhodesia with a railway. In a little time he will be at Lake Tanganyika, and the spirit which enables him to effect these things is so uncommon, so wanted, and so entirely wanting here that *nolens volens* the eyes of every energetic, pushful young man turn to Rhodes from the tricksters or noddies who at present rule and so manage their departments that the conveyance of a family mail-bag, such as I intended to use for the carrying of this to Graff-Reinet, cannot be relied on for even six miles by train.

WHAT MR. CHAMBERLAIN SAID IN 1883.

Politicians have short memories all the world over. Some candid friends now and again make public some of their past utterances, which are not always consonant with their latter-day political principles. Mr. Chamberlain has turned his coat so completely of recent years that the following extract from a speech delivered by him in Birmingham in March, 1883, does not come as a surprise to those who know him best:—'If the Orange Free State, as most probably would have been the case, had joined with the Transvaal Boers, no doubt Lord Salisbury would have declared war on it too. And if then, what was not at all unlikely, the whole Dutch population of the Cape had risen, Lord Salisbury, with a

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