

waved the cross the people would gather to the standard and fight for Scotland. There the emblem of the flaming cross aroused the patriotism of the people and nerved them to strike a vigorous blow for their native land. The sign of the cross has in the same way nerved the Catholic soldier to deeds of daring on a thousand hard-fought fields. Take, for instance, Meagher's gallant Irish Brigade at St. Mary's Heights on the deadly day of Fredericksburg. They knelt, received their chaplain's blessing, made the sign of the cross, and then charged up the lead-lashed hill straight to certain doom. Six times in succession they faced that hell-storm. It was not war. It was sheer massacre. But no man flinched. That morning 1200 rations were served out to the gallant Brigade. In the evening just a little over 200 sufficed for the bleeding remnant of that band of heroes. In General Longstreet's words, 'it was the handsomest thing of the whole war.' In denouncing a display of anti-Catholic bigotry at an election contest last year a correspondent of the *Brooklyn Eagle* said: 'It did not weaken the blows that Phil Sheridan inflicted on the enemy at Five Forks because in the morning he was observed to make the sign of the cross with his good right hand before he mounted his charger—just what Rosecrans told his men to do at Corinth. "Make the sign of the cross and go at them, boys!" said old Rosey. They did, and were invincible.' In all human probability many a gallant Dubliner did the same at Elandslaagte. They were none the worse of that. For did not a gallant American officer say of his Irish Catholic soldiers in the great Civil War that he 'found the most pious of them the very bravest,' and that they were the men he would pick if he 'wanted to storm the gates of hell'? The soldier who begins by making the gates of heaven 'suffer violence' need not have much fear of the gates of hell.

CARLYLE wrote in his *Journal* in 1831 that it is a 'vain hope to make people happy by politics.' The saying is, we fancy, even truer of the politicians themselves than of the people who send them to do their talking in

Parliament. Disillusion, such as is said to sometimes follow the peal of wedding bells, will probably come in due course to many of the fresh New Zealand legislators who were returned triumphantly on the 6th, when they find that part of their function as parliamentarians will be to act, not merely as law-makers, but also as factotums and agents-general in miniature to all and sundry in their constituencies. A fair average sample of the 'odd jobs' expected of the parliamentary 'generally useful' is furnished by the following letter recently received by a New South Wales legislator. We quote from a Sydney contemporary:—

As I can't come to town in time for registration, haven't cut sorghum for milken cows, and boys being away shearen, I would like you to see the constible and regisser my dog. he is 8 mouts old 15th of next mont. his name is Bismark, and i don't sactly know what bread you would call him, but he is by Brown's old coolie, that you remember, him that bit the baliff, and a fox-terrier that onct belonged to old Mrs. Tomson, up the river. there is a bridge out hear that wants doen up about 8 pound, and it will help you hear if you get it looked to for us, as some thing Nash could do, more for us than you. You will get a petishion about it signed by me and other leaden residence. Dooley's draft mare, the one with the two foals, got her leg down it referendum day, and there was nearly a smash up.

The spelling of this interesting document reminds one of Artemus Ward's criticism of Chaucer: 'Some kind person has s t me Chawcer's poems. Mr. C. had talent, but he couldn't spel. No man has a right to be a literary man unless he knows how to spel. It is a pity that Chawcer, who had genevus, was so unedicated. He's the wuss speller I know of.' The writer of that missive had 'genevus,' even though he 'couldn't spel.' And neither Chaucer nor Ward could give clearer or more diplomatic expression to their sense of the utility of parliamentary representatives.

THE CHARGE OF RITUAL MURDER.

In his *Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar* Mark Twain inserted the following bit of wisdom: 'The difference between a cat and a lie is this, that a cat has only nine lives.' The statement is true in an altogether especial manner of those screaming hair-raisers which are produced in periods of sectarian fury for the purpose of blackening the character of a rival creed. The Reformation produced a plentiful supply of gruesome, monstrous, and impossible charges of idolatry, phenomenal immorality, and diabolical chuckle-headedness against the Catholic body. Many of these survive to our day. At this hour they are the stock-in-trade of cheap and nasty controversialists and of those strange couples with damaged reputations and police-court records who wander over the surface of our planet earning a dishonest and dishonourable livelihood by pandering to a certain taste for the prurient and the obscene. Catholics can and ought to sympathise with people of any creed who are made the butt of foul and monstrous calumnies. In the days when the Church was in the Catacombs, pagans accused the early Christians of blood-guiltiness in connection with their

worship. It is a discredit, not to Christianity, but to many who bear the Christian name, that for several centuries past a blood accusation or charge of ritual murder has been laid against the Jewish people. The charge never for a moment stood the test of investigation. It died and was buried in dishonour. But in periods of social and political ferment it was exhumed and hawked about to poison the wholesome atmosphere with its foetid smell. And thus it happens that a mysterious murder at Polna, in Bohemia, was made the occasion of resurrecting the old calumny. There was an anti-Semite fury abroad. The leaders of the foolish crusade would not let so fair an opportunity pass. And hence the killing of a youth in Polna was turned into a charge of ritual murder against the authorities of the Jewish Church.

Some time ago we dealt editorially with the squalid story of this strange and long-lived calumny against a people who, whatever their shortcomings, do not lie open to the charge of having persecuted Christian people nor imbrued their hands in their blood. By a strange error, there are some who fancy that the Catholic Church has given a sort of sanction to the 'blood accusation' by authorising the cult of Simon of Trient, who is alleged to have been ritually murdered by Jews. The story was carefully investigated by Pope Sixtus IV. As a result, this Pontiff emphatically forbade the cult of the boy, in a rescript to the Bishop of Ventimiglia. Many other Popes have likewise marked their strong disapprobation of this calumny against our Jewish forefathers in the true faith. Papal rescripts against it were issued by Pope Gregory IX., who declared that in doing so he was following the example of his predecessors in the Holy See. Other Papal documents condemning the charge of ritual murder were published to the world by one each of those Popes who bore the names of Eugenius, Alexander, Clement, Celestine, and Innocent. Another Pope, besides denouncing the story a calumny, ordered all who were in prison on such a charge to be at once set free.

The calumny arising out of the Polna tragedy has been publicly denounced by Father Andreas Csori in Buda-Pesth; by the *Furistische Blätter*, an Austrian law-journal which is contributed to by many leading barristers of the Empire; by the Congress of Orientalists at Rome, in their session of October 10; and by many others. All through Austria great meetings of Jews have been held to protest against the story of the ritual murder. The most notable and impressive utterance on the subject was, undoubtedly, that of Chief Rabbi Dr. Güdemann at a mass meeting of his co-religionists in Vienna. The *Jewish Chronicle* of October 13 thus reports a portion of his great speech on the occasion: 'A thrill passed through the audience when, with uplifted hand, the Chief Rabbi impressively exclaimed: "Shall I swear that there is not the slightest grain of truth in the blood accusation? Well, then! I can affirm by the most sacred of oaths, before God and all the world, that in our religious writings I cannot find the least justification for the charge that the Jews, or any Jewish sect, or any individual Jews have ever used or still use Christian blood, human blood, for ritual purposes, and that I have never heard of any Jew, either in the past or in the present, who, by any act of his, gave just ground for this accusation."'

RULES FOR THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

INTERESTING DISCOURSE BY FATHER FAUVEL.

(From our TEMUKA correspondent.)

A VERY practical instruction on the duties of publicans was given at Temuka on last Sunday by the Rev. Father Fauvel, S.M. The Rev. Father took as his text the words of Isaiah v. 22: 'Woe to you that are mighty to drink and understand to make others drunk.' The preacher opened his discourse with a reference to the recent Prohibition agitation, which, after mighty threatening, had left the interests of the hotelkeepers in the electorate intact. He wished them happiness here and hereafter, and therefore deemed it his sacred duty to give them a salutary advice, and wished to God that his voice was powerful enough to carry his words throughout the length and breadth of the Colony.

There is no effect, said the rev. preacher (whose words summarise), without an adequate cause. What is the cause of the agitation that has banded so many thousands of people together heart and soul in an effort to shut up public-houses for ever? There are, perhaps, several contributing causes, political, social, or other. But we have not to go far to find the chief one—the frightful vice of drunkenness, which degrades a man's humanity, and ruins him in body and soul. And yet, to the disgrace of our common Christianity, it is encouraged and favoured by a certain class of publicans. It is no wonder that people have got tired of this. It is no wonder, too, that many, confounding the traffic with a gross and sinful abuse of the traffic, have left no stone unturned to utterly put a stop to it. The number of hotelkeepers in my parish is small, indeed, but that is no reason why I should not explain to them their duties and obligations—what they are to do and what to avoid—in connection with a trade that offers so