make use of their powers under the Juvenile Offenders Act to avoid sending children to gaol. "It is disappointing to find so many juvenile offenders imprisoned." The Board give a list of cases. The worst came from Cork. No fewer than eight children between the ages of 9 and 11½ were sent to gaol in Cork in 1903 for "obstructing the footway." In Galway a little girl of 10 was sent to gaol for seven days for trespass! Is it too much to say that the magistrates who did these things should get as many months as these children got days in prison?'

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The apparent and artificially created increase in juvenile crime in Ireland will speedily disappear when sanity and humanity return from their holiday and take up their quarters in the brain-cases of the Irish Administration. In the 'Humanitarian' some two years ago Miss Rosa M. Barrett, a Member of the Royal Statistical Society, pointed out as a remarkable fact, that in Ireland alone, of all civilised countries, there was a steady decrease of juvenile crime. In 1898 (she said) there were less than half as many juvenile criminals in Ireland as there were ten years before, and during the three years following 1898 the figures were the lowest on record. In the course of a reply to a discussion on her article on 'The Treatment of Juvenile Offenders' in the 'Journal of the Royal Statistical Society' about the same time, Miss Barrett stated that criminals from 16 to 21 years of age are increasing in England and Scotland. She added: 'I am somewhat at a loss to explain why Ireland (so erroneously thought to be a specially criminal country) is so extraordinarily free from serious crime. With a smaller population Scotland has an enormously greater number of prisoners (almost twice as many in some years), while serious offenders are only 16.6 per 10,000 of the population in Ireland, as compared with 25.4 per 10,000 in England. The convicted prisoners for all offences in Ireland are but 7.3 per 1000 persons; in Scotland they are 12.6 per 1000. Convicts, both male and female, show an extraordinary decrease in Ireland, and one is forced to believe that instead of the Irish being a naturally lawless, offensive people, as so many think, they are in truth naturally law-abiding and well-behaved beyond most peoples. Whether this is due to their deep religious instincts or to other causes, it is not for me to decide.' In the course of the paper referred to above Miss Barrett states that in Ireland 'juvenile crime has diminished 39 per cent. in 20 years and forms only 0.6 per cent of the total crime, falling, especially among girls, more rapidly than in any European country.' She furthermore declares that, apart from drunkenness and allied misdemeanors, 'female crime is almost non-existent in Ireland.'

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In his 'Kilmainham Memories,' published in 1896, Mr. Tighe Hopkins says: 'Our great guilds of crime—the bands of professional burglars and robbers; the financial conspirators; the adept forgers; the trained thieves; the habitual leviers of blackmail; the bogus noblemen, parsons, and ladies of family; the "long-firm" practitioners; the hotel and railway sharps; the "magsmen," "hooks," and "bounces"—these are almost unrepresented in Ireland. In a word, so far as habitual and professional crime is concerned, there is not as decent a country in Europe.'

A Reverend Romancer

A gay and reverend spinner of iridescent missionary tales is just now perambulating New Zealand intent upon charming the chinking coins out of the public pocket for the funds of a Bible Society. The good man's method is simplicity itself. It is in part the method pursued in the famine days by the Connemara 'soupers' who tried to inveigle the starving poor to

> 'Sell their sowls
> For penny rowls,
> For soup and hairy bacon.'

Their mission was money, money, and plenty of it, for 'the cause'; and nothing filled the coffers so fast as sensational tales of sweeping 'conversions' of whole country-sides told on British platforms and through the British religious press. Those enterprising 'soupers' made, in fact, in single baronies of the West more 'converts' than double the entire population resident there. But, somehow, when it came to a matter-of-fact count of heads, the multitudinous recruits vanished into space and had no local habitation or a name. The Bible Society has taken a leaf out of the book of the Anglo-Irish Mission's imaginative 'soupers.' At Invercargill, for instance, the agent in effect, informed his audience that the Catholic clergy in France are running in eager droves 'away from Rome' and into the welcoming arms of the Bible Society. 'Only recently,' said this retailer of Munchausen tales, 'seven hundred priests had seceded from the Church of Rome (in France) and taken up work as colporteurs.' Mark Twain once lamented his inability to tell a fib that anybody would doubt, or a truth that anybody would believe. It is, of course, just possible that the man who spun that tall story in Invercargill may have accurately gauged the gullibility of the audience to whom he addressed his fervent appeal for shekels. But he might at least have culled a more plausible tale from his repertoire, in view of the probability that it would be perused by people of normal sanity in the columns of the 'Southland Times.' As it is, the tinselled tale of the seven hundred recruits from 'Rome' has about the same relation to sober fact as the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.

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No country or creed in the world has, perhaps, a clergy so exemplary, so pious, and so devoted to its work as the clergy of France. Renan, who was at one time a seminarian, had an intimate knowledge of many of them; yet, despite his anti-Catholic fanaticism, he declared in his 'Souvenirs de ma Jeunesse': 'I have never known any but good priests.' No Englishman of the present day, perhaps, has such an intimate knowledge of France as Mr. John Edward Courtenay Bodley. For fifteen years or more he has resided in that country for the purpose of collecting materials for his great work on its social and religious institutions. Yet, convinced Protestant though he is, he could write as follows in a volume that appeared some four years ago: 'The parish priests of France, than whom there is not a more exemplary body of men in the land, illustrate the better qualities, refined by discipline, of those great categories of the people which constitute the real force of the nation.' And of like kind are the rest. But among such a multitude of men as constitute the clergy of France, there must, nevertheless, be, as human nature goes, a certain small per-centage of wreckage—of those who have fallen short of the requirements of their high calling and who are, perhaps, almost as dissatisfied with the restraints imposed upon them by the Church as the Church is dissatisfied with them. But even among those faithless few, the merest fragment have nibbled at any form of Protestantism, and these (as their spokesman Bourrier declared in London in 1900) did not wish to join the Reformed denominations, but to 'reform' the Church from within!

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The reason is not far to seek. 'The French Protestants,' says Hamerton (an English Protestant) in his 'French v. English' (p. 155), 'form a little world apart, which (except, perhaps, in the most Protestant districts, and they are of small extent) appears to be outside the current of national life.' Protestantism in France is stagnant and its progress has long ago ceased. But there is another reason for the ex-priests' avoidance of Reformed denominations in France. 'France, with all her faults, possesses,' says a well-informed Catholic writer, 'a certain measure of self-respect and clear-sightedness which makes her a very poor