

to leave only a comparatively insignificant trace upon the criminal records of the province. We need not here refer to the remarkably high rate of illegitimacy that is a distinguishing feature of those counties in Ulster that return Orangemen to the Imperial Parliament. But we may direct the attention of the men in the saffron masks to the pre-eminence of their corner of Ireland in serious crime. According to the admission of their friend Mr. Long in the House of Commons in last May, five of Ireland's six cases of bigamy occurred in Ulster; the same province was credited with 41 out of the country's total of 81 cases of robbery and assault with intent to rob—34 of the cases occurred in Belfast; and 17 out of a total of 41 cases of concealment of birth took place in Ulster. In all Ireland there were 475 cases of burglary and house-breaking; 188 of these were in Ulster—127 in Belfast alone. We draw no conclusions. We merely offer these statistical nuts for our censors to crack with their own teeth—that is, with the principles which they use against us. It is a bad principle that will not work as well for Orangemen as for 'Papists'. (b) We now turn to the methods of statistically recording crime. These are by no means uniform in all countries. England and Scotland, for instance, are happily free from the methods of collecting and cataloguing so-called 'agrarian outrages' in the South and West of Ireland. The methods referred to represent, not a statistical, but a party-political resort that is an 'outrage' on common-sense and common justice. Many of our readers will probably remember the sweeping exposure of the official methods of 'outrage' manufacture that shook the British Parliament with storms of diaphragm-shaking laughter in the early eighties. Some amazing samples of the *modus operandi* will be found in T. P. O'Connor's 'Parnell Movement'. In New Zealand every conviction, even of a habitual offender, counts upon the records as a separate individual! So much for the 'experts' assumption of uniformity of law, of legal administration, and of statistical methods.

5. The man who makes the mere numerical count of crimes a test of the comparative morality of religious faiths, whereby assumes that all the crimes so enumerated are equal. It is, according to our anonymous censors, the mere number, and not the weight, of the crimes that tips the balance of wrong-doing to this side or that. They thus place the casual neighbor's quarrel, or the blow that resents an insult to a woman, or the theft of a few potatoes to save the life of a starving chad, on the same level of immorality as forgery, burglary, and the sin—crying to heaven for vengeance—of the brutalised 'professional' who has massacred more innocents than Herod. Unlike our masked 'experts', statisticians and moralists take the gravity as well as the numerical count into consideration in determining questions of comparative crime.

6. Our coy 'experts' assume that all prisoners who enter themselves as 'Roman Catholics' upon the register are 'Roman Catholics' in reality. What is the ground for this assumption? In a large class of cases, the mere assertion—not even a statutory declaration—of hardened criminals whose uncorroborated oath would not be accepted by any court of justice. Add to this the overwhelming evidence of the practice of many old criminals fraudulently describing themselves as 'Roman Catholics'. We have from time to time given details of this resort, including the case of a long-sentence Jew in the Dunedin prison who had himself improperly entered upon the records as a 'Roman Catholic'. A digest of the prisoners' reasons for this practice was given in our columns a few years ago by a keen and observant chaplain to one of the largest prisons in New Zealand.

7. It is furthermore assumed that the alleged 'Roman Catholic' prisoners are all practising Catholics. For is not their lapse from the path of rectitude set

forth, directly or by implication, as the 'fruit' or the 'result' of 'Romish' teaching and practice? Experience, however, shows that a large percentage of offenders, and a very big percentage of habitual offenders, give in their free and ordinary life no allegiance to any Church or creed.

8. In comparing Catholic with non-Catholic criminality in New Zealand, the masked 'experts' fall habitually into one other pit of undue assumption: They take it for granted that Catholics are an 'integral' seventh of the population of this Colony. As a matter of fact, they are only a 'numerical' seventh. To be an 'integral' seventh of our population, Catholics would have to be a seventh of all the principal sections of the people, and possess a seventh of the wealth and other advantages of the country—they would have to be a seventh of the land-owners, the merchants, the farmers, the manufacturers, the mine-owners, the shopkeepers, the professional men, etc. But this is far from being the case. Owing to causes which are written broad and deep upon the history of the British Isles, Catholics in New Zealand belong mostly to the working and the poorer classes. They are (as stated) only a 'numerical', not an 'integral', seventh of our population. For purposes of comparison, they should therefore not be contrasted with the total population of the country, but with the classes to whom they for the greater part belong, and with whom alone they, as a body, have much or anything in common. Now, as everybody knows, it is precisely from the working and the poorer classes that the vast bulk of our prison population is drawn. Are Catholics represented on our crime calendar above their proportion to that part of the population to which they mainly belong? No attempt has ever been made to prove this. And the statistics do not say. In the matter of grave crime, are Catholics represented on our calendar in their full proportion to that part of the population to which they chiefly belong? We do not believe they are, and we confidently challenge comparison. And what about divorce, suicide, infanticide, foeticide, race suicide, and the other darling abominations of our day? Here, too, Catholics can throw down the gauntlet of comparison to the world at large.

It is, of course, the height of folly to judge the relative morality of creeds from an infinitesimal part of their adherents' sins, and to judge their relative criminality from a small-fractional part of the offenders against statute law—namely, from those who happen to get lodged in gaol. Even a Jourdain or a Justice Shallow would not fall into such a supreme foolishness. But it is worse than folly—it is a crime—to coin figures, to manipulate figures, to 'sneak' false statements and false or unwarrantable assumptions and inferences into figures, for the purposes of these 'odorous comparisons'. In the Church of Christ, the poor we have always with us, and the tares are permitted to grow up with the wheat till the harvest time. Christ was ever gentle with the sinners who fell through frailty or the pressure of envying temptation. But His thunders were reserved for the Pharisee and for those who saw the mote in their brother's eye and did not consider the beam in their own.

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