

## Current Topics

### Everything is Caesar's

Dr. Starbuck, an eminent American Unitarian divine, sets forth as follows the motto of the French Gambettists: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and understand that everything is Caesar's'.

### 'Fatal Guides'

Divine praise, according to Sacred Writ, is perfected in the mouths of babes and sucklings. And wisdom sometimes leaps from the mouths of children as a crystal spring often bursts from rocky ground. There lay a deep and probably unconscious philosophy in the answer of the child who said, in reply to a question 'why that tree grew crooked': 'Somebody trod on it, I suppose, when it was a little tree.' How many little lives are permanently bent and twisted and deformed by the crushing example of wicked or unworthy parents: Pagan though he was, Juvenal besought fathers and mothers to refrain from evil—if from no other motive—'ne crimina nostra sequantur ex nobis geniti' (lest their children might imitate them in their sins).

'O fatal guides! this reason should suffice  
To win you from the slippery route of vice,  
This powerful reason: lest your sons pursue  
The guilty track thus plainly marked by you!  
For youth is facile, and its yielding will  
Receives with fatal ease th' imprint of ill.'

'Children,' says Joubert in his 'Pensees,' 'have more need of models than of critics.' And of all mankind, they learn most and fastest and best or worst in the school of example. Good parents, like the good pastor of Auburn, 'allure to brighter worlds.' But, like him, they do better still: they 'lead the way.'

### A Cowardly Government

'The French Government,' says the 'Catholic Times,' 'instead of being ashamed—as they should be if they had any sense of what is due to the national honor—of the seizure of the Pope's representative's papers, are making use of a venal and contemptible press to publish hints and insinuations to the effect that evidence of intrigues against France has been discovered in the documents. . . . Many other assertions, hints, and rumors of this kind have been put in circulation. We need not warn our readers against crediting any of them. If the French Government can only make accusations by stooping to unworthy artifices and subterfuges, it is not difficult to appraise the accusations at their true value. The whole affair is disgraceful to the French Ministry. Had the Pope a standing army like the Kaiser, Monsignor Montagnini's papers would have remained untouched. . . . The intensely anti-Catholic correspondent, who represents the "Times" in Paris never loses an opportunity of showing out a hint or insinuation prejudicial to the Holy Father. He has made the discovery that the announcement as to the publication of Monsignor Montagnini's papers has produced a "real panic" at the Vatican. The wish is father to the thought. But the correspondent, being in the secrets of the atheists and Freemasons who conduct the Government of France, has at his disposal the means of knowing that the Vatican has not the slightest cause for panic. There are several strong reasons why it should feel no anxiety. The first is to be found in the denial, by them "Osservatore Romano" of the French papers' statements with regard to the contents of the documents and the alleged interference of the Vatican in questions affecting France and Spain alone. The next is the knowledge that by common consent a wide latitude is allowed to writers of confidential communi-

cations. And the third reason is that there need not be the slightest fear of honorable people, who are acquainted with the recent proceedings of the French Government and their campaign of persecution, believing anything that may appear in their newspaper organs. If they are failing in their fight against Christianity, they at least have succeeded in degrading French journalism.'

### A 'Clifton' Romance

During his wanderings in search of adventures, Don Quixote 'rescued' the boy Andres from his master's lash. The only result of the 'rescue' was this: that Andres—who, had not the 'rescuer' appeared, would have got off with a few blows—received the father and mother of a welting, that sent him to the hospital for repairs. And the Knight of the Rueful Countenance had such biting sarcasm flung at his impetuous head, that the gamin Andres almost laughed thereat, even while the hot blows rained upon his unprotected cuticle. When, later on, the lad met his 'deliverer,' he addressed the Knight of La Mancha in these words: 'For the love of God, Sir Knight Errant, if you meet me again, don't succor or help me, even if you see me torn to pieces (aunque vea que me hacen pedazos); but leave me to my misfortune, which, however great it may be, will not be worse than that which will come to me from your help.' Then, invoking a malediction on the Don and on 'all the knights errant that were ever born into the world,' the hapless Andres vanished from the scene.

The happily rare obscurantists in New Zealand who object to the Irish people having control in their own house, have long been under the gently-falling lash of the progressive and liberal-minded thought of the Colony. Some weeks ago an ex-legislator in Waimate clapped on the helmet of Manbrino and set his goose-quill lance in rest to do battle (professedly) against Home Rule. But unlike the Rueful Knight, he did not even score a momentary success. The blows which in Cervantes' story fell upon the farmer's urchin, rained instead at Waimate upon the shoulders of the 'deliverer'; and those for whom he did battle speedily realised that the worst service which it was in his power to do to their cause was to set up as its advocate. It so happened that the pretended onslaught on Home Rule was, from first to last, nothing more or less than a rough attack on the priesthood and the Catholic laity of Ireland. The assailant was one of those who fancy that a display of oratorical fireworks is the only way in which it is possible to make their dim light shine before men. Dean Regnault had an easy task in dealing with the amazing misstatements made by his fiery and precipitate opponent. The ex-legislator made a crowning feature of a story to the following effect:

1. He asserted that a violent and unprovoked attack was made on a meek and inoffensive minister of the Lord at Clifton, Co. Fermanagh, Ireland, and that a report of the proceedings appeared in the 'Weekly Irish Times' of September 13, 1906. He soon found it necessary to eat up this whole story, without salt.

2. He then changed the venue. The unprovoked assault took place at Clifton, in Galway County. And it was reported in the 'Weekly Irish Times' of October 13 (not September 13), 1906. The ex-legislator soon found it necessary to swallow this slander on the peaceful inland village of Clifton, Co. Galway.

3. His next story was that the unprovoked and dastardly assault upon a meek and lamb-like evangelist took place at the seaport town of Clifden, and that the details of it were to be found in the 'Weekly Irish Times' of October 13, 1906. Each of the shifting tales was accompanied by strong asseverations of the 'truth' and 'accuracy' of the writer's statements.

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