

The persecuting pagan Roman Emperor Trajan fed the Christians to wild beasts, by whose teeth they were ground—noble wheat of God!—and had them slowly roasted to death in the Coliseum—beautiful glow-worms of the Most High! He ordered torture and death upon a large scale, but even his pagan heart refused to tolerate the slings and arrows of the anonymous accuser. He drew the line there. In our own time, 'literary roughs' is the epithet flung by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the genial Poet of the Breakfast Table, at the ill-conditioned masked men who hurl anonymous accusations at people through the columns of the newspaper press or the pages of the lampoon. 'It is understood in good society,' says Dr. Maurice Francis Egan, 'that a man who writes a letter which he is afraid to sign with his own name, would lie or steal. And I believe he would.' Disraeli had also a fine contempt for anonymous assailants whose lucubrations appear so often in the daily press. 'An anonymous writer,' said he in his denunciation of the 'Globe' in 1836, 'should at least display power; but we can only view with contemptuous levity the mischievous varlet who pelts us with mud as we are riding along, and then hides behind a dust-bin.' 'Anonymity,' said Dr. Parker, of the City Temple (London), a few years ago, 'is not modesty, though it may easily be either impudence or cowardice.' And even that gentle soul, Cardinal Manning, granted that it is extremely difficult for a man to avoid saying under a mask of anonymity what he would not say with an open face.

A Slander—but no Apology

Bishop Creighton said of the English schoolboy that 'the only means to make him learn is at the point of the bayonet.' Which is, of course, not quite fair to the English schoolboy. But there are other people besides the English schoolboys that learn, as the Scot is alleged to joke, 'wi' deeficulty.' And one of these is the typical reverend enthusiast who indulges in the barn-storming order of oratory what time the circling year brings around the annual insanity of 'the glorious twelfth.' But, difficult as it is for these reverend exponents of the 'yellow' variety of No-Popery to learn the lessons of experience, there is, we rather think, one at least of the fraternity in Victoria who has 'come a cropper' that will serve him for many a day. We refer to the Rev. S. Pearce Carey, of Melbourne. As related in our last issue, his reverence sanctified the Lord's day by stating to his saffron-sashed hearers and (through the press reports) to the general public that there was such a frightful mortality among the infants in a Catholic-Foundling Home near Melbourne (that at Broadmeadows is the only one in Victoria) that 'somebody should hang for it.' There never was, perhaps, a more overwhelming refutation of an Orange or non-Orange slander than that which (reproduced in our last issue) was made by the Vicar-General of Melbourne. But the advocate of hanging appears to have well learned and carefully applied the principle of Orange polemics laid down by Grand Master-Snowball in the course of a letter published in the *Riponsire Advocate* (Beaufort, Victoria) in 1904—namely, that lodge orators may not properly be called upon to prove accusations made against Popery 'on so important an occasion as the twelfth of July.'

The other chief guiding principle of lodge polemics has likewise been carefully followed in the present instance: that no apology is to be made, no regret expressed, however thorough and complete the vindication of the innocent or the refutation of the slander may be. Herein, the 'glorious twelfth' orator finds a backing (which he will no doubt appreciate if these lines ever meet his eye) in the example of no less a light than Doctor Martin Luther. Luther once most foully slandered Duke George of Saxony. He, however, obstinately refused to express apology or regret when he found he had cruelly wronged the Duke, and, for the purpose of justifying himself, constructed a *series* or chain of logic (so-called) which is as delightful for its labored self-deception as it is amazing for its audacity. 'I owe no apology to the Duke,' said he, 'for he rages against me and my doctrine. Now I am bound to believe that a man who rages against me and my doctrine rages against God and His Christ. And I am bound to believe that a man who rages against God and His Christ is possessed of the devil. And I am bound to believe that a man who is possessed of the devil is always meditating every possible mischief.' Thus, on Luther's comforting (though rather Mahomedan) principle, you may reason that if Victorian Catholics did not perpetrate a wholesale slaughter of infants at Broadmeadows—but 'quite the reverse to the contrary,' as Artemus Ward phrases it—they did something else

that equally deserved hanging. And therefore the Rev. S. Pearce Carey is excused from all obligation of withdrawing the Herodian accusation of slaughtering innocents which he made or necessarily implied. *Quod erat demonstrandum!*

Look on that picture and look on this! At Lithgow (New South Wales) the Rev. D. Hudson (Anglican) frankly warned the brethren that they must not expect from him abusive talk about Catholics. 'He thought,' says the newspaper-report, 'they might leave Sunday alone for the worship of God. In conclusion, he wished to suggest for their consideration that they might learn lessons from the conduct of their Roman Catholic brethren, unless they were bigoted. He thought he could prove to them that their Roman Catholic brethren acted more wisely from their point of view of life and duty than did many Protestants from their point of view. For instance, in attending their churches, they did it better than Protestants; in supporting their churches, they gave better than Protestants; thirdly, they trained their children more carefully in religious instruction than did Protestants, speaking generally. To sum up, he thought they showed more loyalty to their cause than did Protestants. The discipline of the Roman Catholic Church was better than that of the Protestant Church. The Protestant opportunities and liberties were greater, but they had abused their opportunities and liberties. They shouted for the open Bible, and kept it closed. Men who boasted of their opportunities and refused to use them deserved to lose them. He urged them to be sincere, to be tolerant, to try to see a little more good in their Roman Catholic brethren, and to keep their own hearts and lives as in the sight of God.'

'The Noble Art'

Father Bernard Vaughan stoutly maintained on a recent occasion that 'boxing and fencing should form an essential part of the curriculum of every boy's education.' 'Boxing,' added he, 'is not brutalising, no matter what people may say. We know that to be a success the professional boxer of to-day has to live a simple, strenuous life.' As to the statement that boxing is not brutalising, one must make a distinction between the clean and manly exhibitions of skill and self-discipline given by men who 'don the mittens' for amusement, exercise, or a harmless and good-tempered athletic display (such as Father Vaughan contemplates), and, on the other hand, the things that are witnessed in the prize-ring—especially in 'glove-fights to a finish.' These latter may be made more cruel and even more dangerous than the old-fashioned 'mill' with bare knuckles, such as that of 'Donnelly and Cooper, who fought all on Kildare.' The 'glove-fights to a finish' that were popular in England for some years up to 1899 were a libel on sport, and were more degrading than the Spanish *corrida de toros*, or bull-fight.

In England, the prize-ring of the nineteenth century was a revival, not a survival. We first hear of it about the year 1740, in the days when religious feeling had, perhaps, touched bottom among the people. Hitherto Hodge had been content to settle his differences at Smithfield and the other markets by brute force and endurance, rather than by skill, at fisticuffs. One Broughton introduced the prize-ring, boxing-gloves, and fights to a finish. A hard-hitting slogger named Jackson followed him in 1795, and established what are, substantially, the present rules of 'the noble art of self-defence.' The craze took a violent grip of the public fancy, and Jackson became almost as great a hero as a Spanish *matador*, or as Wellington after Waterloo. The high nobility became his pupils—George IV., the Dukes of York and Clarence, Lord Byron, and the rest; and for half a century 'the fancy' sparred and countered and drew blood from 'claret-jugs,' bunged up 'blinkers,' and knocked teeth out of 'potato-traps,' till the game became too 'crooked' except for roughs and pick-pockets and such-like lewd fellows of the baser sort. It died at last of gangrene (as one might say)—of its own rottenness. The last forty years witnessed a fresh revival. And as before, the nobility—even royalty—took the prize-ring under their high patronage. The brutal exhibition in which the hireling Crook met his death at the close of 1897 was, in fact, a 'select affair,' which was witnessed by numbers of titled Englishmen and by a large body of the wealthy patrons of this revival of one of the pagan sports of the Coliseum. The Burns-Roche mill of last St. Patrick's Day was no more elevating, if less fatal. Boxing is a clean and wholesome exercise—but not under the conditions that still cling to the prize-ring.

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