

Current Topics

Catholic v. Secular Education

A further instalment (the seventh) to the discussion on religious education *versus* secular public instruction, in the *Otago Daily Times*, will be found on the next page of this issue. The next following article will deal with the abounding misrepresentations, by an anonymous writer, in regard to the action of the late Bishop Moran and of the Catholic body in connection with the change from religious to secular education after 1877. The story, as spun by the anonymous writer (whose identity, by the way is now sufficiently known) constitutes a curious chapter in the ungentle art of saying the thing that 'ain't so.'

'An Impeached Nation'

The *New Zealand Tablet* printing works have just issued a new and pretty bulky volume by the editor of this paper. It is entitled *An Impeached Nation, Being a Study of Irish Outrages*. The small nucleus of this book was a series of articles that appeared in the *New Zealand Tablet* some time ago. These have been entirely re-written, enormously expanded, and brought up to date. The publication of the book was (says a Prefatory Note) 'delayed for many months, partly through the pressure of other work, partly through the accidental destruction of notes and manuscript equivalent to about two hundred printed pages.' The scope of the book is broadly indicated in the following further quotation from the Prefatory Note: 'The object of the present writer is to set forth the real facts and figures of crime in Ireland; to compare these with the statistics of crime in such admittedly law-abiding countries as England and Wales, Scotland, etc.; to examine into the motives and the methods of both the official and the unofficial exaggeration of the delinquencies of the Irish people; to present to the reader detailed evidence of this curious phase of political agitation; and to advance large and outstanding facts and features of Irish life which go to show that the wrongs perpetrated by the law, by the ministers of the law, and by the ruling caste against the Irish people, have been far graver, more studied, and more systematic than the offences committed by the people (oftentimes by starving peasants in defence of their last scanty meals of potatoes) against the law. The reader will judge whether or no he has succeeded.'

We have only to add that the book is printed on excellent toned paper, that it is handsomely bound, that it contains 426 pages of closely printed matter; that the (incomplete) Index of Authorities runs into five pages, and that there is an elaborate, closely-packed, double-column General Index, in small print, extending to no less than twenty-four pages, and giving a ready reference to every statement in the book that is likely to be called for.

An Old Slander Revived

'It is by wholesale, retail, systematic, unscrupulous lying, for I can use no gentler term,' wrote Newman nearly sixty years ago, 'that the many rivulets are made to flow for the feeding of the great Protestant tradition regarding the Catholic Church.' The statement is pretty well as true in this year of grace as it was when Newman wrote. The persistence and longevity of a good, round, healthy anti-Catholic lie is remarkable, and almost every week a glance through his exchanges furnishes the Catholic journalist with fresh illustrations of 'Pudd'nhead Wilson's' maxim that 'the principal difference between a cat and a lie is that the cat has only nine lives.' The latest case, in point takes the shape of a revival—by an American religious paper called *The Lutheran*—of an ancient fabrication that was long ago luminously exposed, and that long ago received what ought to have been its final quietus. In the midst of a long litany of errors and misquotations, the *Lutheran* resurrected this hoary calumny in the following form:

'The Archbishop of St. Louis said: "If the Catholics ever gain—which they assuredly will—an immense numerical majority, religious freedom in this country will be at an end."'

The Archbishop of St. Louis referred to was the revered Archbishop Kenrick. Needless to say, no such language was ever used by this venerable prelate. The words quoted were a deliberately garbled extract from a weekly paper published in St. Louis, called *The Shepherd of the Valley*, edited by the late Judge Bakewell (then a recent convert and quite a young man). When the fiction was revived about a quarter of a century ago, Mr. Charles A.

Hardy, then editor of the *Catholic Standard*, wrote to Mr. Bakewell asking him for a statement of the real facts in the case, and we take from our contemporary the following sufficient extract from the text of Mr. Bakewell's lucid and comprehensive reply, which is dated from 'St. Louis, January 1, 1886':—

'The extracts which you showed me are the revival of a very old "gag." About 1853-4, at the time of the Know-Nothing agitation, many papers throughout the United States published the following as an extract from the *Shepherd of the Valley*, and then attributed the language to the venerable prelate who was then, and who now is, Archbishop of St. Louis; he, of course, was not Archbishop Ryan.'

"If Catholics ever attain, which they surely will, though at a distant day, the immense numerical majority in the United States, religious liberty, as at present understood, will be at an end."

Shortly afterwards a new edition of *Gavin's Master-Key to Popery*, or *Maria Monk's Revelations*, or some such delectable storehouse of anti-Catholic lies, was published, and this story about the views of the Archbishop of St. Louis on the incompatibility of the spread of the Catholic religion in America with the continued existence of religious liberty, together with the extract, as above, which was given as his published language, was put into the appendix, and thus embalmed for preservation, to be used as occasion might serve in the anti-Catholic controversy. The extract, until the war, was regularly trotted out at intervals, but since then has, I believe, until lately been forgotten.

The facts are these. The *Shepherd of the Valley*, a weekly paper, was edited and published by me, in St. Louis, from January, 1852, to July, 1854. I was then a very young man. It was not unusual at that time for Catholic Bishops to permit Catholic papers in their dioceses to print, at the head of the editorial column, some form of words to the effect that the paper was published with the approbation of the Ordinary of the diocese. It was well understood by Catholics that this implied no more than that the Bishop considered the paper harmless, or perhaps likely, on the whole, to do more good than harm. So far as the Archbishop of St. Louis was concerned, except this formal approbation, he never wrote a line for the paper whilst I had it, never saw it until it was in print, and, I dare say, hardly ever opened it. He was as entirely innocent of any connection with it, except so far as stated above, as was the President of the United States. All its editorial matter I wrote myself, and I thought as little of consulting his Grace as to what I should say or publish as I did of consulting the Grand Turk. The paper was in no sense the Archbishop's organ. What I said in it had no special significance. I was perfectly free, and had a great deal too much respect for the Archbishop to think of taking up his time with anything concerning my paper. I was, as I have said, a very young man, and he was one of the most learned and (putting aside his sacred office), to my mind, one of the most venerable of men. He was very good and gracious to me when, at very rare intervals, I called to see him; but he never, I believe, gave me the slightest hint as to the conduct of my paper, except that once or twice he expressed disapproval of the character of some selected matter, but purely as a matter of taste.

The paragraph inserted above from the *Shepherd of the Valley* was by me, and formed part of an editorial which appeared in that paper in 1852. It was, however, followed by these words: "So say our enemies," which the controversialists wholly omitted.

It is manifest, from what I have said, that no prelate of the Catholic Church can be charged with persecuting sentiments on account of this paragraph, and that as far as for my humble self, it is about as fair to impute, on account of them, any such sentiments to me as it would be to say that King David was an atheist because he uses this language in the 14th Psalm, "There is no God," though he puts these words—as I did the words which caused this rumpus—into the mouths of the enemies of the Church.

However, in my case, after saying, "So say our enemies," I added, "So say we." But the next words are, "But in what sense do we say so?" And I then go on to show that religious liberty is generally misunderstood for total indifference for religion, and that in this case religious liberty is approved by no one, Catholic or Protestant, who has any belief in religion at all.

From the foregoing it is clear, first, that neither Archbishop Kenrick nor Archbishop Ryan ever uttered any such words as those so impudently attributed to them; and, secondly, that the garblers, in suppressing the explanatory passages in the *Shepherd of the Valley* article, were guilty of as deliberate and malicious mendacity as if they had actually and formally invented the sentence they