

condition that he should not be required to retract the Modernist errors which led to his severance from the sacred ministry and from the Catholic Church. The Prior of Storrington declines to accept the assertion in regard to the refusal to retract. We express no opinion as to the Prior's doubts beyond saying that they are inferences, and not based on positive grounds. No man can say what thoughts passed through the mind of the dying man before he passed away. But the position in regard to the disciplinary act of denial of Catholic burial to him was perfectly clear. It is stated as follows in the London *Tablet* of June 24, p. 125: 'In view of the adverse comment occasioned by the refusal of the Bishop of Southwark to allow the late Father Tyrrell to be buried with Catholic rites, we are officially asked to state that no one of his friends in attendance at his deathbed could give the Bishop an assurance that Father Tyrrell had made any retraction, either written or verbal or by signs, during the whole of his last illness. As the case of Father Tyrrell was specially reserved to the Holy See, a retraction was necessary as a condition of Catholic burial.'

The Duke of Norfolk

A recent cable message regarding the censuring of the Duke of Norfolk by the House of Commons, was a puzzle to New Zealand readers. Our English files to hand this week lift the mystification out of the incident. The Liverpool *Catholic Times* says: 'The action taken in the House of Commons on Tuesday afternoon, when it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Dillon, that as it had been represented that the Duke of Norfolk had infringed the privileges of the House by concerning himself in the election of a member for the High Peak Division of Derbyshire, the Committee of Privileges inquire into the alleged breach of privilege, was doubtless prompted by the suggestion of the Liberal papers that though the Duke interfered ostensibly in the interests of the Catholic schools, his real motive was of a partisan character. It cannot, however, be disputed that the cause of the Catholic schools always occupies a foremost place in the Duke of Norfolk's thoughts. At the same time, it is undeniable that the letter was a violation of the sessional order forbidding peers to interfere in elections. Mr. Balfour admitted that technically it was an infraction of the privileges of the House of Commons. But he urged that others had on various occasions offended more seriously than the Duke of Norfolk without having been taken to task. That is so, and Mr. Balfour was correct in saying that the Committees can do little or nothing, whatever the decision at which it arrives. But the case is likely to raise the question whether the sessional order should be made more stringent by definite modification or altogether abolished.'

Ethics of Anonymous Attack

A plain cross (not crucifix) was recently introduced into St. Stephen's Anglican Church at Ashburton. Thereupon a whirlwind of vehement protest caught the church and the vicar in its swirl. A meeting of parishioners was called, and by 56 votes to 32 the cross was retained. The discussion then erupted into the *Ashburton Guardian* and crept down its columns at a high temperature. With its merits or demerits we do not deal. Its sole interest to us lies in the happy sequel to a furious letter in which a masked man, under the pretence of debating the issue, said (among other vitriolic rubbish) that 'playful Italian priests set poor Kossuth in an iron chair and roasted him till he would kiss the cross.' This brought Dean O'Donnell upon the scene. 'It will be,' wrote he, 'news to most students of history that Italians—whether priests or laymen—enjoyed such autocratic powers in Austria or Hungary at any time during Kossuth's career. Considering that Kossuth lived to the age of ninety-two years, the roasting endured by him at the hands of the scoundrelly "Italian priests" cannot be said to have shortened his life. Passing strange it seems, too, that Kossuth, a free man, should have left England in 1859, where priests of any nationality—even Anglican priests—were few and far between, and should have elected to pass the years between that date and 1894 in Italy among the bloodthirsty "Italian priests"! A demand for proof of the Kossuth-roasting myth disclosed (as might be expected) the fact that there was no rag or scrap of evidence whatsoever to sustain it. The story was simply one of those bits of crude controversial-hysteria that serve anonymous accusers instead of history.'

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Dean O'Donnell took occasion, from his exposure of the Kossuth fabrication, to read a lecture on the ethics of anonymous attack. We dealt at length with the subject in the course of a recent correspondence in the *Southland Times* (Invercargill). Incidentally we showed that both the legal and social presumption, backed by the lessons of a long-drawn human experience, must ever be—until evidence to

the contrary is forthcoming—be against the honesty, and good faith of the masked accuser. We therefore perused with special interest Dean O'Donnell's brief and trenchant remarks upon the same general theme. 'Do you think,' he asks the *Guardian* editor, 'it consonant with the traditions of the best journalism to allow a nameless thing to fling dishonoring taunts and accusations at a considerable body of your readers and subscribers and advertisers? And these accusations so obviously false that at least every man with any pretence to literary culture should recognise their spurious quality at a glance! And worst of all to allow this nameless thing to add insult to injury by calmly telling your injured readers: "Oh, if you didn't do that particular piece of villainy, I am sure you did as bad. It was some other patriot they put in the chair." I have read betimes in your leading columns a statement of very high ideals both in public and private life. Begin to put these ideals in practice in the conduct of your journal, and then perhaps your readers will begin to believe that they count with you for something more than gas or £ s d. If you printed about me personally what you have allowed "Jeremiah" to say about Catholics as a body, the Courts would soon settle the matter between us; but unfortunately the Courts don't trouble when it is a whole community that is libelled. It is well, however, to remember that communities have weapons at command which even editors cannot afford to despise.'

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To these remarks the *Guardian* makes in part the following handsome editorial reply: 'Granted that the unhistoric statement, in the first instance, and the malicious suggestion in the second, might have been or even should have been struck out in the exercise of editorial discrimination and right, the failure to do so might be due to various explicable or even excusable causes—absence, extreme pressure of work, exhaustion, temporary illness, or even simple failure to see the points in all their bearings at the decisive moment. Anyway, in view of the fact that the writings of "Jeremiah" are not the work of this journal, that nothing akin to such writing ever has appeared, ever could appear, or ever will appear in the paper's own columns under its present editorship, we are quite willing to appeal from Dean O'Donnell as a dashing letter-writer to Dean O'Donnell, as a deliberative judge, sitting in equity and deciding on the evidence, with the assistance of any jury drawn from his own parishioners. We think we have sufficient knowledge of history, we think we have sufficient sense of justice to recognise—and we know that we ever have in actual writing in these columns and elsewhere invariably recognised—that great non-Protestant Catholic Church which dates back for nearly two thousand years, as an institution which for fully fifteen centuries stood alone in the world as a stronghold, at once militant and sheltering, for learning, humanity, religion, and righteousness, and which is still the mother of salvation to millions upon millions of human souls. We hardly think, therefore, that an isolated instance of unpremeditatedly permitting the publication of the puerile misstatements of a fugitive anonymous correspondent should be regarded as seriously prejudicial to the character of this journal, or to that of its editor—not more so, in fact, than it need be considered as a menace to the stability of the great historic Roman Catholic Church itself. A wasp or fly may dart itself against the wall of St. Peter's, but the petty incident hardly shakes that mighty edifice to its foundations.' 'It is,' said Dean O'Donnell in a parting letter to the editor (August 26), 'the barest justice, I think, to say that, whatever may have been the measure of your fault (if any), you have made more than ample amends, and that in the handsomest way. I can hardly regret the incident just closed, seeing that it has given occasion for a noble display of true Christian and gentlemanly generosity.' Which moved the editor to add the following graceful footnote, which is creditable alike to his heart and mind: 'In expressing regret for the misprint referred to in Dean O'Donnell's postscript, we should like to say—and say, too, without a shade of mental reservation—that the Dean's graceful and cordial note proves that the "noble display of true Christian and gentlemanly generosity" is assuredly not confined to our side of the brief controversy, which now ends in endless goodwill.'

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