

which the genius of the great Catholic navigator, Christopher Columbus, discovered beyond the Atlantic. Despite the evil influence of agnosticism here and there, the Catholic Church has probably never displayed in the long course of her history such a wondrous and varied and successful energy in works of charity, education, church extension, and missionary zeal as at the present time. We have on several occasions dealt with the matter of her growth in numerical strength. The following additional figures in point will be of interest to our readers. They are taken partly from a recent publication, *Le Protestantisme Contemporain*, and partly from Mulhall's *Dictionary of Statistics* for 1899. They show the numerical advance made by the Church in various countries since 1800:—

COUNTRY.	1800.	1890.
Belgium	3,000,000	6,016,000
Germany	6,000,000	16,789,000
England and Scotland ...	120,000	2,000,000
Holland	350,000	1,488,800
Scandinavia	200	8,000
Switzerland	542,000	1,190,000
Canada and Newfoundland ...	137,000	2,088,561
United States	36,000	9,856,622
Montenegro (1854)	3,000	6,350
Bosnia and Herzegovina (1850)	150,000	334,000

In the Philippine Islands there are close on six million Catholics, with a school system so perfected by the Spanish monks that there is as little illiteracy among them as there is in the United States. In the Dutch colonies of Sunda, Sumatra, and Java there were no Catholics in the year 1800 on account of the rigid penal laws which were then in force. King Charles, however, proclaimed religious liberty, and in 1890 the number of Catholics in those colonies amounted to 45,271. Some of the greatest relative successes of the Catholic missionaries have been achieved in the face of dire obstacles in Ceylon, India, China, and Japan. But the absolute growth of the Catholic Church in America has been altogether phenomenal. Where there was only one bishop in the year 1800, there are now 18 archbishops, 78 bishops, 1 Prefect Apostolic, 8137 secular priests, 2744 regulars, and 110 different orders of women dedicated to the services of a God and their neighbour in endless forms of religious activity. At the present moment the Catholic population of the United States cannot be less than between twelve and thirteen millions. *Floreat!*

A RAG OF THE THE boles of the blue-gums on the Canterbury Plains and down in Otago look fresh
PENAL LAWS. and gay in their silver-grey coats. But look into their spreading arms and you will see hanging there for ever and ever the dry and rattling tatters of previous years' discarded bark. It is somewhat the same with that fair Emancipation Act of 1829, which is erroneously supposed to have relieved Catholics of all the disabilities of the old Penal Code. It has, indeed, undone the vastly greater part of the old no-Popery legislation. But some rags and tatters of the old still Code hang upon the Emancipation Act. Until Gladstone's Act of 1870 it was a crime punishable by two years' imprisonment, or by a fine of £500, for a Catholic priest to celebrate a marriage between Catholics if one of the contracting parties had not been a Catholic for fully twelve months. It cannot be urged that this was an obsolete penal statute. On the contrary, it was brought into force repeatedly. Among the instances that occur to our memory was that of Rev. Patrick Campbell, Catholic curate of Waterside, Derry. He was brought up under this Act at the Derry Assizes, somewhere in the fifties. Judge Torrens presided. Father Campbell was defended by Mr. (afterwards Lord) O'Hagan, whose speech on the occasion did much to rivet public attention to the enormity of this musty old marriage law. The celebrated Yelverton case in the sixties did still more to discredit it. This was followed by the trial of a priest of the diocese of Clogher, before Judge Hayes, for the crime of having officiated at a Catholic marriage. A Bill to abolish the penalty attaching to this Act was introduced into the House of Commons in April, 1866, by Mr. Sergeant Armstrong, M.P. for Sligo. But the infamous law did not disappear from the statute-book till 1870. One case was tried in Dublin in 1898, and another was tried in the middle of last November—the case of a minor named Hughes who wished to join the Jesuit Noviciate—and they prove that to this hour the Jesuits and other religious Orders are simply, as the Dublin *Freeman* puts it, illegal bodies, 'like the Ribbon Society.' In fact, the application of young Hughes to the Chief Clerk in Chancery was refused on the express grounds that the Jesuits are not merely a non-legal, but an absolutely illegal body. Religious liberty is one of the boasts of our age, and we trust that the Irish Members of Parliament will unite for the nonce and see that this and the remaining rags of penal legislation are swept utterly and finally away.

TO THOSE ZOILUS finds fault with Homer, ex-shoe-maker Gifford with Hazlitt, Keats, and
WHOM Moore, and in social life we have scores of
IT MAY Dennises and Oldmixons who try to reach
CONCERN. fame by libelling better people than themselves, and who are for ever seeking for the fly in the fair amber of other people's motives and conduct. But

there is a foundation of solid truth in the following bit of biting comment which appeared in a recent issue of the *S. H. Review*. We commend it to the attention of all New Zealand Catholics whom it may concern:—

'If Catholic pastors showed the majority of our young men that they are spending far more money on cigarettes than on their God; that the God of most of them is their tobacco, their beer, and their belly; and that Catholic loyalty and duty should prompt them to save their dimes for Catholic schools and religious institutions, it would be all the better for Catholic education, Catholic standing in society, and Catholic unity. If our Catholic men and women of society would devote an occasional five hundred dollars to the purchasing of Catholic books for a parochial or a public library, or for the dissemination of Catholic literature, instead of wasting it on senseless paraphernalia for skulking in dark halls, or for the adornment of the dance-floor, and on sealskin saccques for their overbearing wives; it would be all the better for their souls and for the souls of their poorer brethren, in the name of Catholic unity.'

'SOMEBODY'S THE brave and disinterested services rendered by the Catholic Sisters to the garrisons
DARLING.' of Kimberley, Mafeking, and Ladysmith have recalled to the mind of a writer in one of the latest South African papers to hand the story of an American lyric entitled 'Somebody's Darling.' It appears that this pathetic little bit of war poetry was written in a military hospital by Sister Lacoste, one of the nuns who did such noble service alike to the men in grey and the men in blue during the great American Civil War. It appears that a gallant young Catholic man, Patrick Feeney, the only son of a widowed mother, took the war fever and decided to join the Northern Army. He enlisted secretly at Detroit. As soon as his mother heard of his enlistment she made a record trip to Detroit, saw the General in command, and tried to save her boy. She failed, for the men in blue were already under arms and ready to march. The mother pleaded to see her son. He was brought to her. The sight of the fine young fellow in his uniform touched the maternal heart with pride. She embraced and blessed him. 'Heaven,' said she, 'has blessed me with you, lad. I came to take you away, but now I would not if I could. If you come back alive, I'll thank God; but if you are killed, it will be a joy to me to know that you died a good soldier.' They parted—he to the front, she to her home.

One day Sister Lacoste went into the dead-room of the military hospital. She found there the corpse of a young man who had been fatally wounded at the battle of Cedar Creek. He proved to be Patrick Feeney, the widow's son. According to the writer in the South African paper referred to, she sent the following little poetic effusion to the bereaved mother with the details of his death:—

SOMEBODY'S DARLING.

Into a ward of unwhitewashed walls,
Where the dead and the dying lay
Wounded by bayonets, shot, and balls,
Somebody's Darling was borne one day.

Somebody's Darling so young and so fair,
Wearing still on his pale young face,
Soon to be hid by the dust of the grave,
The lingering light of his boyhood's grace.

Matted and damp are the curls of gold
Kissing the snow of that fair young brow;
Pale are the lips of delicate mould—
Somebody's Darling is dying now.

Kiss him once for somebody's sake,
Murmur a prayer soft and low;
One bright curl from the cluster take—
They were somebody's pride, you know.

Somebody's hand had rested there;
Was it a mother's soft and white?
Or have the lips of a sister fair
Been baptised in those waves of light?

God knows best! He was somebody's love.
Somebody's heart enshrined him there;
Somebody wafted his name above
Night and morn on the wings of pray'r.

Somebody's watching and waiting for him,
Yearning to clasp him again to her heart;
There he lies, with his blue eyes dim,
And smiling child-like lips apart.

Tenderly bury the fair young dead,
Pausing to drop on his grave a tear;
Carve on the wooden slab at his head:
'Somebody's Darling lies buried here.'

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