

somewhat of alarm, the encroachments of Romanism, that there seems to be a determined purpose on the part of the Pope to right certain wrongs, and also to stand by those within the Church who seem to have the welfare of their people most earnestly at heart. It is, indeed, a fact worthy of recognition and gratulation, if it shall prove true, that the supreme authorities within the Church of Rome have set themselves on the side of the political liberty and the higher education of those under them. The Rome of the past has thrived on the ignorance of the masses as well as their enslavement; but the day of enforced ignorance is over. The people will not consent to be kept in shackles longer. What the outcome of the whole movement will be remains to be seen, but we hope for large results.

The Briggs Case Decision.

THE decision of the Presbytery of New York in the case of Professor Briggs is not to be looked upon as an expression of sympathy with the views to which he has given voice, so much as an indication that there shall be a liberty of research and of the publication of the results of research, so far as these are not in conflict with the essential truths of the Scriptures or with basal moral principles. For the sake of the peace of the Church it is to be hoped that the matter will be allowed to rest where it is, and that all who have shared, actively, passively, or sympathetically, in the progress of the case, will give themselves anew to the great work committed to them of preaching the Gospel, the good tidings of a free and full salvation in Jesus Christ, and that whatever bitterness or wrath or strife or clamor, if any, may have been engendered, will be "put away" finally and forever.

Choosing a Text.

SOME time since we received a communication from a correspondent asking us to furnish him with a text on a

theme selected by him for a special occasion. The responsibility was one that we were hardly willing to assume. The question arose in our mind, What is the province of the text? Is it a mere label to be attached to a production, or is its function something else, and if so, what? Ought a so-called sermon, which has been prepared without particular reference to Scripture, to be honored with a text? Should the theme suggest the text or the text the theme? To this question we felt ourselves compelled to make but one answer: that inasmuch as the minister is a minister of "the Gospel," and is called upon to preach the Word, the theme should rather be suggested by the text than the text by the theme. If an occasion arises when it seems important to treat of some special subject not suggested by a passage of Scripture, let the sermon go textless. Do not make a text but a hat to cover an otherwise exposed head. The announcement of a text is a semi-promise that what follows shall be an exposition of what is contained in it; and such promise ought to be redeemed.

Dr. Parkhurst's Vindication.

It is a pleasure to be able to record that the charges made by the President of the Society for the Prevention of Crime, as to the connivance of the metropolitan police authorities with the violators of law, have been proved true by the very Superintendent who put himself on record as denying the statements made in said charges. No comment is needed upon his action in arraigning before the police commissioners some of the best-known inspectors and captains of police on the charge of wittingly permitting the existence of gambling dens within their respective districts and precincts. It is simply a withdrawal in act of his previous denial in word. By it Dr. Parkhurst stands completely acquitted of any wanton or ill-grounded assertion. We admire his courage and commend his example.