

## THE CURSE OF IRELAND.

We are not likely to forget the wrongs of Ireland. We hear them at all times, and from all quarters. We hear of her landlordism, of her priest craft, of her famines and her poverty, but it is possible that the *grand curse* of Green Erin is largely overlooked. Let us look at a few facts.

"During the last famine year, 1879, Ireland stretched forth her hands to receive the contributions of the benevolent all over the world. Appeals for bread for her starving poor were incessant, and their utter destitution was portrayed in language that brought tears from the eyes, and generous donations from the purses of sympathetic multitudes. The total amount contributed for their relief by the British Government and by private charity, British and foreign, is stated at £1,261,000, or \$6,305,000, for the year 1879; while during the same year of starvation, the value of spirits and beer, consumed in Ireland was about £9,375,000, or \$56,875,000! For every dollar received from charity in answer to most piteous appeals for bread, more than seven dollars were spent for intoxicating liquors! During the same year, in England and Wales, where no famine prevailed, the proportion of persons arrested for drunkenness was seven per thousand of the population; in Ireland over eighteen per thousand! About one person in every eleven of the total population of the island, during this year of sore hunger and apparently still sorer thirst, "either received official relief, or was officially arrested for being drunk!" Another item from British official statistics sheds additional light on the great source of Irish wretchedness. During the twelve months ending with March, 1879, the number of detections for illicit distilling and dealing was in Scotland two, in England eight, in Ireland 683. Alas for the people whose bread is dear, but whose untaxed whiskey is cheap!"—*Selected.*

## A HAPPY FUTURE.

"We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him." We have a future which is an object, not of a dim expectation and trembling hope, but of knowledge. Our word is not "it may be," but "it will be." We have a certainty, not a possibility, or a probability, for our hope. That which is to be becomes firm reality

as that which has been. Hope is truer than history. The future is not cloud-land, but solid, on which we may plant a firm foot.

And therefore the habit of living in the future should make us glad and confident. We should not keep the contemplation of another state of existence to make us sorrowful, nor allow the transiency of this present to shade our joys. Our hope should make us buoyant, and should keep us firm. It is an anchor to the soul. All men live by hope, even when it is fixed upon the uncertain and changing things of this world. The hopes of the men who have not their hearts fixed upon God try to grapple themselves on the cloud-rock that rolls along the flanks of the mountains; but our hopes pierce within that veil, and lay hold of the Rock of Ages, that towers above the flying vapors. Let us, then, be strong; for our future is not a dim peradventure, not a vague dream, nor a fancy of our own, nor a wish turning itself into a vision; but it is made and certified by him who is the God of all the past, and of all the present. It is built upon his word; and the brightest hope of all its brightness is the enjoyment of more of his presence and the possession of more of his likeness. That hope is certain. Therefore, let us live in it, and "reach forth unto the things which are before."—*Alexander McLaren, D. D.*

## WHO DO THE HOME WORK.

During the late meeting of the American Board in Portland, Me., one man, through the leading secular paper, ventured to raise the old, stale question. "Haven't we got material enough at home to work on, and spend our money and sympathy on, without sending or going to heathen lands?" The editorial reply very effectually disposed of his plea. We quote the closing sentences:—

"Observation shows that, as a rule, the active friend of Foreign Missions is also the active philanthropist in neighbourhood affairs, while he who carps and quibbles about the alleged waste of substance and endeavor in distant lands seldom breaks his neck in a tumultuous struggle to be first in promoting unostentatious home charities. Even from a purely secular point of view the missionary spirit is not only one of the finest and noblest, but also one of the most practical and sensible that can actuate men or women."