

CATHOLIC PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

A meeting of the Catholics of Halifax has been called by the Bishop, to consider the best mode of representing to the Legislature the strong claims of the Catholic Schools in the North as well as South End of the City for an increased Grant out of the Education fund.—The meeting will be held at St Mary's precisely at 12 o'clock to-morrow, and we trust that the friends of education will assemble in large numbers on this occasion, and by united and vigorous action press those claims, once for all, on the attention of the Government.

FREEMASONRY.

A *Simple Catholic* has written to ask our opinion on the lawfulness of becoming a Free Mason. He must be very simple indeed to require any instruction on this point. No good Catholic can be a Freemason. No Freemason can receive the Sacraments in the Catholic Church. Freemasonry and Catholicity are incompatible. If a member of the True Church become a Freemason, he ceases to be a Catholic by the very act. The system has been formally and solemnly condemned by two of the Popes, the illustrious Clement XII and Benedict XIV. By this supreme authority the dreadful censure of Excommunication is annexed *ipso facto* to any one who joins a Freemason Society, and the absolution from this Censure is reserved to the Pope himself. It is the opinion of very eminent Theologians that all Secret Societies, such as the Odd Fellows, &c., &c. are equally unlawful.—With regard to the childish associations, alluded to by *A simple Catholic*, they give us very little concern. None but simpletons of any Creed would join them, for they are of mushroom growth, and will be of mushroom duration.

We do not deem it necessary to recount the solid Scriptural reasons which induced the supreme Pastors of the Catholic Church to proscrib all Secret Societies. We should think that the Gospel of Jesus Christ infinitely exceeds all the mere human systems of benevolence, humanity, brotherly love, and so forth, that were ever excogitated by all the odd fellows and freemasons from Manichæus to Count Cagliostro.

A *simple Catholic* might have consulted his spiritual guide on the subject of Freemasonry or any other *Bunkum*, as we believe there is an able Divine in that part of the country from which his letter is dated.

CHANGES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

We extract the following from a Wesleyan Paper. Little did its publishers imagine the service they were rendering to the cause of Catholic truth and wisdom, by pointing out those extraordinary mutations in one of the living languages of Europe. If the venerable Liturgy of the Catholic Church were to have been translated into the language of all countries even a thousand years ago, the identity of doctrine would be now completely destroyed. No two countries would agree, or rather no country would agree with itself. Behold, on the other hand, the wisdom and beauty of the Catholic Service. It is the same in every part of the world. It has been the same in all times. The Liturgy of a Peter, a Leo, a Gregory the Great, and an Innocent the 3rd, is read in the same language by Pius IX. Thus even in her language is the Church, Catholic or Universal both in *time and place*, and by the uniformity of her tongue all the varieties, corruptions and errors of human speech are avoided :—

“CHANGES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.—In the year 700 the Lord's Prayer began thus : “Uren fader thio arth in hœfnas sic gekaldn thio noma to eyideth thio rich; sic thio walla sue is in hœfnas and in artho.” In the year 900 it began thus : “Thee ure faver tho ert on heofenum si thio namagehatgod. Cum ohin x̄c. Si thio willa on eorthen swa, swa on heofnum.” In the year 1001, in the reign of Henry II., it was read thus, and sent over by Pope Adrian, an Englishman. “Uri fader in heaven rich. Thy name be hailed eber lich. Thou brings us thy michell lesse, Als hise in heavenly doe. That in yearth beene it also,” &c. In the year 1002, in the reign of Henry III., it read thus : “Fader thou art in heaven blisse, Thio Heylo name it wart the blisse. Cur̄n and mot thy kingdom. Thio holy will it be all don, In heaven ana in

earth also, So shall it be in full ic tro.” &c. In the reign of Henry VI., it began thus : “Our fader thou art in heavens, hallowgd be thy name, tho kingdom come to thee; be tho will done on earth as in heaven,” &c. In 1537, it began thus : “O, our father which art in heaven! hallowed be thy name. Let thy kingdom come. Thy will be fulfilled, as well in earth as it is in heaven,” &c. And at different periods, various translations by different individuals have been given, of a certain passage in the New Testament. In the year 1390, Wiclif gave the following : “But feith in the substance of things that ben to be hoped for, and an argument of things not aperynge, and in this feith celd men han getun witnessing” In the year 1534, Tyndal gave it as his opinion, “Fayth is a confydence of things which is hoped fir, and a certayntie of thynges which are not seen. For by it the elders were well reported of.” In the same year we have Cranmer's opinion of the same text. “Fayth,” says he, “is a sure confydence of thyngs which are not seen. For by it the elders obtayned a good report.” In the year 1557, Geneva gives his opinion on the same text. “Faytho,” says he, “is that which causeth those things to appear indeed which are not seen. For by it our elders are well reported of.” In the year 1562, Rhiems has the following exposition on the same text : “And fayth is the substance of things to be hoped for, the argument of things not appearing. For in this the old men obtained testimonie.” And in the year 1604, when King James came to the throne of Great Britain, and by whose authority the Scriptures were translated into the English language, he gave this exposition on the same text. “Now faith,” says he, “is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.”

PIUS IX.—SPAIN.

(Translated for the Cross from the *Ami de la Religion*.)

The Catholics have already commended the noble initiative which Spain has taken in regard to the Holy See, and also the conduct of the Ambassador at Rome. The entire Ministry had the honor of presenting the Crown with a copy of the decree to solicit, in the name of the Government, on the part of the Bishops of the Kingdom, the celebration of a *triduo*—or three days of solemn prayer. We give a few passages of the Report which preceded the Decree of the Queen, and which reflects honor on those that signed it :—

“The Government of your Majesty are far from turning to political questions in such a melancholy circumstance; but Ministers of a Catholic Queen—inheritor of the fervent zeal and sacred heraldry of a hundred Kings—faithful interpreter of the universal sentiments and the ardent piety of fourteen millions of souls—they ought to approach the throne of your Majesty to call, with expressions of deep regret, your sovereign attention to the recent misfortunes of the common Chief of Christendom.

The news of such lamentable events causes affliction and agitation throughout Christendom. The echoes of the grief and alarm of religious men, will resound even to the farthest of our hamlets; and to mitigate them, it is but reasonable that the sublime accents of Religion should reach them from the palaces of our Kings, and from the seat of Government.

“When a common danger threatens the Church and State—the Throne and true Liberty—useful institutions—noble and elevated sentiments—one cannot look on a calm and immovable spectator without becoming an inglorious victim of those revolutions. The spiritual tranquillity of the faithful confirms the prosperity of families and nations; the Sacred Ministry descending without interruption from the age of the Apostles, through the mutation of time, maintains the uprightness of conscience, and thereby the solidity of thrones and the peace of society. The Church will not succumb, and as long as she is persecuted the agitation of society will be inevitable.

“The undersigned Ministers have the most profound conviction, Madame, that in the furious tempest which has broken over nations, Religion is the first remedy for such evils; almost the only restraint of immorality; and by its civilizing, beneficent influence, sustains equally nations and thrones. The Government, resolved to pay all the homage which is due to him, uniting their vows, and wishing that the Span-

ish people would solemnly join with Christianity to beseech the Most High to extend his mercy to our afflicted Church, to preserve and console our Universal Pastor; and therefore have the honor of submitting the following decree for the approbation of your Majesty :—

THE DECREE.

“In accordance with the advice of my Ministers, I appoint that in all the Churches of the Kingdom of Spain, there should be three successive days of public prayers, with the assistance of the Clergy, the Authorities, and the Corporations; invitation being addressed to the Faithful to implore the help of the Almighty for the necessities of the Catholic Church, and that the tribulations of our Pastor may be brought to a happy and speedy termination.

“Given at the Palace the 4th December, 1848.” (Signed with the Royal hand.)

GROSS READINGS.

In a late English Paper we happened to read an account of the very expensive Theatrical Exhibitions before Her Majesty the Queen, at Windsor Castle; and on the very next evening we were startled in seeing the report of a Coroner's Inquest on the body of a poor man who died of starvation in Ireland, and in whose stomach nothing was found but a few leaves of raw cabbage!

PROEMIUM OF THE CATHEMERINON;

OR,

LIFE OF PRUDENTIUS.

Full fifty-seven years,

If well I judge, have taken now their flight,

Since first these weary eyes of mine

Awakened to the light.

Old age, at length, appears,

And my last moment shall ere long be run,

But ah! in all that length of days,

What good have I yet done!

My Childhood's careless time

Was passed in tears beneath the master's rod,

My Boyhood ran in folly's way

And oft displeas'd my God.

Then came Lust's reign of crime,

And vain excess—my grief—my shame—my pain;

And filled, alas! my youthful soul

With many a sinful stain.

Law next engaged the hour,

And with impetuous course I drove along,

Prepared for every cause that rose;

Defending right and wrong.

Invested, then, with power,

I held the rule o'er noble cities, twice,

Borrow'd on Virtue due rewards,

And always punished Vice.

At length, my gracious King

Did raise me high amid his martial band,

Assigning me a lofty rank,

The second in the land.

While thus flew Time's swift wing,

The grey of years stole sudden o'er my brow,

And chides me that I have forgot

Mazzyia's Consul now.

My Birth-day, then begun,

Has, therefore, seen full many a winter's snow,

And marked, on many a field of spring,

The blushing roses blow.

But oh! what thus is won

When perishes, at last, this fragile clay,

And all that I now call my own

Grim Death shall tear away.

Say'st thou of me, kind friend!

The world thy soul adores eludes thy grasp,

And not to God belong those things

Which thou would'st fondly clasp!

No—no—e'en in the end

My wayward soul shall seek the better choice,

And make amends for all misdeeds]

And tune my sweetest voice.

And neither day nor night

Shall I e'er cease to celebrate His name,

And Heresy's proud host assail

And Cath'lic faith proclaim.

Oppose each Pagan rite,

And dash, O Rome! thy cherished idols down

And praise aloud th' Apostles' choir,

And sing the Martyr's crown.

And oh! this very hour

Fain would I burst my bonds to freely soar,

And far beyond this world of woe

Sing songs for evermore!

M. A. W.

STATISTICS OF DESTITUTION—SKIBBEREEN.

A correspondent of the *Evening Mail*, writing from Skibbereen under date December 13, 1848, says :—

“At a meeting held in the vestry-room of the parish church of Kilmoe, on Monday, the 4th instant, it was suggested that the several townlands in the parish be visited by trustworthy and intelligent men, to report on the present state of the poor. Accordingly twenty-four men were appointed. The parish was divided, *pro tempore*, into twelve districts. Each district was allotted to two of the men appointed. These men brought in their reports, in writing, on the 7th. From these reports we lay before the public the following abstract of the sad details :—Most of us, whose names are subscribed, are and have been daily eye-witnesses of many of the facts stated, and of similar ones. Out of the population of this parish, amounting to about 6,000, *more than 1,000 have at present scarcely a morsel to put in their mouths*. Besides they have no firing; scarcely the name of clothing either by night or day; huts far worse (aye, immeasurably worse) than an English pig-sty to live in. *Some of them have no house at all, but exist under large rocks in the sides of cliffs*. They subsist on sea weed, muscles, the green leaves of turnips, the small stunted turnips left in the ground after the crop was removed, the small potatoes left by the diggers of the crop in the tillage. Most of the potato ground in the parish has been *already redug two or three times* by these wretched creatures hunting for this miserable subsistence. Besides these one thousand perishing creatures, six hundred and thirty nine paupers receive outdoor relief under the poor law; yet neither have they a sufficiency of food, putting out of the question firing and clothing. The allowance for outdoor relief by the poor law is one pound of Indian meal for an adult, and a half pound for a child in 24 hours, which is allowed to be, without other aid, *insufficient to support life*; and in this remote district, the poor have no other resource than those above mentioned, which are now exhausted.”

One thousand British subjects—one thousand of our fellow-men—one thousand of God's creatures—*without food*, without the name of clothing—crawling for shelter during the long cold nights of this inclement winter season under large rocks in the sides of cliffs; and yet the ministry under whose management these scenes occur are idle. Good Heavens! only think of it. Call to mind the storms of sleet and rain which drenched this city during the past week, and pass in mind to the cliffs of Skibbereen, where God's poor are cowering, like the wild birds of the air, from the drifting sleet that is beaten with the fury of a tempest against their naked bodies! Think—think what must be their cries, their agonies; and, oh think, will a merciful and just God, as He looks through the storm on that appalling spectacle, not write judgement with the finger of His wrath against those whose duty it is to relieve such distress.

Come here, Queen Victoria—turn from the painted baubles of mimic tragedy which are about to amuse your leisure hours during the Christmas times. There is no need to have recourse for excitement to the representation of artificial woe. Here—here, under the cliffs of Skibbereen, beneath your Majesty's sceptre, there is enough of real tragedy. Here the grey-haired father watches the live long night of a stormy winter, and draws closer and closer to his bosom the cold corpse of a wife, a son, or a daughter, and prays, while the piercing blast and drenching rain beat more and more savagely against his exhausted frame, that he may live till morning's sun enables him to look upon the ruined home of his fathers as he breathes his last!

We have been informed that affidavits were published last week in one of the City Papers relative to the burial of the poor Indian in the County of Digby. We allude to the fact for the purpose of stating our opinion that all those Journals which published the statement referred to, should, in justice to the Rev. gentleman concerned, also publish the contradiction.

ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH.

Omitted by mistake in last week's Cross :—
Andrew Hunter O 2 6
Mary Doyle O 1 3

By the last packet we received the melancholy intelligence of the death of two Irish Prelates—The Rt. Rev. Dr. Maginn the learned and patriotic Bishop of Derry, and the Rt. Rev. Dr. Walsh the reverend Bishop of Cloyne and Ross.