

four hours the active commencement of the investigation. Our correspondent charges against the Warden cruelty, favouritism, discrimination against Roman Catholics, falsification of the records, concealment of facts, and bad management generally. It is needless to say that we would not undertake the publication of such a terrible letter if the writer of it were not a responsible man."—(*Mail*, 23rd May, 1885.)

"The letter from the promoters of the Central Prison inquiry, which will be found elsewhere, contains charges of the gravest possible nature against the Warden of that institution. We are well aware that the letter contains material for a dozen libel suits against the *Mail*; nevertheless it is the bounden duty of a public journal to run the risks of actions-at-law when, as in this case, the public good demands it. It is almost unnecessary to say that we know nothing of the truth or falsity of the charges; but they are made by men of standing in the community, who profess to be able to prove them, and for that reason, and none other, we deem it our duty in the public interest to bring them to the notice of the Local Government. It is true a commission has been appointed to inquire into the multifarious accusations that have been levelled at Mr. Massie for a year past.

"The complainants are Roman Catholics. They assert that one of the prison guards (Guinness), who was until recently a Roman Catholic himself, is extremely prejudiced against Roman Catholic prisoners; and that Mr. Massie upholds him in all he does, in order to gratify certain visitors to the prison, who claim Guinness as their special *protégé* in religion. Furthermore, it is stated, though not by Roman Catholics, that this guard constantly displays a bitter *animus* against Protestant prisoners who do not belong to the particular denomination or school which he champions; and that here again he finds an all-powerful ally in the Warden. This is the general charge, and out of it the specific charges of cruelty and favouritism appear to have grown. Had the Legislature provided for paid chaplains to the prison, it is safe to say this very painful controversy would not have occurred. But in the absence of regular chaplains, visitors of various denominations, some clerical, others lay, attend to the spiritual wants of the inmates; and to the undue zeal of some of these persons the whole trouble appears to be due. Competition among Christian communions is very good in its way, but it is somewhat out of place when it takes the form of a rough-and-tumble combat over sinners who are supposed to be undergoing moral quarantine in a gaol. A fight over a corpse in a dead-house would not be more indecorous. Mr. Massie may have been weak enough to take sides in this *melée*, for he is neither a strong nor a prudent man; but we hesitate to believe that he has been guilty of the graver offences laid at his door by the promoters of the inquiry. They charge him in so many words with crimes near akin to murder. Putting aside the cases of the prisoners Linden, Mulholland and Mahony, and the dreadful allegations concerning the practices to which certain prisoners are sometimes compelled to resort, owing to the neglect or cruelty of the guards in not providing them with buckets, it is alleged that Mr. Massie starved a prisoner