

# THE CITY OF BRISBANE INQUIRY.

SIR.—Owing to a petition from the passengers for an investigation into certain great irregularities which occurred on board the ship *City of Brisbane*, during her late passage to this port, an inquiry, conducted by A. C. Kemball, Esq., has been going on for three weeks at the Immigration Office. That inquiry, I believe, has been searchingly instituted, and many particulars of a very serious character have been elicited: but in the meantime, those parties who can give evidence are rapidly dispersing over the colony, and shortly, it is to be presumed, the *City of Brisbane* will be taking her departure.

Now, up to this time little public notice has been taken of this investigation, and it appears very doubtful whether any remedial measures are to be adopted in the matter. At present the investigation has been conducted with closed doors, and the witnesses have not been sworn. Such an inquiry, I imagine, unless followed by one of a more legal nature, can end in little more than smoke. That such should be the case would be only a disgrace to this colony, an insult to the passengers, and a gross injustice to all future immigrants. For when I consider the state of things on board ship, it seems impossible to believe but that very severe measures will be taken, in order to prevent the recurrence of anything of the sort in the Government immigrant vessels bound for this colony.

Without now entering into particulars, may state here, in order to give a faint idea of the inconveniences and nuisances to which we were subject, that the arrangements and appointments in connection with the stores and the galley were very inefficient and incompetent, and that the numerous inconveniences hence arising were aggravated by the incivility, blackguardism, and insolence of the officers and their subordinates. But all this sinks into insignificance compared with the fearful language and unchecked licentiousness which, there is but too much evidence to prove, prevailed during a great part of the voyage. But this is not all; for, through some mismanagement, liquor found its way one Sunday to the fore-castle which led to a serious mutiny, during which knives were drawn, and serious injuries inflicted upon one of the passengers and the first officer; the man at the helm left his post, and the lives of the passengers were endangered.

Hoping more vigorous measures will soon be taken in this matter, and that public attention may be drawn to the subject, seeing it can but have a painful interest for all, especially those who are expecting friends from home,

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

A PASSENGER.

SIR.—In your issue of Saturday last I noticed two erroneous statements, which I believe were made by you in perfect good faith. In your weekly epitome you say, "the Rev. W. McGinty has been excommunicated by the Bishop," and that "his co-trustees, Messrs. O'Sullivan and Gorry, have resigned their trusts under a threat of excommunication."

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I am myself a Roman Catholic, and feel deeply interested in the matters here referred to. I was one of the congregation when these occurrences took place at Ipswich on last Sunday. I paid the greatest attention to everything that happened. I took carefully to inform myself afterwards by reference to the best authorities on all the details of the case, and I am able to assert that Father McGinty was not excommunicated by the Bishop, and that his co-trustees were not threatened with excommunication.

To put you clearly in possession of the nature of the case, allow me to tell you, that there is a law of the Council of Trent (General Councils, such as the Council of Trent, are the highest authorities in the Catholic Church), which punishes certain acts by the ecclesiastical censure of excommunication. To incur this censure, the commission of the acts prohibited by the law is sufficient; and it is not necessary that the law should be put in force by the Bishop. Still more, it is not in the Bishop's power to suspend its operation, if the act be once committed, and the perpetrator continue contumacious. The part the Bishop took in the matter was to cause attention to be directed to the existence of the law, to have its penalties explained, and to admonish the Rev. Mr. McGinty that his acts were liable to its penalties. There is one step in such cases which it is left to the discretion and the judgment of the Bishop to take or to omit, viz., to *denounce solemnly* the person who incurs the censure. This step has not been taken.

The error of the statement made in Saturday's *Courier* consists in this, that it represents the Bishop to have inflicted the censure, while in reality it was inflicted by the Council of Trent, and knowingly incurred by Father McGinty, who was admonished by his Bishop to avoid it, but refused. I am further enabled to state that forbearance in this whole matter was carried to its utmost limits. The Bishop was bound to require from the Rev. Mr. McGinty an account of his administration, and that he should deliver up the property belonging to the church.

As to the lay trustees, they should have had no more to do with the question between the Bishop and Father McGinty—it being purely an ecclesiastical one—than any other two members of the congregation. They were not asked to give up their trusts, but Father McGinty, on being removed from Ipswich, was directed to have the Bishop's name substituted for his own as a co-trustee with them. He refused to leave Ipswich or to give up his trust, and they supported and abetted him, and for this their trusts were recalled. In the want of their refusal to deliver up the trusts after that recall, they would have rendered themselves liable to the same calamity which befel Father McGinty. This implied no action whatever on the part of the Bishop, but would be the result of their own conduct had they not yielded obedience. They did so, and so far acted wisely.

I think that all concerned will be assured that I have no feeling but that of kindness

I think that in connection with that I have no feeling but that of kindness towards them, and that I am induced to make this statement merely through a sense of justice.

#### A CATHOLIC.

The coroner at Newcastle, Dr. R. C. Knaggs, held an inquest, on Saturday evening, at the Bank Hotel, on the body of Andrew Morgan. From the evidence it appeared that he had been seen walking along the rails leading to one of the A. A. Company's shoots in the early part of the afternoon, and was observed by one of the witnesses to be in a state of intoxication, and suddenly to trip up as if his foot had caught one of the rails, throwing him over on his head on to the zinc roof of a dwelling house seven feet below, and from thence on to the ground, coming in contact with a stone in his fall. Death was instantaneous. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, caused by intemperance.

An old brood mare died lately at Exeter Farm, near Braidwood, at the advanced age of thirty-eight years.