

## GENERAL NEWS.

THE number of letters received by His Holiness on the occasion of his birthday, was over one hundred thousand, and the signatures exceeded three hundred thousand.—The widow of the late Mr J. F. Maguire, M.P., for Cork, has had a special audience of the Pope, to whom she presented a purse containing 150 sovereigns, the contributions of some Irish friends.

There has been a march of agricultural laborers through the Eastern and Midland Counties, beginning at Cambridge. They wore blue ribbons, and some carried flags. There were 40 bands of music. Altogether 5,000 were present. Arch was the principal spokesman.

Dr. Fortune, who was nominated to be the first Bishop of the newly-created Diocese of Sandhurst, was obliged to decline that dignity for reasons which His Holiness was pleased to consider valid. The Propaganda on the 22nd of May selected in room of Dr. Fortune, the Rev. Canon Maguire, of Cork, brother to the late John Francis Maguire, of Cork, and proprietor of the 'Examiner' newspaper. The Pope ratified the selection of the Propaganda, on the evening of the 24th May. Dr. Gould, Archbishop of Melbourne, and Dr. O'Connor, Bishop of Ballarat, have left Rome for Ireland.

A valuable addition has been made to Archaeological learning by the appearance of the first volume of Archdall's *Monasticon Hibernicum*, by Kellys, of Dublin. This is a history of the Abbeys, Priors, and other Religious Houses in Ireland, by Mervyn Archdall, A.M., edited, with extensive notes, by the Right Rev. Patrick F. Moran, Lord Bishop of Ossory, and other distinguished antiquarians. It is a work which, when completed, will add one more and invaluable boon to those already contributed by Dr. Moran to Irish ecclesiastical literature and history, in addition to his *Archbishops of Dublin*, his life of the Primate Oliver Plunket, the life of St. Brendan, and his essays on the Ancient Irish Church. In the volume before us we are given a *fac simile* of Archdall's Map of Ireland, prepared to elucidate the work; Ptolemy's Map of Erin, corrected from *Eardie History*, showing the *locale* of the Belgic Septs, and much enlarged from that published by Charles O'Connor in *Dissertations*. We have also three very fine views of St. Patrick's, Dublin, one of the Ancient Archbishop's Palaces of Tallaght, and of St. Colman's Cathedral and Round Tower at Cloyne, all in the highest style of art—and yet these are comparatively nothing to the exquisite engravings in gold and colors of members of the monastic body, such as a Benedictine monk, a Benedictine nun, an Augustinian hermit, and a Cistercian monk, which are perfect gems of art. We should not omit to state that there is also given a copy of the figures of the three Patron Saints of Ireland, originally published, we believe, by Messingham, with Latin inscription and translation:

In Down three saints one grave do fill;  
Bridgid, Patrick, and Columbkille.

A very curious discovery has been made at Nancy, in the Convent of Visitation. It appears that the great Bossuet left a pile of manuscript there when he visited it, and that it has never been touched since. The present Superioress happened to come across these treasures whilst searching for some other papers concerning the house over which she rules. Convinced that the documents were genuine, she placed them in the hands of Colonel Ferval, who is at present editing them. They consist of many sermons, and of a series of letters addressed to Madam de Valliere on the occasion of that lady's conversion. The sermons are not only of great beauty, but of the highest historical value. When published, this important work will extend over three volumes.

The 'Christian Union' (Henry Ward Beecher's paper) had an article on 'Appleton's Cyclopedia,' from which we take the following extract:—But we took up our pen to thank those editors who have so promptly and in so manly a way defended 'Appleton's Cyclopedia' from the charge of catering to the Roman Catholic public. A more needless and baseless charge was never made. We have examined the facts with some care, and acquit the gentleman engaged upon this national work of any such design, or of falling into any such error by heedlessness. We honor them for calling Roman Catholic scholars to their aid. It is right that they should. It is time that we had done with the senseless prejudices which regard Roman Catholic priests as of course unchristian, and Roman Catholic scholars as Jesuitic, insincere, and untrustworthy. Some of the noblest prelates and most reliable scholars of to-day are Roman Catholics.

The Louisville 'Catholic Advocate' thus pleads the cause of "Denominational Education":—"We have never doubted that the sincere among our separated brethren would in time come to consider our present Common School system a snare to those who love Christ. It is such a snare that must, if persisted in, finally land the nation on the shores of unbelief. We are more than pleased, we are delighted with the action on the subject of education taken by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church now holding its sittings in Louisville. There is something in this action that gives us better hope for the future. There is a modicum of faith left in Protestant Christianity. Not every Protestant is ready to sell out, body and bones, to the devil. There is a cry raised, just whence we thought it would be raised, to put on the brakes. We are thankful that God has put it into the hearts of these men to divine the danger unseen by so many eyes."

The age of martyrdom is not ended. The flame of devotion to Catholic faith burns as brightly in the souls of the unlettered peasants of Catholic Poland, as it did eighteen centuries ago in the hearts of those who fearlessly braved all the torments which Roman paganism could invent. The Russian soldiery shoot these Polish heroes by the score, because they refuse to abandon their faith and become members of the national church; but those who escape the carnage in fear of losing the eternal reward of bearing testimony to Jesus Christ by their blood, take their places as they did lately at Prutulin; they bared their breasts, the remnant of those doomed to die, and cried out: "Shoot away; we want to die for the faith." The highest honor the Poles now covet, is to have some members of their families enrolled among the martyrs. They smite in derision when the officials of the

Russian Government threaten them, in their obstinate refusal to become schismatics, with the knout, imprisonment, or Siberian exile. Every village has its martyr's grave, at which the faithful peasants daily kneel, and pray that they may stand firm in this new hour of trial. Weak women and tender children go with the light of heaven's happiness in their eyes to the ordeal of death which the Czar has prescribed for his Catholic subjects of Poland. He may exterminate the race, but he will never succeed in tearing the Catholic faith from their hearts.

The consecration of the new cathedral at Thurles for the Diocese of Cashel, fixed for July, has been postponed until next year. The new cathedral at Sligo, for the Diocese of Elphin, has been consecrated.

## TRUE WORDS FROM AN UNEXPECTED QUARTER.

It is not often that we find in the 'Lutheran and Missionary' remarks with which we can so fully agree as the following:—

## "THE FRUIT OF SECULAR EDUCATION."

It cannot have escaped the notice of reflective Christians, that one of the most deplorable results of a purely secular education, towards which the present school system of our country is rapidly tending, is the gradual undermining of those religious convictions with which even the State cannot afford to dispense. It is certainly alarming to witness the want of respect for the obligations of the oath which exist among us, and of which we have recently had most painful examples from men in high places. Indeed, things have come to such a pass that the oath is often used to shield rather than to reveal the truth.

And yet, of all the institutions that have grown out of religion, and come down to us from the past, there is none more vital to the well-being of a nation than that of the oath. The administration of justice, which involves the protection of the weak and poor from the encroachments of the rich and powerful; the settling of disputes between citizens; the security against official turpitude and the evils of selfishness, are all more or less dependent on the sanctity of sworn statements. In a word, there is no principle which human society, as at present organized, can so ill afford to relinquish as that laid down by the apostle to the Hebrews (chap. vi. 16): "An oath for conformation is an end of all strife." But what is the practical value of this principle when men daily lift their hand towards heaven, solemnly renouncing the Divine favor, and imploring the Divine vengeance, should they fail to speak the truth to the best of their knowledge and belief—and then deliberately color or deny the truth for the comparatively paltry consideration of money or reputation.

There is only one defence against this evil, and it lies in a thorough religious training for the young, so that the consciences of our future citizens may be quickened by the conviction that dishonesty and perjury are not only meanness, but sin—not only against man, but against God—God, who is retributive in his dealings with his creatures, and "will by no means clear the guilty."

We are aware that false swearing is not confined to sceptics and atheists, but men who profess Christianity are often detected in perjurying themselves. Such examples, it is said, go to show that a religious education is incapable of curing the evil. We are bold to say, however, that the very smallest number of such persons have had a religious education. There is a profession of religion which is like the boasting of a coward before the battle; and there is a species of sentiment that passes for religion, but which vanishes before temptation, because it springs not from just and adequate notions of man's accountability to God, and a proper estimate of eternal retributions when contrasted with those that are temporal. The cases of deliberate perjury are exceedingly rare, if they exist at all, where the moral nature has been as carefully trained as the intellectual. And yet, although no one has ever shown that mankind are more susceptible morally than they are intellectually, years are consumed in a careful study to master a system of mathematics and philosophy while the religious training of the child consists, for the most part, in such bits of pious exhortations as may be dropped by a parent or Sunday-school teacher.

There is, perhaps, no country in which the oath is administered so frequently, and for such trivial causes, as in our own, and yet there is none which guards so carefully against sanctioning the inculcation of those doctrines of religion without a name, to which the oath is degraded to a mere farce.

If it be true, as Montesquieu observes, that "religion is the best security we can have of the probity of men," can the State afford to be severely neutral in regard to it? There is no principle, however sound in general, that will not produce evil if allowed to work itself out, without regard to other equally sound but countervailing principles. Just as there is a point at which civil liberty passes over into license, and ceases to be liberty at all, so it is possible to carry religious liberty to such lengths that it becomes the instrument of destruction to religion itself. Tinker and reform on education system as we may, we will either have to bear the reproaches of sin or conform to the principles that "righteousness exalteth a nation," and that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of the wisdom."—'The Lutheran.'

True: But who is to teach that "righteousness"? The Church or the State? To whom was the commission given by our divine Lord? The 'Lutheran' does not affirm that it was given to secular authorities. And if not, then according to the 'Lutheran's' own arguments, the secular authorities are guilty of usurpation in the public schools; and yet, according to the same argument, the State, by the "purely secular education," imparted in the public school is undermining those religious convictions with which even the State cannot afford to dispense; and, moreover is guilty of gross injustice in compelling Catholics to sustain those schools. And this compulsion the State does exercise by the school-taxes, which by law it levies and collects.

Will the 'Lutheran' consider this and unite with us in opposing the present system of public schools?—Philadelphia 'Standard.'