

some reason to question the efficiency of the rescue work performed by the "Colonel" in Melbourne. Has the "Colonel" been able to refute the charges? According to the official reports of the police department in Melbourne it would seem that the efficiency of rescue work was in some degree, to say the least of it, doubtful. Senior-Detective Sergeant Thomas Nixon, for instance, reporting on August 7th, 1890, states that the members of his particular branch of the service are agreed that the Army's Prison Gate Brigade has rendered them no services. "Colonel" Barker and "Captain" Foley, he says, again, had from time to time furnished information as to contemplated crimes and other misdemeanours which was found to be false and groundless. "I am also in a position to say," he adds, "that some of the worst criminals have been kept and fed while they were out at night committing robberies. This was well known to 'Captain' Foley, but he was prevented, as he told me, by 'Colonel' Barker from giving information." We may, however, give "Colonel" Barker the benefit of the doubt. "Captain" Foley does not appear to have been a very reliable informant. The "Captain" himself, in fact, has since returned to his evil ways, and is now serving a sentence of three years in gaol. A more serious charge brought against the "Colonel," and concerning which there is no apparent doubt, is that on a certain occasion he was found in possession of about £60, which was part of the proceeds of a big robbery of watches and jewellery committed in Collins street. A man, again, who had been wounded in an attempt to rob a bank was kept in the army barracks some days, and when the police were informed of it he was sent out of their way. "The Army generally," concludes Sergeant Nixon, "is made up of strong men who are quite able to do any sort of hard work if they would, and of young girls who would be much better—and more respectable—in service than selling the *War Cry*."—Inspector D. S. Kennedy says, "So far as thieves are concerned I do not believe that the 'Army' effort to reform them is attended with much success."—Superintendent Sadleir, in his report to the Chief Commissioner, under date September 2, 1890, declares the Prison Gate work a failure. Some of the police, he says, believe the criminals taken in hand hopelessly depraved but cunning enough to deceive the officers, while others have no faith in the officers, but believe them to be working for their own personal gains. "Facts," he concludes, have been stated to me that certainly place their conduct in a somewhat suspicious light."—"These," finally remarks the *Age*, "are very grave charges, and it is incumbent on 'Colonel' Barker to refute them if he can. They are officially made, and if their accuracy is challenged by the Salvation Army officers, it is open to them to apply to the Chief Secretary to cause a searching inquiry to be made into the whole matter." Have the officers done so, or did "Colonel" Barker leave Melbourne without moving in the matter? Is he, moreover, now about to proceed to London with his honours thick upon him, to perform rescue work of the same kind there? As the people rescued by the "Colonel" may possibly form a portion of their future population, a full explanation of the matter must needs be of interest to the colonies.

#### LENTEN CIRCULAR TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH, 1891.

DEAR Rev. Father and Beloved Brethren in Christ.—At the approach of the Holy Season of Lent, We are but fulfilling our duty, in the absence of our beloved Bishop, by exhorting you to spend this time of Grace and Benediction according to the Spirit of Holy Church. We may indeed apply to Lent, the words of St. Paul, "Behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of Salvation." (Cor. vi., 2.)

Lent is a time of Prayer, Mortification and Penance, a time of weeping and reparation for our own sins and those of others, and specially adapted for meditation on the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a time of reconciliation with the God of All Mercy by Penance, and the Holy Eucharist, of entering into ourselves and amending in our lives whatever may be wanting. Thus saith the Lord, "Be converted to Me with all your heart in fasting, in weeping and in mourning. Blow the trumpet in Zion and sanctify a Fast." (Joel ii., 12-15.) Lent is a time of Penance. The Church now especially calls upon us to turn our hearts to God in sorrow for having offended Him, and to make satisfaction for the insults offered to Him by our manifold transgressions. No one, however blameless his life may appear, can neglect this duty with safety.

The Saints most distinguished for purity of life, were also conspicuous for their spirit of Penance. But, if Penance, and self-denial are necessary, even for those who are striving to live in God's grace, how much more for those who have grievously sinned? Sin means the turning away our will from God to creatures: Penance means the undoing of Sin, and setting free our will from creatures, and bringing it back to God and to His peace.

The virtue of Penance, like the malice of sin is in the soul; but its outward acts dispose our hearts to receive God's grace, overcome self-love, and manifest the existence of the virtue which is itself unseen.

As, however, men are averse to this virtue, the Church periodically compels them by Her laws of Fasting and Abstinence to strengthen their wills to labour for the salvation of the souls, lest being left to themselves they should neglect it altogether. If we desire, therefore, to escape the wrath of God, like the Saints we must

lead lives of Penance, and throw ourselves completely into the spirit of the Church during this holy season of sorrow, pardon and grace.

As regards the "Lenten Fast" we must observe it as prescribed by the Church. We must, moreover, remember that it is not sufficient merely to comply with the bare letter of the law, which is but a means to an end, but we must labour generously to restrain our senses, to fast from swearing, profanity, cursing, blaspheming, and from the deadly vice of intemperance. Therefore, says St. Augustine, "Let us above all things fast from Sin." That our fasts may not be rejected like the fasts of the Jews by Isaiah, and by our Lord Himself in the new dispensation.

With Fasting and Abstinence let us join prayer and almsgiving according to the advice of the Archangel Raphael to Tobias:—"Prayer is good with Fasting and Alms-deeds, more than to lay up the surer of gold."

Holy Church wishes us during Lent to meditate on the bitter Passion of our Lord and invites her children to the foot of the Cross, there to contemplate in deepest sorrow the fearful consequences which sin has wrought in the agonising body of their expiring Redeemer.

"Nothing," says St. Augustine, "is more conducive to our salvation than turning over in our minds all that the Son of God has done for us." "I owe," cries out St. Ambrose, "far more to Thy Passion, by which Thou hast redeemed me, than to Thy Omnipotence by which Thou hast created me." Mortification is insufficient for salvation; it must be accompanied with compunction of heart. Nothing is more calculated to excite this sorrow of heart than the meditation of this mystery of the Passion, so tender, yet so terrible. During these days of Lent honour the Passion of our Lord by prayer, spiritual reading, and receiving the Holy Sacraments with humble and contrite hearts.

Amongst the holy exercises suitable for the sanctification of Lent is devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, having for object the Divine Heart of that loving Saviour, the history of whose tender mercy as shown forth during His bitter Passion and Crucifixion, is so touchingly brought before us during the sublime ceremonies of Holy Week. The accounts which reached us of the results of the solemn Consecration of our children to the Sacred Heart, ordered in all the Parishes of the Diocese last October, were gratifying in the extreme. The crowded Confessionals and Communion Rails bore testimony to the efficacy of this devotion in rousing many of our people from the lethargy into which they had fallen. We wish, therefore, that Pastors and people will earnestly co-operate in the establishment and maintenance of the Devotion of the Apostleship of Prayer in the parish, in the family, and in the school, and thus contribute to the extension of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and to the bringing down the blessings of the Sacred Heart on this Diocese.

We feel strongly urged to remind you of the importance of displaying the greatest zeal in the education of our children. The salvation of their souls depends in a great measure upon the impressions imparted by a Catholic education. It is the duty of parents to instruct them in the great truths of our Holy Faith, to teach them to love the Church as their tender Mother, and the infallible exponent of Divine Truth. No one can exaggerate the blessings of a Christian education. A Christian education moulds the heart and forms the consciences of children, makes them good citizens and faithful members of Holy Church. Godless education, by neglecting the moral restraints so necessary for our perverse inclinations, forms bad men and worse women. Let a child be educated without Faith, without the Knowledge of God, of the Sacraments, of the Intercession of the Saints and the Virgin Mother, and what would it be? It would become paganised. The child in the Catholic school is reminded of these truths. Every system of education not based on religion must be for Catholics an evil of the greatest magnitude, and such is the State education of this Colony, for whilst it unites in the same school pupils and teachers of every creed and no creed, it must necessarily promote that spirit of infidelity which ignores the very existence of God, "in whom we live, move, and have our being." Parents having the facilities of sending their children to Catholic schools, but who, unmindful of their responsibility, should send them elsewhere, are unworthy of the Sacraments.

Wherefore, We earnestly exhort you, dear Brethren, to assist your pastors by liberal donations in procuring a Catholic education for your children. Thereby, whilst fitting them out for eternal life by the moral and religious training necessary, they will also receive that secular education requisite for their advancement in this life. Give liberally of the means God has given you, and you shall receive in return an ample reward from the "Giver of every good gift," mindful that worldly goods are not to be compared to the priceless souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Lent is therefore the great harvest time of souls. Many a soul now in Heaven can attribute its being there to a well spent Lent: and many a soul which is lost, owes its unhappy state of eternal separation from God to its disregard of the repeated calls made to it to avail itself of the countless opportunities given in the acceptable time of Lent.

You will be pleased to learn, dear Brethren in Jesus Christ, that, during the past year, thanks to the indefatigable labours of the Clergy, and the generosity of the people, new churches have been opened in St. Mary's Parish, Manchester street, Christchurch, at Fairlie Creek, and Methven. New presbyteries have been erected at Leeston and Darfield. A new convent has been erected at Waimate, and the schools of that parish have been entrusted to the zealous Sisters of St. Joseph, lately arrived from Sydney. A new school has been opened at Halswell, a suburb of Christchurch, and it is hoped that in the very near future the Catholic boys' schools of Timaru and Grey-mouth will be placed under the able direction of the Marist Brothers. The Diocesan Clergy have been increased by the addition of Rev. P. Aubrey, S.M., (Temuka) and Rev. W. Hyland (Abura).

Once more We direct your attention to the pressing needs of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, of Mount Magdala. The noble work which they are so successfully, yet so unobtrusively, carrying out at the Magdalen Asylum, impels us to appeal to the generosity of the charitably disposed, in every portion of the Colony to aid them. An