

church. This event we are celebrating to-day. When the foundation stone of this church was laid the official returns tell us that the Catholic population of Port Phillip, as Melbourne was then called, consisted of 2073 souls. In the short space of sixty years how that grain of mustard seed has multiplied! In place of that little congregation we have now in the State of Victoria 1 Archbishop, 3 Bishops, 238 priests, 65 religious Brothers, 1019 nuns, 350 churches, 36,350 children attending Catholic schools, and a Catholic population of 263,710. The Fathers of the Sydney Plenary Council of 1885 exclaimed in heartfelt thankfulness: 'The prevalent impression on our minds during these days of our Council is one of intense thankfulness to God, Who has so blessed the mustard seed of the Faith in Australasia. At a date so recent as to be quite within the memory of men still moving amongst us, there was not one priest nor one altar in all these Southern lands. It is not simply that the ministrations of the Church were poor and scant, but, as a matter of fact, it did not exist.' The heads of the Church in Victoria may, in like manner, thank with full hearts the Giver of all good gifts for the rich blessing of fruitfulness which He has given to the Church in that State during the past sixty years.

Notes

A Mare's Nest

From a communication received by us from Auckland we learn that some no-Popery prospector up there has 'struck' a mare's nest. There has apparently been a good deal of noisy exultation over the discovery, but the nest is not, after all, so valuable an asset as it seemed, for the old mare had forsaken it long ago. It is the mouldy old 'fake' about the Ballinasloe Lunatic Asylum, Ireland. According to sundry Orange Members of Parliament, who worked themselves into simulated epileptic fits over the matter, the position of medical officer of the Asylum was vacant; there were two applicants, one a Catholic, the other a Protestant (Dr. Enright); and the Catholic secured the appointment solely on account of his religious belief. But it so happens that two-thirds of this story are 'a fairy tale of a far-off land.' The fact was (as the 'Glasgow Observer' of August 18 pointed out) 'that the Catholic was, in reality, the only applicant. There was nominally a Protestant applicant, Dr. Enright. As a matter of fact Dr. Enright's religion was not known when the appointment was made; but, in any case, his application was put aside because he failed to comply with the conditions advertised of sending in testimonials—a requirement attached by all public boards everywhere in the case of applications for public professional appointments.' Irish Catholics do not follow the evil example of religious boycotting set them by the Irish Executive, by members of the dominant creed, and by the Yellow Agony in Ulster which, nevertheless, raises a fine buzz about 'exclusive dealing' from the same motive that the pickpocket and the cheat talk most loudly at times of honesty and 'honor-bright'.

An Anglican Monastery

In one of his books the veteran Protestant missionary writer, Dr. Newham Cust, LL.D., gives the following among his eleven 'suggestions for emendation of missionary methods': 'Let no male missionary marry till he has had ten years' service in the field. Encourage brotherhoods and sisterhoods, as a matter of administrative convenience and economy.' The Anglican Bishop of Melbourne seems to have been taking a leaf out of Dr. Cust's 'Missionary Methods.' At the recent Anglican Synod in Melbourne he outlined as follows a scheme for the establishment of monasteries in his diocese:—

'I wish to draw your attention to a scheme I have in hand for dealing with the work of a large country district. In the Ferntree Gully district we shall have, in the course of a year or two, some twelve churches. My proposal is to work the Ferntree Gully district on a new plan. To erect a clergy house with accommodation of the simplest character for six men; to place the whole district under the charge of one clergyman, and give him lay readers as assistants. The daily life will be regulated from morning till night by rule and discipline. Hours for study and other work will be prescribed, and young men entering the work of the ministry under such conditions will acquire habits that will influence the whole of their lives. The plan assumes that these young men should put off all considerations of marriage for a number of years. The first thought of a young man upon taking holy orders must be for the great work to which he is about to give his life, and early engagements to marry have often proved a hindrance in the way of both study and work. As the clergy house contemplated must be well and substantially built, the sum of about £1,000 will be needed for the purpose. Nothing will be required in the way of maintenance, as each man will be charged a moderate sum for his board and lodging.'

Easing Off

The situation in France has 'eased off' so far as the hesitant Bishop of Laval is concerned. He got strict injunctions from M. Nero Combes not to proceed to Rome to give account of his personal conduct and of his spiritual stewardship. He has, however, wisely elected to obey the higher law and is now in the Eternal City. The 'Osservatore Romano' publishes, in connection with the case, the following note: Monsignor Geay, Bishop of Laval, has arrived in Rome in obedience to the orders of the Holy Father. The Italian and foreign Catholic Press will do well to abstain from commenting on this matter until the Holy See has come to a decision on the affair.'

Combes: A Biography

From our esteemed contemporary, the 'Austral Light,' we extract the following nutshell biography of the little man who, dressed in a little brief authority, is strutting on the political stage of France in the big buskins of a Nero:—

It is generally understood that M. Combes, the Anarch and Apostate, who is waging war on Christianity in France, was at one time in a religious Order. Few, however, know the extent of his connection with religion. The following personal facts, therefore, may be of interest in consideration of the part which this man is playing as leader of the Satanic hosts in France. The parents of Combes were peasants who were too poor to pay for his education. The Lazarites (known here as Vincentians) took the lad and educated him. Like the charitable man in the fable, they warmed the viper in their bosom who was afterwards to sting the Orders to death. After a few years the Fathers found themselves compelled to expel Combes for irreligion. He was not immoral, but irreligious, possessing a distaste for the practice of religion, and being entirely wanting in religious dispositions. Some years later he found his way into the congregation known as the Assumptionists, a great body of secular priests, whose object is to effect all the good possible, especially through the press. It was this congregation which established 'La Croix,' a vigorous and influential journal, which was unfortunately and vainly sacrificed as a peace-offering to the persecutors then menacing the Church. The wily enemies of the Faith pretended that if this formidable adversary, 'La Croix,' were removed, there would be peace. Like the forester in the story, they wanted the fangs of the lion removed in order that they might more safely beat out its brains with a club. With this congregation Combes remained for some years, wearing the soutane all the time. He never made any ad-