

Rev. Mother Catherine Drexel, foundress and Superioress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, who has consecrated her fortune of 40,000,000 dollars to charitable works, and more especially to the progress of civilisation amongst the negroes. What an eloquent reply are these facts to the attacks of the free-thinking press, which tells its readers every day that Catholic Faith is dead and dogma on the eve of disappearing from the earth.

Death of Rev. Brother Mark, Auckland

(From our own correspondent.)

Shortly after nine o'clock on Tuesday morning Rev. Brother Mark, Director of the Sacred Heart College, Ponsonby, died suddenly. A little more than a fortnight ago he had a very sudden attack of illness, and was convalescent when he met with this second and fatal attack. He had risen early in the morning and had had breakfast with the other Brothers. On going upstairs to his room after breakfast he fell, and in a very short time was dead. Dr. Bedford, who attended him in his recent illness, was telephoned for immediately, but on arriving a few minutes later found that his patient was no more. The students were in school when the sad event occurred. The Brothers conducted them to the college chapel immediately, and there the Very Rev. Dr. Egan, in a few touching words, told them what had happened, and asked them to join with him in praying for the repose of the soul of Brother Mark.

It is close on a quarter of a century since Brother Mark joined the Order of the Marist Brothers. He was born in County Waterford, Ireland, his family name being Lemhan. As a youth he thought he had a vocation for the priesthood, and after undergoing a collegiate training, went to Mount Melleray Seminary to pursue his higher studies. Many of his class-mates there are now engaged in their priestly labors in different parts of Australia, and, in the person of the Ven. Archpriest Walsh, of Westport, we have in New Zealand one who always held Brother Mark in the highest esteem. After spending two or three years at Mount Melleray, he became convinced that God had not called him to the priesthood, and, leaving the Seminary emigrated to New South Wales, where he settled down to teaching, having previously fitted himself for the profession in the great training school at Fort street, Sydney. He entered the service of the New South Wales Education Department, and soon rose to be head of a school. After he had been some years engaged in teaching he entered the Marist Brothers' Society, and, after undergoing the customary training in the Novitiate, was appointed Director of St. Francis' school, Haymarket. In 1886 he was appointed to the Directorship of the most important Brothers' school in New Zealand then, that of Wellington. Who can tell the amount of good he accomplished during the many years he spent there?

On the afternoon of his death and the whole of the following day numerous telegrams were received at the College from Wellington, expressing the sympathy of the senders with the Brothers on the loss they had sustained. One of the first telegrams received was from one of Brother Mark's oldest friends, the Ven. Archdeacon Devoy. Messages of condolence were also received from the Very Rev. Father Lewis, Rev. Father Holley, Very Rev. Father Keogh (Rector of St. Patrick's College), Rev. Father Kimbell, Rev. H. Van Staveren (Jewish Rabbi), and many others. Cables were received from his Lordship, Bishop Lemhan, from Melbourne, and from the Rev. Father O'Shea, at present in Sydney.

About six years ago Brother Mark was appointed Visitor to the Brothers' schools in New Zealand. All the Brothers in the Colony, who have known him, will long treasure his memory. He was the most self-sacrificing and self-forgoing of men.

In him the Marist Brothers have lost one of their most successful teachers, one of their ablest administrators, and one of their best and most zealous members.

After Requiem Mass, which was celebrated in the College Chapel by the Very Rev. Dr. Egan, the funeral left on Wednesday morning for Panmure. The procession was headed by the pupils of the Marist Brothers' parochial school, Pitt street, followed by the College boys, and vehicles containing the local clergy, the Brothers, and friends of the deceased. At Panmure the funeral was met by the Rev. Father O'Hara. The Very Rev. Dr. Egan read the burial service, and the remains of the late Brother Mark were laid to rest beside those of his late confrere, Brother Joseph, whose sudden death in Auckland some ten years ago caused similar expressions of deep sympathy as were received on this occasion from different parts of the Colony. Among the

clergy present at the grave were the Rev. Fathers Patterson, Holbrook, McMilian, Duffy, McGuinness, Buckley, and Sheridan.—R.I.P.

The Growth of Insanity in Ireland

In his annual report Dr. William Graham, Medical Superintendent of the Belfast Lunatic Asylum, gives some interesting facts in connection with the unpleasant problem of increasing insanity in Ireland. He says: 'No explanation of this terrible growth has ever been offered by the advocates of accumulation. It is obvious that the source of the evil must be sought outside the asylum walls. Turn the matter as we may in our minds, we are driven by the sheer force of facts to the conclusion that the mass of the increase is real and absolute, not apparent and relative. When all fair deductions have been made, insanity is increasing about 30 per cent. faster than the population in England, and with us is increasing in spite of a diminishing population. And this position is corroborated by experts whose outlook is not bounded by Ireland, but extends to the civilised world. Allow me to quote a few words from a recent article of Professor Lombroso:—'Insane persons have multiplied a hundredfold with civilisation to such an extent that where a few years ago one madhouse was enough now 100 are needed.' In the United States, while the population doubled in little more than 30 years, the insane increased sixfold; so in the last decade the increase in population was 30 per cent. and that of the insane 155 per cent. In France there were 131 insane per 100,000 inhabitants in 1883, 133 in 1881, 136 in 1888.' This sounds appalling.

But Facts are Facts,

and once observed an effort must be made to trace the cause. Dealing with alcoholism as a predisposing cause, according to many, the view of Dr. Graham is that 'the curious fact remains that amongst savage peoples alcohol does not produce that ultra-demoralisation of the nervous system known to civilised men. There must be some other cause at work to account for it. In other words, alcoholism is not merely a cause, it is an effect as well; a symptom of an already existing degeneracy of brain and nervous system. It is not denied that continued drunkenness may set up such changes which, gradually increasing from generation to generation, will issue in insanity. But cases of this order are probably exceptional. In the majority of instances there is already a weakness of brain and nerve which leads to a want of self-control, and this in turn issues in intemperance. The fact, then, on which emphasis is to be laid is not the craving for drink, but the degeneracy of which it is most frequently the symptom.' Turning to the more complicated problem of heredity, his view is that heredity causes nothing, brings nothing into existence; all it does is to take up and perpetuate tendencies which from whatever cause have been originated and developed. The blindness of heredity is not to let die certain phenomena once they have been brought into the field of being. The exhaustion which is coming on the country through the drain of emigration was also dealt with in this connection by Dr. Graham in his paper. Speaking of the past forty years he says: 'Not only are the gentry the people who, with whatever faults, set a higher standard of culture before the nation disappearing, but the great middle class, the professional men, the educated artisan, the brainy farmer, have had to go elsewhere in order to find adequate scope for their talent and energy. The lamentable result is that Ireland to-day is depleted of her best and strongest elements, retaining the weak and the unfit. In the past forty years we have lost about four millions of the physical and mental flower of the country. Is it any wonder, then, that

Mental Degeneration is on the Increase

amongst us?' A possible predisposing cause of the mischief, too, is the change that has taken place in the dietary of the people, whereby their physical and mental stamina is physically affected. As Dr. Graham points out, the laborer and the artisan used to make porridge, milk, and potatoes, with an occasional piece of fish, their staple food. Now, instead of these, they try to do their work by the aid of stimulants, such as tea, stout, and other artificial drinks; not only so, but the utter ignorance of cooking which prevails in the country, even in its simplest forms makes the people easy victims to all kinds of canned or concentrated meats. To make matters worse, the tea that is consumed so abundantly is not China, but Indian, or, as it is popularly called, 'Assam.' This is often boiled, kept on the stove or near the fire. The result is a poisonous concoction, destructive to the nerves and ruinous to the digestion.