

The form of belief with which the good missionaries have to contend is a mixture of Confucianism and Buddhism. The former, which comprises the basis of the Chinese Government, jurisprudence and education, embodies a collection of sayings, political and moral, attributed to the great philosopher, whom the literati worship as the greatest genius which China has produced.

The Christian Religion

forbids polygamy, lying, cheating, and opium smoking, besetting sins which the Chinaman finds hard to cast aside. Here truth, purity, honesty, self-restraint, obedience to authority, worship of God alone are required, and it is difficult for the Chinaman to imbibe such virtues. If it were conceivable, take away the Sixth and Seventh Commandments of God and perhaps the most serious obstacle to his conversion would be removed. The spirit of materialism and superstition is also a deep-rooted obstacle to the reception of the faith. A Chinese considers that Confucius' teachings will give him social salvation. Beyond this his soul scarcely aspires to anything loftier, and he therefore does not want Christ and Christianity. The Chinaman believes that the missionaries are advance agents of their governments and the forerunners of foreign invasion. He sees that the Christian religion is likely to be a 'power in the land which will eventually destroy all forms of native worship, while Christian converts are considered anti-national. With all these obstacles, however, the faith is making headway in China by leaps and bounds. Officials, scholars, the rich and influential have embraced the faith by thousands, and they cling to their convictions with laudable heroism, despite fire, sword, and unmentionable tortures. The new convert is like a man who, having crossed a bridge, finds himself breathing a new life in an atmosphere of faith, hope, and charity, and is usually only too willing to seek the martyr's crown rather than renounce his holy faith.

There is every hope for the conversion of China if only the faithful at home were more in touch with this stupendous undertaking. Doubtless faith takes time to root, sprout, and grow. It took centuries of earnest work to convert Europe from paganism, with a vast calendar of martyrs, saints, and scholars.

An Irish Missionary.

The missionaries in Shanghai are mostly of French nationality, a few countrymen of the saintly martyr of Molokai, and one worthy son of St. Patrick. The Rev. F. M. Kennelly, S.J., was born about forty years ago at Listowel, North Kerry, and belongs to a highly respected family still represented there. One of his brothers is parish priest at Clunes, Victoria. (Father Kennelly of Clunes is a personal friend of the editor of the 'N.Z. Tablet') Two members of the family are Sisters of Mercy in Sacramento, Cal., and two brothers reside in New York. Father Kennelly, like the saintly Brendan of Clonfert, was early imbued with the missionary spirit. He came to China in 1885, and has not seen the land of his birth since. He was ordained a priest in 1890, and had been engaged for six years teaching in Shanghai. The field of his missionary activity is immense and also extends to visiting men-of-war, hospitals, prisons, police stations, and the many other arduous duties of a priest, which are known only to himself and Almighty God. From his busy life, however, he snatches moments to contribute articles to the local press and the New York 'Messenger.' His name is on every tongue from Hong Kong to Chefoo, and many a poor, hard-up sailor he has befriended.

Being an eminent linguist, speaking French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and several Chinese dialects, he still is proud of the Gaelic tongue of his beloved Eire, which he regards as an invaluable auxiliary in the acquisition of languages. Father Kennelly is rather difficult to catch, but if you happen to be occasionally lucky you are introduced to a plain room with a bare floor, a crucifix on the wall, a picture of our Lady, a portrait of the Pope, a few books on a shelf, a secretaire, and the only other chair in the room is offered you with a hearty cead mile faithe. Though a little beyond the prime of life and a few silvery hairs discernible, the intellect and vigor of the Gael is at once apparent in the ample forehead, the firm lips and chin, the hearty hand shake, the natural smile, the twinkling, kindly eye, the sympathetic expressions of the priestly heart, and the magnetic versatility polished by culture and the touches of that rich accent alone peculiar to those born under the shadows of the hills that inspired vigor and eloquence in 'The Liberator.'

Father Kennelly intends shortly to publish, probably in the New York 'Messenger,' an interesting history of the Catholic missions in China, which promises to be a literary as well as a historical treat.

I may say in conclusion that these remarks apply only to a very small section of the vast Celestial Empire, which numbers over 400,000,000 inhabitants, 1,200,000 of whom are Catholics, and many religious Orders and Congregations besides the Society of Jesus. These good soldiers of Christ deserve more than our sympathy and prayers; they merit our material assistance as well to carry on their noble and glorious work.

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From our own correspondent.)

June 24.

His Grace the Archbishop will be in Nelson on Sunday and is to return to the city during the week. On the following Sunday he will hold a Confirmation service in the Sacred Heart Basilica.

The new organ being installed at the Sacred Heart Basilica will not be ready as early as was anticipated. The public opening will therefore not take place until the beginning of August.

On Wednesday afternoon, prior to leaving for their midwinter vacation, the pupils of St. Mary's Convent gave a most interesting and enjoyable entertainment in the presence of the parents and friends of the children. A special feature of the programme was the singing of many of the youngest performers, who made their first appearance. The children of his Excellency the Governor were present at the entertainment.

On Thursday evening the members of the Catholic Young Men's Club held a conversazione in St. Patrick's Hall, the occasion being the opening of their newly furnished rooms. The hall was comfortably filled, and presented a pleasing and cosy appearance. Cards and vocal items helped to pass a very pleasant evening.

The Victoria College Debating Society discussed the question of Home Rule for Ireland at their meeting on Saturday evening. The debate proved most interesting, and resulted in an easy win for the supporters of the Home Rule movement. Of the three speakers chosen to represent the college at the coming inter-society contest, it is pleasing to note that two are prominent members of the local Catholic Young Men's Club.

Wanganui

(From our own correspondent.)

June 23.

A well known Catholic young man has determined to contest the Wanganui seat against all comers at the next general election. I refer to Mr. James T. Hogan, who is well known in volunteer and rowing circles in this town. As a proof of Mr. Hogan's sterling worth, it is but necessary to say that he never allies himself with any sport or pastime without soon taking a place among the leaders. He joined the oldest volunteer corps in Wanganui—the Wanganui Rifles—as a private about eight years ago; he was senior lieutenant when he retired about a month ago, carrying with him the esteem and confidence not only of his fellow-officers, but of the men who served under him. Mr. Hogan has great natural ability, is a fluent speaker, a born debater, and a popular elocutionist.

Napier

(From our own correspondent.)

June 22.

Mr. M. L. Gleeson, son of Mr. P. Gleeson of this town, who recently passed the solicitors' final examination, has commenced the practice of his profession in Napier, having entered into partnership with Mr. I. Cresswell. The new firm will practice under the title of Cresswell and Gleeson.

On June 7 the death took place, after a very short illness, of Mr. William Anderson, eldest son of Captain Anderson, of this town, at the early age of 20 years. The cause of death was an acute attack of influenza. The funeral, which took place on June 9, was largely attended, the many floral emblems testifying to the esteem in which deceased was held. A large circle of friends extend sincere sympathy to relatives. Rev. Father Bell officiated at the grave.—R.I.P.

It is with regret I have to record the death of Mr. Leo Evans, which took place on June 13, after a painful illness, and at the early age of 25 years. He was