

to the empty dormitories and in and out the mournful class-rooms. And yet the missing one was not to be found. Then they remembered—the chapel. There, indeed, they found her;

In the Dim, Denuded Chapel,

at the lowest of the altar-steps, praying her last prayer in the little shrine which had meant for her all the happiest moments of her simple existence and which now looked upon the tragedy of her empty life. Even when they called her, she was hardly conscious of the truth, and the harsh voice of an official was required to make her realise that the moment had come for her to bid farewell for ever to her convent-home and all its gentle memories.

'It is to little purpose,' adds the 'Freeman,' 'to continue what can prove but a heart-rending tale. Suffice it to say with Francois Coppee, who writes the preface to the work, that posterity will learn from these simple pages the truth of the deplorable tragedy which is being enacted at this day in Catholic France. Heroism is not the monopoly of the battlefield, nor are its acts apportioned only to strong men. In the great, sad exodus from the convents of France, there beat under coarse and unpretentious garb (thousands of hearts courageous, the patient heroism of which, knowing no certainty of future nor term to suspense and sorrow, was knowable only to the Mind that misses nothing.

CENSUS RETURNS

MARRIAGE AND EDUCATION

It is found that in April, 1906, there were 9633 bachelors aged 20 years and upwards in excess of the number of the spinsters aged 15 years and up. In 1901 the reverse was the case, the spinsters having been 3572 in excess of the bachelors, and in 1896 similarly the spinsters exceeded the bachelors by 1786. No doubt the preponderance of bachelors in 1905 (for the whole Colony) had been to a great extent brought about by increased arrivals of male population from abroad. But in regard to proportions of the Colony other causes may have operated. At each of the above quoted censuses the provincial districts of Canterbury and Otago are remarkable as having more spinsters than bachelors, while all the others exhibit, more or less, the opposite position. But the figures for 1906 show that the excess of spinsters in Canterbury and Otago has much diminished.

EXCESS OF SPINSTERS OVER BACHELORS.

Provincial District.	1896.	1901.	1906.
Canterbury ...	3997	4918	2117
Otago ...	2066	1899	954

EXCESS OF BACHELORS OVER SPINSTERS.

	1896.	1901.	1906.
Wellington ...	637	32	4389
Auckland ...	708	521	3383
Nelson ...	580	637	1650
Hawke's Bay ...	1142	425	1151
Westland ...	501	666	935
Taranaki ...	524	805	754
Marlborough ...	183	158	532

Of every 100 persons in New Zealand at the time of the census of 1906, 83.50 could read and write, 1.60 could read only, and 14.90 could neither read nor write. The proportion able to read and write, and that of persons able to read only has increased steadily since 1874. The figures (says the 'Otago Daily Times') are given for four censuses:—

	Read and write.	Read only.	Cannot read.
Census, 1874 ...	68.15	8.09	23.76
Census, 1886 ...	74.01	4.80	21.19
Census, 1896 ...	80.60	2.89	16.51
Census, 1906 ...	83.50	1.60	14.90

To ascertain, however, how completely education is carried out, accepting as a test the knowledge of reading and writing, it is necessary to show the condition at present in respect of age periods, which is accordingly given.

At the period under-five years none are found to read and write, and only 0.37 were able to read; 99.63 being unable to do either on account of extreme youth. At five to ten years 85.51 could read and write, and 10.14 read only, leaving 24.35 who could not read. But this last only includes three years of the school-going period.

With the subsequent periods up to 40 years, figures under 'read only' and 'cannot' are reduced to small fractions as under:—

	Read and write.	Read only.	Cannot read.
10 to 15 years ...	99.45	0.22	0.33
15 to 20 years ...	99.63	0.08	0.29
20 to 25 years ...	99.56	0.08	0.36
25 to 30 years ...	99.43	0.13	0.44
30 to 35 years ...	99.35	0.16	0.49
35 to 40 years ...	99.12	0.24	0.64

At 40 to 45 years those who 'cannot read' are over 1 per cent., and the proportion goes on increasing regularly thus:—

	Read and write.	Read only.	Cannot read.
50 to 55 years ...	96.32	1.53	2.15
60 to 65 years ...	94.06	2.53	3.42
70 to 75 years ...	89.15	5.12	5.73
80 and upwards	86.14	6.12	7.74

The improved conditions of the young people are clearly shown above. At the last two periods given, which belong to advanced life, 10.85 per cent. and 13.86 per cent. are found to be either 'reading only' or quite illiterate.

The Opium Wars of China

As a result of the recommendations of the returned Commissioners, after consultation with Yuan-shi-kai and Tang-shao-yi, an edict was issued (says the London 'Daily Chronicle') ordering the abolition of the use of opium, both foreign and native, in China, within ten years.

As far back as the beginning of the last century the Chinese Government desired to rid the country of the curse of opium, the use of which had been steadily growing among the inhabitants. Before 1767 the import of opium had rarely exceeded 200 chests, but in that year it amounted to 1000. By 1800 it had increased so alarmingly that an Imperial edict was issued prohibiting the importation and threatening all Chinese who used it with condign punishment.

The traffic of opium had always been a smuggling one, and the edict did not prevent its increase. India was the great exporter of the drug, and it was because the revenues derived by India from its export to China were threatened that our first war with the latter country was entered into.

In 1835 the Chinese Emperor prohibited the trade. In the same year a quantity of the drug was burned by the Chinese at Canton. For three years trouble occurred connected with the traffic, until at length, in March, 1839, the Chinese Commissioner at Canton ordered the seizure of opium. The British residents were forbidden to leave, and the factories were surrounded. A few days afterward the British Commissioner at Canton required the British residents to surrender to him all their opium. By May over 40,000 chests were surrendered and the Commissioner and British residents left Canton, the Chinese afterward destroying the opium.

This was followed by the Emperor of China in 1840 interdicting all trade and intercourse with England forever. War was declared by Great Britain, and lasted until 1842, when a treaty of peace was signed, Hong-kong being ceded to the British. Nothing was said in the treaty of the opium traffic, which went on as before.

In 1856 we were again at war with China, the opium traffic being one of the principal reasons. In this undertaking France joined us. The war lasted until 1858, when peace was signed, one stipulation being 'a revision of the tariff.'

The third and last war that we embarked upon for the sake of opium was in 1860, France again being our ally. In this expedition the allies marched on Peking, and the summer palace of the Emperor was burned by the British. Peace was signed on October 24, 1860, and the opium traffic established.

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