

# Current Topics

## Religion First

The Irish Catholic voters, who recently in Manchester rightly placed the claims of religious education before those of nationality, prove that even still O'Connell's proud boast is true: 'The Irish people would not erect a splendid shrine even to liberty on the ruins of the temple'.

## God as an 'Extra'

Bishop Keane said many years ago that careful thinkers, both Catholic and Protestant, recognised this fact: that, to build up a thoroughly Christian generation, three agencies must co-operate—the Christian Church, the Christian home, and the Christian school. This is, in effect, the burden of an address delivered a few weeks ago by the Anglican Bishop of Auckland at the Albert Hall, London. For his cabled remarks on the prevalence of white paganism in New Zealand, most of our secular newspapers hosed him at long range with more or less vitriolic 'back-talk' at pretty high pressure. The mailed report of his speech, however, contains some observations in regard to the absence of religious training in the schools of young nations, to which we add a cordial Amen. He is reported to have 'appealed to his hearers, for the sake of God and for the sake of the Empire, to keep their schools religious.' 'No greater menace to the British Empire exists', said his Lordship, 'than that of bringing up children in secular schools where they are taught to treat God as an extra. If that belief is instilled in the children and grows up with them as adults, then God help the British Empire! For the sake of the Empire, for the sake of keeping the white man Christian, keep your religious teaching in your schools. Those from the Old Home when they go into far-distant lands are the men who, through God and the Church, should help the young nations to keep the white man from learning how to do without God.'

## Converts

The Oxford Movement flung wide a door that had long been opened only intermittently, and the many converts that passed through it made a well-beaten path to the portals of the Catholic Church. The movement still keeps on. Our American exchanges received by the last mail by Vancouver give the names of nineteen clergymen of the Protestant Episcopal Church that have, within the past few months, been received into the Catholic fold, or are under instruction to be received back into the unity of the faith. One of the neo-converts (Episcopalian Archdeacon Russell J. Wilbur, of the diocese of Fond du Lac) says that 'quite an exodus of the clergy of the Episcopal Church is going on at the present time'. Among the most recent converts in England is the Marquis of Queensberry, who was received into the Church a few weeks ago.

## The Game of Printers' Ink

'I feel', said Bishop McSherry (Port Elizabeth, South Africa), 'that a good paper is better than a good preacher, because it reaches more minds'. Germany (as opposed to France) is a standing example of the manner in which a well-supported and vigorous Catholic newspaper press unites our people, strengthens their faith, and defends the principles and policies for which it stands. 'There is no cause to-day so lowly', says the New York 'Freeman', 'as not to feel the need of printers' ink. Through it many a bad cause has triumphed, and through the lack of it' (as in France) 'many a worthy cause has failed'. A wise old priest once remarked to our New York contemporary: 'From the very beginning of the art of printing, the devil has always beaten us at the game of printers' ink. We are prone to follow in the old

ruts, and we nearly wait to be hit'. Those who conduct Catholic newspapers know all too well about this tendency of many of our people to wait until they're hit before they realise the necessity of the Church having a strong and wide-awake organ and plenty of printers' ink.

## A Great Catholic Scientist.

The Paris 'Univers' of May 5 announces the passing of the illustrious geologist, M. Lapparent. His death is a blow to the Catholic and the scientific world; for he belonged not to France alone, nor even to the Church alone, but to the world. Lapparent was one of the brilliant line of Christian scientists like Galileo, Newton, Tycho, Brahe, Kepler, Clavius, Ricci, Secchi, Halley, Bessel, Herschel, Huyghens, Piazzi, Leverrier, Frauenhofer, Ohm, Coulomb, Faraday, Roentgen, Clerk Maxwell, Lord Kelvin, Lyell, Agassiz, Romanes, Dana, Asa Gray, and (not to mention many others) the devout Pasteur, whose monument, by virtue of the directions of the will, is a Catholic chapel in which the Clean Oblation is offered for the repose of his soul and for the success of the work which he founded. Intellectually, Lapparent had no sympathy with those whose minds, ill-attuned to the cogent logic of all that is behind the phenomena of sense, stand,

'Unmoved amidst this mighty all,  
Deaf to the universal call'.

The deeper the depths of science which he sounded, the more clearly he saw there the creating power and the guiding Mind of the Great First Cause. He was (says the 'Univers') 'an eminent savant, a declared Catholic, a firm and brilliant defender of our religious beliefs and of our civil liberties'. He was scarcely out of his 'teens' when his brilliant promise as a geologist won him the distinction of being engaged with Elie de Beaumont as a collaborator in the drawing up of a geological map of France. In 1867 (he was then in his twenty-eighth year) he became secretary of the French Geological Society. In 1875 he renounced a bright and lucrative official career to become professor of geology and mineralogy in the newly founded Catholic University of Paris. It was in the halls of that institute of learning that the present writer first met M. Lapparent. His work there was of the first rank of scientific teaching and won for him high honors in the world of research. Numerous scientific works issued from his pen, and in them (especially in his noted works on geology) he finds everywhere the finger of the Creator and demonstrates what he describes as 'the admirable unity and simplicity of the plan of creation'. Despite the heavy demands of his professional work, this great Catholic scientist found time to interest himself actively in works of Catholic education and charity. Like his illustrious contemporary, Pasteur, he was a devout and faithful Catholic, and passed away strengthened by the grace of the last Sacraments.

## 'Los von Risca' in Australia

Dr. John England once said, with much truth, that 'a person needs no other qualification to write against the Roman Catholic religion than to be so disposed; and', added he, 'the abundance of the spirit becomes manifest in the vehemence of the phraseology. Little attention need be paid to facts, circumstances need not be examined, nor is it always necessary to have regard even to probability itself.' We were reminded of all this on perusing an article in a New Zealand contemporary, in which the abundance of one Rev. Dr. Hanson's spirit is amply manifested in the vehemence of some of his phraseology. Thus, the whole context makes it apparent that this fiery minister of the Lord rejoices in the spoliation and banishment of 'various Orders of monks and nuns' in France and the active persecution of religion there by rampant and

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