

shown the pauper-producing Mother Lands one of the cheapest and simplest methods discovered since the middle ages for dealing, with a reasonable degree of effectiveness, with one of the deepest and most trying problems of poverty—namely, the poverty that, in older and less favored countries, has left so many, in the evening of their days, in a state of living 'death without its quiet'. Ever since 1898, our legislation for old-age poverty has been the means of pile-driving new ideas on the subject into the minds of statesmen in English-speaking countries; it has indirectly led to similar provision being made, on similar lines, in Australia; and even in such a conservative country as England it has, undoubtedly, to a considerable degree influenced the decision of the British Ministry to offer to decent senile want an alternative other than the workhouse or the gaol. The principle of punishing poverty as a crime was introduced into England during the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century. That social crime against the poor is perpetrated to this hour. In 'The State and Pensions in Old Age', Booth shows that 'the bulk of pauperism later in life is due not to vice, or drunkenness, or unthrift, but to misfortunes which, under present conditions, must be counted unavoidable. The vicious and the drunken', adds he, 'usually pay their penalty by an early death, and we find a general agreement among those who know how the poor live, that the standard of decency and sobriety rises as age advances. But in hundreds of cases a thrifty or deserving past life does not appear to affect the ultimate result. With this evidence confronting us, we are necessarily led to revise some of the conclusions and to consider more carefully whether the conditions of life in old age can be mitigated by any action on the part of the community'.

Among European countries, Germany, France, Austria, Hungary, and Denmark have had for many years past forms of provision for old-age poverty. That of Denmark resembles the New Zealand system in so far as it dispenses with contributions; but its benefits are so paltry that they barely enable a Danish Darby or Joan to starve more or less respectably and, for the rest, to patch their grief, as best they may, with proverbs. England—with the most terrible poverty-problem of any modern European nation—is now in travail with an Old Age Pensions scheme on non-contributing lines. It was indeed high time for the British State to devise some humane and Christian way of relieving old-age indigence, instead of relegating it to that grave of decent poverty, the workhouse.

## Notes

### 'Musical Straws'

The world keeps moving. So does the Oxford Movement—in unexpected places, too. Through ritual many reach the truths that religious ceremonies express or symbolise. It is, of course, no surprise to see the 'Ave Maria' (Hail Mary) advertised as a vocal solo for last Sunday at the Anglican Pro-Cathedral, Dunedin. But our Philadelphia contemporary, the 'Catholic Standard,' prints, in its issue of April 25, 1908, the following curiously interesting list of 'Musical Straws' from Easter Programmes in Local Protestant Churches:—

'Fiftieth Baptist Church.—Gounod's St. Cecilia Mass, morning and evening.

'Wharton Street Memorial Methodist and St. Paul's Presbyterian Churches.—Union service, in which the "Gloria" from Mozart's Twelfth Mass was sung.

'Union Methodist Church.—"Inflamatus" from the "Stabat Mater."

'Calvary Methodist.—Mozart's Twelfth "Gloria."

'Bethany Presbyterian.—Haydn's "Gloria," march "Pontificale."

'Second Presbyterian.—"Te Deum," "Resurrexit."  
'Oxford Presbyterian.—"Tantum Ergo."  
'West Green Street Presbyterian.—"Gloria."  
'St. Peter's P. E., Germantown.—"Te Deum," "Kyrie," "Gloria," "Sanctus."  
'St. Luke's Reformed Episcopal.—"Te Deum," "Gloria in Excelsis," "Jubilate," "Gloria Tibi," "Sursum Corda," "Sanctus," "Gloria Patri," "Benedictio Anima Mea."  
'Park Congregational.—"Regina Coeli."

### More Italian Slanders

The man who makes a sheep of himself will find plenty of people willing to fleece him; and the churchman in lodge-ridden France or Italy that sits silent under libel will get it galore. The organised campaign of defamation of the Church and of Church persons and institutions by the anti-religious press in France and Italy has made the worm turn; and, as a result, the law-courts in those countries have been paving the path of the libeller with (figurative) thorns and tacks and broken glass. Here is the latest addition to the long list of legal victories won by the intended victims of the slanderous tongue and the venomous pen—we quote from the Rome correspondence of the Philadelphia 'Catholic Standard' of May 23, 1908: 'From Aversa, Italy, comes news of a trial that has excited a good deal of public attention here. It appears that some time ago several charges of a grave nature were spread broadcast by the Socialist paper "La Luce" against Monsignor Raffaele De Biase, secretary to the Bishop of that diocese. Monsignor De Biase lost no time in bringing the responsible parties to justice, with the result which all who understand the state of affairs in Italy heartily approve of. The tribunal condemned Gennaro Gentile, correspondent of "La Luce," to a period of imprisonment to last for one year and five months, and to pay in addition a fine of 1500 francs. After extenuating circumstances had been taken into account, the responsible director of the precious journal, "Francesco Mari," was sentenced to ten months' imprisonment, a fine of 833 francs, the payment of all the costs entailed during the trial and full reparation to be made to the injured party. The court acquitted Alceste Gandino, charged with being the author of the articles in question, as full proof of his guilt could not be obtained.'

This is one of the cases of Rome's 'abominations' which a rather notorious missionary agent has been 'exposing' in England (for the benefit of his mission funds) at so much per 'expose.' It is to be presumed that in this, as in the Fumagalli and Varazze cases, he will take no steps to make the truth reach those who listened to his echoes of the slanders of the atheistic press.

## DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The 'Free Press' states that the Rev. Father O'Neill, of Milton, has been compelled to relinquish his parish work for a time, and has left for Rockhampton, in Queensland, where he will undergo treatment for his throat. He expects to be absent from the Dominion for about six months.

The St. Patrick's-Young Men's Social and Literary Club, South Dunedin, held its usual weekly meeting on Monday evening, when a lecture on 'The Brain' was delivered by Dr. Hastings. The lecture proved to be exceptionally interesting. A vote of thanks was accorded Dr. Hastings for his very instructive lecture.

There was a very large attendance at the meeting of St. Joseph's Men's Club on Friday evening, when Dr. Hastings delivered a lecture on 'The Brain.' Dr. Hastings gave a comprehensive explanation of the various parts of the brain and their functions, enlivening his remarks from time to time with amusing instances of the effect of thought on the health of nervous persons. On the motion of Mr. R. Rossbotham, seconded by Rev. Father Corcoran, and supported by Mr. T. J. Hussey, who presided, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded Dr. Hastings.

The annual meeting of St. Joseph's Cathedral Choir was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Thursday evening of last week, the Rev. Father Corcoran presiding. The committee in their annual report expressed regret at the illness of the president (Rev. Father O'Reilly), and earnestly hoped that he would be speedily restored to health. The special thanks of the choir were due to Mr. Vallis (choirmaster), who had not spared

**J. TAIT, Monumental Sculptor**  
273 Cashel Street W., Christchurch.

{ Just over Bridge  
and opposite  
Drill Shed.

{ Manufacturer and Importer of Every Description of  
Headstones, Cross Monuments etc., in Granite, Marble  
and other stones.