

penalty—on a band of twenty-seven who have been terrorising the north of France and whose crimes were so base and so atrocious that the judge said they made one ashamed of his species. Under the régime of the atheists France is drinking the cup of humiliation to the bitterest dregs.

### More Tracts.

In our last issue we dealt with a clumsy and semi-illiterate forgery which was printed in Palmerston North and is being disseminated throughout New Zealand by tract-distributors, for the conversion of Papists and the glory of the Lord. This week we have received from the Hinds district (Canterbury) a copy of another tract which is being circulated in the district. It also comes from Palmerston North, and bears the imprint of 'E. Whitehead, printer, Palmerston N., N.Z.' It purports to be the story of a young Irish Catholic girl, and is a bad sample of the meaner form of story-slanders that are circulated among Catholics by persons who apparently believe that the vast majority of those who bear the Christian name consist of two classes—knaves and fools; and that the cause of the God of truth is served by the ungentle art of misrepresentation and calumny. Within the compass of four small pages of the stuff that the present tract is composed of, we find, for instance, the following direct or implied misstatements in regard to Catholic faith and practice: (1) That Catholics are 'victims of ignorance and superstition'; (2) that they are not 'allowed to read their Bibles'; (3) that if they chance to come across a Bible they must keep the matter a secret from the priest; (4) that the priest 'forbids you to read the Scriptures' from sordid motives of personal profit; (5) that (according to Catholic teaching) no Catholic goes straight to heaven; (6) that (according to Catholic teaching) the fate of Catholics in the next life is entirely determined in advance by the priest, and that they must put up with it and 'follow the way the priest marks out'; (7) that (in the Catholic idea) people who 'fall into the flames' of Purgatory may 'never come out again'; (8) that (according to 'the teaching of the priests') Christ suffered a mathematical 'half the punishment due to sin, and that the sinner has to endure the rest'—that is, the other fifty per cent. It seems almost incredible that such superstitions in regard to the faith and practice of Catholics should exist, even in the hinterlands of education, at the present day. The schoolmaster is very much abroad. But he evidently has made a very poor impression upon the minds of the people who are responsible for the manufacture and distribution of those tracts from Palmerston North.

So far as one can ascertain from a perusal of this second bit of 'pious fiction' from Palmerston North, the system which it substitutes for the alleged 'superstitions' of Rome is a rather curious travesty of Christianity. According to its theology, it would appear that the sinner (no distinction is expressed) has to endure no punishment at all (a very comforting reflection for the unrepentant burglar and assassin); that the Bible errs most grievously in insisting so strongly on the confession of sins; that the power of forgiving sins expressly left by Christ in His Church is a mockery, a delusion, and a snare; that religion is a matter of wheezy sentimentality; that it normally comes to the true believer with the sudden spasm of a colic or a seizure of apoplexy; that at some psychological moment a voice or a special revelation 'speaks to the heart,' the patient exclaims: 'I am saved!' the business is thereupon transacted, and a permanent and indefeasible title to eternal bliss is thereby signed, sealed, and delivered. This is just what is alleged to have happened to the dying Irish Catholic girl. After a good deal of mawkish (and, for Irish Catholics) ludicrously impossible dialogue, of cruel and unpardonable travesties of our faith and practice, and of good texts of Scripture grievously misunderstood and misapplied, the 'poor victim of ignorance and superstition' abandons the errors of Popery, suffers a sudden spasm of being 'saved,' dies melodramatically, and (as it were) to slow music. She is at once canonised by the omniscient tract-writer, and by him solemnly pronounced, *urbi et orbi*, to be 'for ever with the Lord.' We have often had occasion to be amazed (though not exactly edified) by the free and easy manner in which the small fry of tract-writers hob-nob with the Almighty, sit nonchalantly puffing cigarettes at His council-table and 'scoop' the inner secrets of His eternal Kingdom. It is really pro-di-gi-ous, as Dominie Sampson would say.

What is the object of distributing these tracts among Catholics? If this is done in the hopes of making converts, the tract-distributors might as well save their money and devote it to some other work—such as, for instance, learning the difficult

art of minding their own business, or trying to 'gather in' the stray lambs and sheep of their own flocks. Our 'intelligent' correspondent in the Hinds district fairly voices the Catholic opinion in regard to these semi-illiterate tracts by describing them as 'pestilent trash.' Is the object of this tract-distribution, on the other hand, the strengthening of the faith of Protestants? If so, to what purpose are Catholics pestered and insulted with the offensive rubbish? And in any case, is it not a desperate cause for which the truth is not sufficient, and which must fall back upon the ungentle and unchristian art of calumny? We are glad to believe that no respectable, educated, and God-fearing non-Catholic would be associated with this deplorable form of propaganda.

## DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The work of erecting the new Church of the Irish Martyrs, Cromwell, is now so far advanced that the building is ready for roofing.

The St. Patrick's Young Men's Social and Literary Club, South Dunedin, held its usual weekly meeting on Monday last, when Dr. Hastings delivered an instructive lecture on 'First aid to the injured' to a large audience. At the conclusion a vote of thanks was passed to Dr. Hastings for his interesting and instructive lecture.

The following candidates of St. Catherine's Dominican Convent, Invercargill, were successful at the June theory examinations, conducted by the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music:—Higher division—Harmony (full marks 150, distinction 130, pass 100): Gladys Searell, 140 (distinction); Pearl Evans, 114; Annie Baird, 103.

There was a good attendance at the usual weekly meeting of St. Joseph's Men's Club on Friday evening. The programme consisted of readings from favorite authors, to which Messrs. R. Rossbotham, T. Deehan, E. W. Spain, M. Rossbotham, and D. Corcoran contributed acceptable items. Songs were given by Messrs. H. Miles and G. Hayden, Mr. F. Heley acting as accompanist.

The St. Joseph's Harriers held their run on Saturday from the Mornington school. The pack, leaving the school, crossed the Kaikorai Valley, and, making a circular route over the surrounding hills, came down through Fraser's Gully, and along the road in front of the mill. The runners were generously entertained by Miss W. Power and other lady friends. Mr. A. Dunne expressed the club's appreciation of the kindness shown by the ladies.

A most enjoyable social gathering and eúchre tournament were held in St. Joseph's Hall on Monday evening under the auspices of the confraternity of the Children of Mary. The hall was crowded. The success of the gathering was due in no small measure to the indefatigable efforts of the committee of management. During the evening musical and other items were contributed by Mrs. Meade (whose singing was a feature of the entertainment), Misses Heffernan, Blandford, Messrs. Hussey and Flynn, the accompanists being Mrs. Woods and Miss C. Hughes. In the course of the evening light refreshments were handed round by a number of ladies.

## THE AMERICAN FLEET IN AUCKLAND

### AN IMPOSING SPECTACLE

The much-talked-of and long-expected fleet of United States battleships arrived in Auckland on Sunday morning. The weather was all that could be desired, and consequently the fleet of sixteen battleships as it entered the harbor presented a spectacle which has never previously been witnessed in any port of this Dominion. The citizens of Auckland had been making preparations for the reception of the fleet for several days, with the result that the northern capital, with its triumphal arches, flags, banners, and bunting, presented a most festive appearance. From an early hour crowds of citizens and visitors occupied points of vantage along the harbor so as to catch a first glimpse of the fleet. Contrary to general expectation, the first of the battleships entered the harbor about 8 o'clock. It was a glorious morning. An Auckland August day has rarely broken so beautifully as this one broke. The rain that had been feared held off, and instead there was a sky of glorious blue and a warm sun. It was a day of days in every sense. The great