

Dunne, a Wexford parish priest—once saw the thirsty village cobbler sneaking into the local public-house, and cautioned him that the Spirit of Evil was accompanying him thither. 'Taint worth his while,' replied the cobbler; 'I've only tuppence' (the price of a half-glass or minimum single dose of whisky). It would be well for all concerned if the treating habit were as opposed by the good sense of the public as, in the case just mentioned, it was unwelcome to the thirst of the bibulous village cobbler. The praiseworthy movement for the suppression of that foolish and vicious habit has taken root beyond the Atlantic, and will yet, we hope, exert its beneficent influence throughout this Dominion. The *Catholic Transcript* says in a recent issue:—The Wisconsin Association of German Catholic Benevolent Societies in session at Madison lately went on record as opposed to treating, and declaring against prohibition as contrary to the principles of personal liberty. Saloon treating, which our German friends so lustily condemn as pernicious and tending to promote drunkenness should have gone by the boards long ago. The man who, on pay-day invites the bar-room up for drinks feels he is doing it handsomely by his boon companions who, not to be out-distanced in liberality, follow suit. The week's earnings drop into the till of the saloon-keeper. Home and family are the sufferers. The Anti-Treating Society is out against the mistaken notion of good-fellowship beneath all this. The 'be good to your friends, step in and treat them' sentiment has nothing in common with the sense of independence we Americans boast of. The treating the genial Germans of Wisconsin now condemn they never saw in the Fatherland. Their reprobation of the custom in the land of their adoption does them credit.

Race Suicide

During last week a sitting of the Legislative Council was enlivened by a discussion on a motion tabled by the Hon. J. Barr. The motion prayed that the Government 'take into their immediate consideration the devising of some further practical measures whereby the heavy cost of living at present borne by the married workers as compared with the unmarried may be lessened, and that the position of those with families be especially considered, so that the rearing of their children may be looked forward to with less anxiety than at present, and parenthood thereby encouraged.'

In the course of a speech on the motion, the Attorney-General said: 'At the bottom of the question is that of population. No nation can rise to greatness that does not maintain a national birth-rate. It is hardly necessary to discuss the paramount importance of maintaining a national birth-rate. Mr. Barr wants the State to help those who carry out the duties of citizenship and encourage parenthood. All his suggestions aim at lessening the burden of those who accept the responsibilities of parenthood. Everyone is aware that since 1890 attempt after attempt has been made to lighten the lot of the worker. Two questions arise: (1) Is there need for the Government to encourage parenthood? and (2) Are the suggestions made likely to be effective?' Mr. Barr has pointed out that the average family in New Zealand has fallen from 5.14 to 3.15, a drop of over 15 per cent. He might have gone further and pointed out that the birth-rate, from being the highest in Australasia in 1880, had fallen to the lowest in 1900. New Zealand has an area greater than England and Scotland, and yet only possesses a population a little greater than the city of Glasgow. It can be shown that European countries have doubled their population in thirteen years. At its present rate of progress it would take forty-two years for New Zealand to double its population. In 1878 New Zealand had a normal birth-rate. The Registrar-General has informed me that, had the births continued at the rate then ruling, the population of New Zealand to-day would be 1,289,647 instead of 908,726 as it is. Thirty years ago there were 42 children to every 1,000 married women in New Zealand; now only 27.3—a drop of 14.7. In other words, had the birth-rate of 1878 continued, there would have been 15,000 more births in New Zealand last year than actually took place. The Attorney-General does not view the Hon. Mr. Barr's well-meant proposals with any hope, and he has his doubts that race-suicide 'can be touched by' such palliatives as have been suggested. The root of the trouble about the canary-and-bull-pup family is moral degeneracy. And it is no more to be cured by bribes to workers than cholera-morbus is to be cured by homeopathic doses of the multiplication-table.

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A MUCH-DISCUSSED BOOK

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

STATEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC POSITION

(By the Rev. James M. Liston, Holy Cross College, Mosgiel.)

II.

With the Catholic theory of Expiation before us, we may proceed to examine the book recently published by the Rev. Mr. Gibson Smith, of Wellington. But first let us state his position. He assumes the truth of what St. Paul says: 'Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures' (I. Cor., xv., 3). 'The specific object,' he writes, 'that Jesus had in view in giving Himself up to the death of the Cross was to secure for all who should believe in Him the remission of sins. Without that death there could be no divine forgiveness for sinful men' (p. 19). But clearly this is no more than a simple statement of the connection that exists between the death of Christ and the salvation of men; and we naturally look for a further connection that exists between the death of Christ and spiritual life for men. It is here that the Rev. Mr. Smith's difficulties commence, as the following passage will show:—

'When we turn to the Christian theologians (1) whose duty it is to unfold the Scriptural message, to clear away from it the excrescences that may have gathered round it . . . ; when we ask these theologians whether they have agreed upon a full and satisfying explanation of the problem, "How does Jesus by His death on the Cross secure spiritual life for all believers?" we do not find them able to answer with a clear and convincing affirmative. They are by no means agreed amongst themselves as to the explanation required. Many of them have rejected as being no longer valid, important elements of the explanation offered in bygone days, but none of them have been able, so far, to offer in their turn an explanation which has commended itself to the Christian people generally. Many have clung to the old explanation and striven to free it from all unwarranted accretions, but none have succeeded in so freeing it as to win for their revised version the acceptance of the mass of those who have once rejected it' (p. 15).

Naturally, 'these erroneous methods of describing the Saviour's work' give rise to doubts and perplexities with which 'the thoughtful Christian layman,' who believes in the Saviourhood of Christ, has to struggle (Preface).

'It is for such Christian people that this book is written. It is a book which takes for granted that the great Christian message is true which assumes that all believers do owe their spiritual life to the death of Jesus Christ, but which tries to show wherein the explanations given of this great truth in the past are seriously defective, and endeavors to set the problem in a clearer and fuller light—more accordant with the teaching of Scripture—more satisfying to the reason and conscience of man, and therefore more capable of commending the everlasting truth of the Cross, to earnest and humble truth-seekers of the twentieth century' (p. 18).

In the second chapter of his book, he makes out what he considers to be a *prima facie* case against the theory known as the 'Expiatory Theory,' or 'Theory of Vicarious Satisfaction.' It is here that he comes into conflict with Catholic teaching, and I shall now proceed to answer his criticism on this point.

After telling us that the 'Expiatory Theory' is the explanation which begins by affirming that Christ died 'to satisfy divine justice,' he goes on to remark (2):—

'Before the explanation can be regarded as complete it has to be shown (i.) that a satisfaction of divine justice was required as an *indispensable preliminary* to divine forgiveness. (ii.) It has further to be shown how Jesus in dying came under the sweep of divine justice. (iii.) It has then to be demonstrated how that which Jesus endured in His death so met the requirements of divine justice as to make the forgiveness of sins possible to believers' (p. 20).

Clearly, it is the first condition which is at the root of his difficulties. On p. 21, he further explains: 'Now when it has been said that Christ died to satisfy divine justice, it has usually been in the narrower sense of the word that the expression has been used'—i.e., in sense of retributive justice.

1 He is here, I presume, speaking of Protestant theologians, for, with the exception of the *magnum opus* of Saint Anselm, he shows no acquaintance with the writings of Catholic theologians.

2 Italics and numbering are mine.

The tea that gained a Gold Medal at the Paris Exhibition is 'Maharajah XXXX,' 2s. 'Hondai Lanka.'