

because in many standard works there are objectionable passages that therefore the law is not as alleged on the part of this prosecution—namely, that obscene works are the subject matter of indictment. I think the test of obscenity is whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to degrade and corrupt those whose minds are open to immoral influences, and as to how those into whose hands publications of this sort fall would regard this work. I am quite certain that it would suggest to the minds of the young of either sex thoughts of a most impure and libidinous character.' We hardly think that the spasmodic prosecutions conducted here and there will cleanse the shelves and counters of the booksellers or seriously, if at all, reduce the number of works of fiction of an erotic tendency that are being imported at a great rate into New Zealand. Where poison is being poured into the human body, the physician's first principle of treatment is to stop the supply, then to deal with that which has penetrated into the system. A similar course of action should be adopted in regard to the fiction of an erotic tendency which is poisoning the moral system of many of our young men and maidens. The Customs should be a barrier to cut off the further supply of the infecting medium. With a proper mandate, the police might then be trusted to deal as effectively as circumstances would permit with the unclean or suggestive works which have found a lodging within the Dominion, on the shelves of the booksellers. From the legal point of view, those that have got into private hands must continue to work their mischief without resort. There is, unfortunately, a tendency in some quarters to regard 'business' as a thing without relation to conscience or the moral law. The better class of booksellers will, no doubt, take to heart the lesson of the recent prosecutions, acquaint themselves, as far as they can, with the character of the publications which they expose for sale, and exercise a proper boycott against immoral works and those having an immoral tendency.

We commend to their imitation the example of the large Dublin bookselling and publishing firm of Messrs. Eason, who, some twelve or fifteen years ago, taught a London publishing house a lesson that might be taught to other publishing houses to-day with much benefit to youthful morals. In the *Review of Reviews*, Mr. Stead had described as 'The Book of the Month,' and given lengthy extracts from, a novel antagonistic to Christian marriage. The Messrs. Eason owned at the time, besides their Dublin business, the bookstalls at the Irish railway stations. Their supplies of the *Review of Reviews* were very large. But they promptly returned to Mr. Stead the whole of the big consignment containing the book review in question, and accompanied it with a letter in which they notified him that they declined to be the medium for the circulation of such attacks on Christian marriage. Mr. Stead remonstrated. 'But the only result of his remonstrance was this: Mr. Charles Eason wrote him a letter in which he declared that a fresh perusal of the article in the *Review of Reviews* served only to convince the firm more fully as to its pernicious influence. 'I do not doubt,' wrote Mr. Eason, 'that the topic of Free Love engages the attention of the corrupt Londoner. There are plenty of such persons who are only too glad to get the sanction of writers for the maintenance and practice of their evil thoughts, but the purest and best lives in all parts of the field of Christian philanthropy will mourn the publicity you have given to this evil book. It is not even improbable that the perusal . . . may determine the action of souls to their spiritual ruin.'

Such an example deserves the flattery of extended imitation.

Notes

Parasitic Diseases

'It is in man's power,' said Pasteur, 'to make parasitic diseases disappear from the face of the earth, if the doctrine of spontaneous generation is a chimera, as I am convinced it is.' Pasteur dynamited the theory of spontaneous generation, and his prophecy in regard to parasitic diseases is gradually working towards fulfilment. A Maori leper—a victim of 'the most ancient and most human' of all parasitic diseases—was last week sent from our Quail Island to his home in the North, after having been pronounced free from the dread malady. And from Victoria and New South Wales comes the welcome intelligence that owing to the sharp eye which the public health authorities keeps to sanitation, tuberculosis has considerably decreased in those two States. Leprosy was once pretty nearly as prevalent in Europe

as tubercular disease is now. But the children of to-day may live to see the time when the consumption scourge is as rare among white peoples as leprosy is at the present hour.

Catholic Advance in England

The growth of tolerant feeling towards Catholicism in England, the spread of Ritualism, and the advance made by the Church in Great Britain recently formed the subject of melancholy reflections by an Orange brother (Mr. Albert Bruntnell) in the Rev. Dill-Mackay's organ, the *Sydney Watchman*. Mr. Bruntnell recently visited England, and has come back to Australia with feelings turned black and blue by the things that he has seen. The *Melbourne Tribune* quotes (among others) the following pained remarks of Brother Bruntnell in the *Watchman*:— 'The growth of Ritualism in a large portion of the Church of England is very serious. The most serious part of all is that thousands of our own Protestant people are becoming inured to their surroundings, and it does not now impress them as it once did. The visitor, of course, notices it. A member of the Legislative Council of Victoria, who returned in the same steamer with me, informed me that he went to his little parish church in the town where he was born, and he did not recognise it as the same place. The burning of candles, the wearing of vestments, and the ritual made him feel very uncomfortable and much concerned. The townspeople seemed to regard it as quite the usual thing. When I visited the City of Lincoln the first time, a young man who belonged to the L.O.L., from Leichhardt, Sydney, told me that he had not been able to find an Orange Lodge to affiliate with in the whole of the city. The young man told me that he had been to the Church of England vicar and asked if there was such an institution, and he met with nothing but a scornful rebuke. I stayed in the South of England, where a Bible Christian minister declared to me that he did not know what the L.O.L. was, and asked me to explain.' Mr. Bruntnell concluded with this assurance: 'There can be no doubt but that Roman Catholicism is making a great advance in England.'

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The devotion of the Forty Hours' Adoration commences on Friday morning at St. Patrick's Basilica, South Dunedin.

A long-service and good-conduct medal has been awarded to Warden J. O'Reilly, of the Prisons Department, Dunedin.

On October 1 a very enjoyable social gathering was held in St. George's Hall, Milton, in aid of the convent schools. It was organised by the Children of Mary, who are to be congratulated on the admirable arrangements, as it was the most successful held in Milton during the year.

On Monday night, at St. Joseph's Hall, the Rev. Father Coffey, on behalf of the ladies attending the ambulance class, presented Dr. Hastings with a shaving set. Father Coffey, in making the presentation, thanked the lecturer for the admirable manner in which he conducted the class. Dr. Hastings, in reply, said it gave him great pleasure to be associated with the class, and thanked them very heartily for their presentation.

A grand bazaar and sale of work in aid of the Dominican Convent building fund is announced to take place on Friday and Saturday next (says the *Tuapeka Times*). The ladies of the congregation and their friends have been working hard during the past few months in preparation for the event, and they have got together a very large and varied assortment of articles of an ornamental and useful character. An attractive feature of the bazaar will be the original and varied character of the side-shows which are being arranged for.

On Sunday—the feast of the Holy Rosary—a Missa Cantata was celebrated at half-past 10 o'clock in St. Mary's Church, Milton, by the Rev. Father Farthing, and the choir, which had been considerably augmented, rendered Webbe's Mass in G, Miss Scanlan being organist. Father Farthing (says the local *Herald*) preached an impressive sermon on the Real Presence. At the conclusion of the Mass there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until the evening devotions, when the Rev. Father Morkane (Lawrence) preached an eloquent sermon. There were large congregations both morning and evening. The altar was beautifully decorated for the occasion.

The final meeting of St. Joseph's Men's Club for the present season, held on Friday evening, took the form of a smoke concert, which was largely attended. Songs were contributed by Messrs. Joseph Swanson, T. Hughes, E. Wilkie, O. Swanson,

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