

So should we, but vastly more, if our hands slackened in this noble cause of religious education. And therein all can aid, and the hand that does its due service, however small, contributes to that harmony of development which fits the child for his destined place in the kingdom of heaven.

A few years ago a prominent New York Protestant clergyman, the Rev. W. Montague Geer, D.D., warmly advocated the Catholic solution of the education difficulty in the course of a letter to the *Sun*. 'Here,' said he in this connection, 'is the opportunity for Protestants of all kinds to cry aloud: This would be playing into the hands of the Roman Catholics. It is what they have been demanding for many years past.' Granted; but would it not be playing into their hands nearly as much as we are now doing by allowing them a substantial monopoly of the whole field of Christian education, and of all the blessings which are sure to flow from the noble self-sacrifice they are making rather than wantonly expose their children to the inroads of unbelief? If the writer is not greatly mistaken, unless our affairs take a turn for the better in the sight of Him Whose parting commission to His Church was "Feed My lambs!" . . . for the rehabilitation of our institutions, we shall be flying, as frightened doves to the windows, to the Roman Catholic Church, which, in troublous days, will stand for law and order and for the highest morality.'

Notes

The Secular System: A Discussion

The attention of our readers is directed to pages 170-173, on which appear two further instalments of the series of articles on 'The Secular Phase of our Education System' which the editor of this paper is contributing to the *Otago Daily Times*. A misconception as to the late Bishop Moran's action in regard to the secularising of the public schools of this Dominion found expression in a recent issue of the *Otago Daily Times*. It will be dealt with at the proper time in the course of the series of articles referred to above.

Value of Confession

'During over sixty years,' said the late Lord Russell of Killowen in a letter to the *London Times*, 'I have made certainly more than 1700 confessions, to hundreds of different confessors, and in various countries, and I have never discovered herein any trace of wrong or harm. In addition to my belief in a priest's power of absolution, which as a Catholic, I hold, I have found that the duties incident to every confession of making a careful examination of my conscience, an express and vigorous mental act of sorrow and a firm resolution to avoid sin, most useful; and though these mental acts may be made without intending confession, the habit of confession certainly causes many of them, which would otherwise not be made. My experience of confession have, so far as man can judge, been those of my mother, sisters, wife, and daughters, and of many female friends, and I have always noticed in myself and others that devoutness and regular attendance at confession and at Holy Communion, which it ordinarily precedes, ebb and flow together.'

Coquelin

A brief cable message in last week's daily papers announced the passing of Coquelin the elder, the famous French actor and monologue entertainer. Coquelin left a deep impress upon the French theatrical life of his day, with which he was associated from 1861 till the past year. Our acquaintance with him was entirely connected with his triumphs as a monologue entertainer in the middle eighties. Coquelin was a practical Catholic, and one of the pieces which won him warm applause was a poem, written and recited by him, and entitled 'Si le bon Dieu n'existait pas' ('If the Good God did not exist'). In terms calculated to reach the heart of the humblest, he pictured the anarchy and chaos that society would fall into if it lost faith in the great Creator and Judge. One of his verse-endings finds a rather lurid moral in the 'apachism' that, for a good while past, has been giving anxious nights to the atheist rulers of the Third Republic: 'Ca contrarierait les gendarmes si le bon Dieu n'existait pas'—it would be rough on the police if there were no Good God.'

Converts

Some time ago we announced the conversion of a learned Protestant missionary who had spent a considerable

part of his life and work in the city of Mexico. A recent issue of the *S.H. Review* contains the following further information from the same city: 'At the San Lorenzo Church for English-speaking Catholics on November 26, the Apostolic Delegate to Mexico conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on a large class of candidates, amongst whom were twenty-six converts who have been received into the Catholic Church since the foundation of San Lorenzo parish four years ago.'

Explains Many Things

'Mr. J. E. C. Bodley, the English author, and Mr. J. N. Brodhead, the special correspondent in France of the *Sacred Heart Review*, have,' says the *Casket* (Antigonish), 'told us that the French Government keeps its grip on the people by giving some office or another, great or small—and Frenchmen are so frugal in their habits that scarcely any salary is too small to live on—to a member or a relative of almost every family in the country. Mr. Bodley once put the number of officials directly in the pay of the State at 800,000. Edward Drumont, in a recent number of the *Libre Parole*, gives the exact figures. On January 1, 1906, they were 703,566; on January 1, 1907, 870,589; on January 1, 1908, 913,192. And he sees no reason why the number should not exceed the million by January 1, 1909. And this with a decreasing population.'

Another Blunder

Some time ago we devoted an editorial article—which, by the way, has gone the rounds of the Catholic newspaper press in the English-speaking world—to the ludicrous blunders that occur at times in non-Catholic reporters' descriptions of the ecclesiastical functions of the Church. They are a joy-giving race, and their malapropisms are ever perpetrated with the utmost good faith and the kindest intention. The *Glasgow Observer* adds to our list another gem of purest ray serene. Our gifted contemporary takes it from one of Kensit's 'penny dreadfuls,' entitled *St. Mary's Convent, a Thrilling Tale of Nunnery Life*. It is down to the customary level of illiteracy of that class of Rawhead-and-Bloody-Bones fiction. But its very first page is relieved by a description of a monastery in Spain where, in the evening, 'the Mass for the dead was performed with all its accompanying ceremonial of incense and requiems.' 'Why spend threepence a week,' asks the *Observer*, 'on *Punch*, when a penny will purchase a "Kensit Special"?'

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The parish schools in the city and suburbs re-opened on Monday, and St. Dominic's College on Tuesday.

The Provincial Ecclesiastical Seminary, Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, re-opens on February 16, and students are requested to be promptly in attendance on that date.

The annual retreat of the clergy of the diocese will open at Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, on Monday evening. The annual Synod takes place on the following Friday morning.

The following students of Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, passed both the matriculation and Solicitors' General Knowledge examinations: Frank Delargy, Thomas Hanrahan, Daniel McLaughlin, and James Falconer.

The annual picnic of the children attending the Catholic schools of the city, suburbs, and Port Chalmers took place at Outram on Wednesday, where they were conveyed in a train consisting of seventeen carriages. They were accompanied by the clergy of the city and suburbs, the Christian Brothers, and a large number of parents and friends.

The following is a list of successful candidates from St. Dominic's College at the University and Civil Service examinations:—Helen McKenzie, by passing the University Junior Scholarship French examination, has completed her medical preliminary. Matriculation—Hannah Bourke; Civil Service Junior—Pass with credit, Hannah Bourke; pass, Madeline Pryce Helps, Johanna O'Leary, Hazel Tighe Umbers.

Whilst congratulating Mr. D. S. Columb on his promotion to the Wellington branch of the A.M.P. Society, we nevertheless regret that it necessitates his departure from Dunedin. Mr. Columb was an active member of St. Joseph's Club, and took a deep interest in its progress. As captain of the Hibernian Cadets he endeared himself to all, and during the past two years under his able captaincy the corps has reached a high state of efficiency. On Tuesday evening he was the recipient of a presentation and address at the hands of the members of the corps. We wish Mr. Columb every success in his new position, and hope that his sojourn in Wellington may be a very happy one.

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{ Just over Bridge and opposite Drill Shed, } Manufacturer and Importer of Every Description of Headstones, Cross Monuments etc., in Granite, Marble and other stones.