

other hand, how those who cannot in conscience accept it must either smother their conscientious convictions in return for the valued boon of such free instruction, or (as an alternative) pay a double and continuing tax or fine—one for the education which they cannot in conscience accept, the other for the education which they can.

But this injustice is not all. It has numerous ramifications, and time and again it sneaks along like a pick-pocket in a crowd and 'lifts' other coins from the unwilling pockets of Catholics. The greater wrongs are not necessarily those that create the greatest resentment and disgust. People are often more intimately afflicted and embittered by the little meannesses and the petty blisters of life than by its greater tribulations. And one can readily, in the circumstances, understand the feeling of strong indignation with which the Catholics of Oamaru have viewed the latest penalty imposed upon them for their conscientious and practical belief in Christ as the grand Model and Exemplar to keep ever before the minds of the little men and maids at school. Catholic rate-payers in the 'White City' contributed their proper quota towards the erection of the local Municipal Swimming Baths; they, too, contribute their due proportion towards the cost of an instructor, and towards the capitation grant allowed by the Education Department in respect of children trained in the useful art of swimming and of life-saving. We let an Oamaru contemporary tell the remainder of the tale:—

'Recently applications were made by the heads of the Catholic schools in Oamaru to the Borough Council for the use of the Municipal Swimming Baths on the same terms as those enjoyed by the public schools. On receipt of the applications, the Town Clerk wrote to the Otago Education Board asking if Catholic schools were eligible to receive the capitation grant of 2s 6d paid in respect of every child attending twenty swimming lessons in any given school year, and received a reply that pupils attending Catholic schools were not eligible to attend swimming classes in respect of which such capitation grant was paid. On receipt of the intimation the Town Clerk addressed the following letter to the Hon. the Minister for Education: "I am instructed by his Worship the Mayor to point out that the art of swimming and life-saving is an accomplishment altogether outside of the ordinary school work, which should be learned by all, and every facility afforded to those wishing to learn. The ability to save life from drowning is a matter of national importance, in which the question of creed can in no way enter, and I am instructed to request that you will take into serious consideration the question of making the capitation apply to all schools complying with the regulations now governing public schools, and so abolish the disability under which the Catholic schools of the Dominion now suffer in this respect. In Oamaru the baths and a competent instructor are provided by the Municipality, and what is now asked is, that the boys and girls should have an equal opportunity of qualifying for capitation, irrespective of what school they happen to attend. I am directed to express the hope that the above suggestion may commend itself to you and that you will see your way to grant to the Catholic scholars an opportunity of learning the art of swimming equal to that now enjoyed by the scholars at the schools maintained by the Government."

The letter just quoted is a credit to the mind and heart of all concerned in its writing. It is the very meanness and pettiness of the wrong here protested against that hurts most. Catholics ask in this matter, as in the matter of a capitation grant for the secular instruction imparted in their schools, an extension, to them, of the principle adopted by the Government in regard to the erring children of a larger growth committed to the Salvation Army's Home for Inebriates on Pakatoa Island.

## Notes

### Praise from the 'New' Theologian

The Rev. R. J. Campbell—he of the revamped old errors ycleped the 'new' theology—has somewhere in his heart a tender spot for the Ancient Faith. He took the wrappings off that spot in a recent sermon in the City Temple, London. 'I wish,' said he—'oh, how earnestly I wish—all members of all Churches, and of no Church, could come to think of human society as Christians once thought of the Church universal and undivided. I never go into a Catholic church without catching something of the spirit

of that older day. In the silence of the kneeling worshippers; in the lamp that burns before the High Altar; in the pictures that adorn the walls, showing the stages of the Cross on which the life of Christ was sacrificed, that He might draw all men unto Himself, I see symbols of the vaster unity that is yet to be achieved. There is a solemn stillness, a suggestion of heaven and unseen helpers, in that earthly temple made with hands. It is impossible for any man with reverence in his soul to stand in that silence without feeling that it is the speech of God.'

Well said, Brother Campbell!

### Canterbury's First Catholic Missionaries

With the current (April) issue the *New Brighton Monthly Magazine* (an Anglican Church organ from Canterbury) appears in an enlarged form, settles down into the easy dignity of a religious journal that has achieved, as well as deserved, success, and looks at the future with the confident eye with which the eagle is said to gaze at the sun. We compliment the *New Brighton Magazine* on the broadminded and fraternal charity with which one of its contributors refers to the early Catholic missionaries in Canterbury, in the course of an interesting and well-written article on the early days of the Churches in that province. 'It must not be supposed,' says the writer of the article, 'that clergy of the Church of England were the first to minister to the spiritual wants of the scattered settlers in the Middle Island of New Zealand. Long before they arrived, two priests of the Roman Catholic Church traversed the then dreary plains, visiting the whaling settlers, and amid toil, hardship, and frequent risk of life, pursued their missionary work almost without reward, except such as they received in the shape of the friendship, kind offices, and grateful blessings of those to whom they ministered. A stretch of country, roughly speaking of five hundred miles in length and two hundred miles in width, intersected by many dangerous rivers, divided by almost impassable mountain ranges whose eternally snow-capped peaks, beautiful to the eye, must have suggested death in fearful forms to the intrepid missionaries, was the scene of the faithful works of the Rev. Fathers Séon and Chataigner. On the bare plains of Canterbury, with its Hurunui, Rakaia, Ashburton, and Rangitata rivers, which even years afterwards, when settlement had progressed, were noted as the graves of hundreds of our settlers, across the dividing ranges of the Southern Alps; through the bleak and mountainous regions of Otago, which were almost unexplored till the excitement of the gold diggings caused hardy diggers to force their way in spite of bush, mountain torrent, or rugged rock; in the recesses of the West Coast of the Island, where even now the heavily and closely-timbered country is so difficult to penetrate that gold-miners even shirk any part that does not yield them a certainty of £6 a week profit; these two men labored, beloved alike by Catholic and Protestant, Church of England or Presbyterian, gentle or simple. In those early days they asked no questions as to a man or a woman's creed before rendering the help that was needed, or giving the kind word of encouragement to the sorely troubled.'

We lift our hat to the writer of that generous and well-merited tribute to the pioneer priests of Canterbury.

## DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The Right Rev. Mgr. Mackay, V.G., returned to Oamaru on Thursday of last week from a visit to Rotorua and Te Aroha. We understand that his health has much benefited by his visit to the thermal districts.

The Little Sisters of the Poor, Anderson's Bay, have been the recipients of a generous gift from Mr. J. Donlan, Musselburgh, who has presented them with a section of land, an acre in extent, adjoining their own land. This addition to the property of the Little Sisters of the Poor brings its area to close on five acres.

The South Dunedin Young Men's Club held its annual meeting in St. Patrick's schoolroom on Monday, March 29, when about 40 members attended. The secretary's report on the 1908 season, which was read and adopted, showed that the club had had a successful year. In all 24 meetings were held, taken up with social evenings, lectures, debates, question boxes, euchre parties, and mock banquets. The club's annual concert was held in the South Dunedin Town Hall on October 16, the entertainment being a complete success. The club's weekly meetings will begin shortly after Easter. The following officers were elected for the current year:—President, R.V. J. O'Malley; vice-presidents, Messrs. J. J. Marlow, J. McCurdie, W. Tynan, C. A. Shiel, M. McKay, and Rev.

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