

bers are pledged never to sleep over four hours, also to train their children to do with less sleep. The president of the society says: "Since limiting myself to four hours I have felt more active, energetic, and healthy than ever before. Millions of people are wasting their lives by unnecessary sleep. It is also a sure sign of laziness, and lazy people are not wanted in Chicago." The society has a large membership, and branches will be established in other parts of the country.'

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Excessive sleep is injurious at any age. Even in the new-born sprawling, mewling infant, consciousness requires exercise for its development. In old age the habit of prolonged sleep is accompanied by a marked enfeeblement of memory. Many of our readers will remember the case of Linnaeus, the great botanist, who, in his feeble and sleepy-headed old age, took down one of his own books out of a case, and, having forgotten all about his authorship of it, exclaimed as he devoured its pages: 'How fine this is! What would I not give to have written that!' Alfred the Great allowed himself eight hours abed. It is not so generally known that he anticipated the eight hours' movement by nearly a thousand years, his motto being, eight hours' labor, eight hours' recreation, eight hours' rest. Eight hours are said to be, on the average, a wise and safe allowance for adults to devote to 'drifting down the tides of sleep.' Grown persons in perfect health may, however, safely curtail this allowance. Dr. Binns, in his curious old book, *The Anatomy of Sleep*, gives a number of instances in which this curtailment was, for a time at least, successfully effected. 'Jeremy Taylor,' says he, 'allowed but three hours out of the twenty-four for sleep; Baxter, four; Wesley, six; Lord Coke and Sir William Jones, seven. Nine, however,' he adds, 'will frequently be found not too much for literary men.' We may supplement the list. Edison sometimes goes for two or three nights without sleep, when on the track of a new discovery or invention. His usual sleeping hours are only four or five out of the twenty-four. Four hours were also, for long years, the time devoted by Pope Leo XIII. to slumber. The great engineer Brunel worked twenty hours a day. During the siege of Gibraltar Sir George A. Elliott (afterwards Lord Heathfield) slept only four hours out of the twenty-four. Humboldt, when in the prime of life, managed to live and work on two hours sleep a day. In his old age he indulged himself with four. And he lived to the respectable age of 89 years. But it may be pointed out that such examples are 'more for admiration than imitation.'

For Young Men and Maidens.

Some of our young men and maidens are at a loss to understand the attitude of the Church in regard to mixed marriages. Briefly, they are forbidden because (1) the sanctity of marriage requires that the contracting parties should both be, by faith and other dispositions of the soul, in a state to receive the grace of the sacrament, and (2) because of the domestic discord that so frequently follows such unions, and the danger of divorce, or of the Catholic party or of the children becoming perverts or lapsing into indifference or infidelity.

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In Germany a regular census of changes of religion is kept. The lesson that may be learned from it is this: that Catholicism is the greatest loser and infidelity the greatest gainer by mixed marriages. It has been ascertained that such unions have produced similar results in the United States. Here is a paragraph from an editorial article in a recent issue of the *New York Freeman's Journal* which would furnish a text for a useful sermon next Sunday and give a warning to those of our matrimonially inclined young men and women who are casting sheep's eyes over the picket fences of the various denominations: 'A recent census taken by agents of the Young Men's Christian Association, acting in co-operation with the Federal Census Bureau, shows the evil effects of mixed marriages viewed from a Catholic standpoint. Representative cities, towns, and country districts were selected in different parts of the United States, and in individual cities representative wards were selected and average blocks in these wards were visited in a house-to-house canvass. A number of questions were framed and a blank containing them was given to each of the young men between the ages of 16 and 35 who were questioned. The net result is summarised in *Association Men*, an organ of the Young Men's Christian Association. Here is an extract from the summary which speaks for itself:

"In families where the father and mother belong to the same church, 78 per cent. of the young men are church members. In families where the father and mother are church members, but do not belong to the same church, only 55 per cent. of the young men are church members. In families where but one of the parents is a church member, only 50 per cent. of the young men are members of churches. Where the father and mother are both Catholics, only 8

per cent. of the young men are not church members. Where the father and mother are both Protestants, 32 per cent. of the young men are not church members. Where one of the parents is a Catholic and the other a Protestant, 66 per cent. of the young men do not belong to a church. Where the parents are members of Protestant churches, but do not belong to the same church, 50 per cent. of the young men of these families are not church members. Where one of the parents is a Catholic, 44 per cent. of the young men do not belong to church. Where one of the parents is a Protestant, 51 per cent. do not belong to church."

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These figures tell a plain, unvarnished tale and convey a lesson which he that runs may read. 'Go over these figures,' says our valued *New York contemporary*, 'and you will appreciate the reasons why the Church does not approve of mixed marriages. Take note that where father and mother are Catholics only 8 per cent. of the sons do not attend church. Where one of the parents is a Catholic and the other is a Protestant 66 per cent. do not attend church.'

In Lighter Vein

(By 'QUIP.')

*. Correspondence, newspaper cuttings, etc., intended for this department should be addressed 'QUIP,' N.Z. TABLET Office, Dunedin, and should reach this office on or before Monday morning.

'THERE's nothing like a little judicious levity.'

R. L. STEVENSON.

The 'Stuffing' Business.

Mr. Hensclaw, or Shorthorn, or whatever is the name of the gentleman who discovered that ten out of every nine men employed by the Government are 'Papists,' is still having the 'stuffing' knocked out of him by the *TABLET*. But he doesn't care. He has had his fling at Popery, and it has done him more good than a lifetime at Rotorua. An American gentleman who rejoices in the classic appellation of Weary Waggles once enquired of a brother-aristocrat named Ragson Tatters how he (Tatters) would like to sit on a throne. Ragson replied that 'any'ting in the sittin' line'd suit' him. Anything in the no-Popery line suits our vociferous yellow friend. And you don't catch him fooling away his time looking for proofs. He simply howls out his false statement—and stops. Stopping is his strong point. The more he stops the better he looks. And, as J. M. Bailey remarked of Walt Whitman, if he would only stop altogether the public would vote him a statue—at the expense of his friends of the Orange Lodge.

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Strange to say, the Church of Rome is still in existence. So is the public service, although, according to Mr. Cornclaw's statement, it must, by sheer dint of 'stuffing,' have a liver like that of a Strassburg goose. It is really marvellous that the lodges in New Zealand, with their pea-blowers and their swords made out of pieces of flax, have been just as unsuccessful as Emperors with their big armies against 'Rome.' There is a spook at present 'on the loose' about Christchurch. It must be all that is left of Mr. Haudeaw's great scheme. Like the amorous goldfish in the Geisha,

'Its fate, so bit-bit-bitter,

Is a story fit-fit-fitter

For a sad little sigh, and a tear in the eye.

Than a thoughtless tit-tit-titter.'

As a token of my small sympathy I herewith shed two sob's, and close this paragraph with my voice half-paralysed and full of tears.

Model Letters.

Letter writing is a very beautiful accomplishment, and it is as rare as it is beautiful. The *Polite Letter-writer* was compiled for the purpose of giving red-blooded plebeians some idea of the stately style of the Vere de Veres. In order to improve the minds of readers of this column, I shall give once in a while examples of what perfect letters should be. I shall endeavor to make them suitable to the surroundings of people in every walk of life, and I shall choose only the most classical.

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Unfortunately the unpleasant duty very often devolves upon a man of writing for the doctor. Here is an example of what such a letter should be. It is said to have been written a short time ago to a Christchurch medico: 'Dear Doctor,—My wife's mother is at death's door. Please come at once and see if you can't pull her through.' Or perhaps you are the mother of a family, and have to explain the absence, through sickness, of one of your boys from