

The churches on Easter Sunday were taxed to their utmost capacity. At St. Patrick's in the morning the Bishop preached on the feast of the day. The Rev. Father Patterson was celebrant of High Mass, Father Purton being deacon and Father Buckley sub-deacon. Mercadante's Mass in B flat was sung in an efficient manner by the choir, under the conductorship of Mr P. F. Hiscocks. In the evening there were Pontifical Vespers and a sermon on the Resurrection by the Rev. Father Benedict, O.P. Rev. Dr. Egan celebrated Mass at the Sacred Heart Church, and the choir sang Haydn's 'Second Mass' in a finished manner.

The Vatican.

THE Rome correspondent of the *Chicago Record*, a secular newspaper, in the course of an interesting sketch of the Papal Secretary of State, gives the following particulars of the Vatican:—Cardinal Rampolla, next to the Holy Father, the greatest man in the Catholic Church to-day, lives at the top of the Vatican, and his visitors are required to climb 463 marble stairs. There are no elevators in that venerable building, although it has been fitted with electric lights at a cost of 45,000 dols. It looks queer to have a cluster of electric bulbs hanging over an altar, but you can see this anomaly at the head-quarters of the Catholic Church. The Pope, whose apartments are immediately below those of Cardinal Rampolla, is carried up and down stairs in a sedan chair by four of his guards, who handle him as tenderly as if he were an infant. Everybody else has to walk, and it is a long hard journey. When I suggested to an eminent prelate that the climb to the top of the Vatican ought to be counted as a penance, he smiled and said that he knew of a good many people who would be glad to get rid of their sins in that way.

The Vatican is not a single building, but an accumulation of buildings stretching over an area of thirteen and one-half acres. They were begun about the year 300, and have grown gradually. The outside length of the wall is 1151 feet in one direction and 787 feet in the other, but they are joined by lower walls, which enclose a large garden and park that contains two or three villas in which his Holiness takes refuge during the heat of the summer. The Pontiff drives in the park daily when the weather will permit, and with its winding walks and roads it is large enough to give him a variety of scenery, as well as plenty of fresh air and exercise. Since 1870 the Pope has been practically a prisoner within the walls of his palace, surrounded by Cardinals and the other functionaries of the Church inviolable and inviolate, for the Italian Parliament, when it deprived him of temporal authority extended to his Holiness what is known in diplomatic circles as the doctrine of 'extra-territoriality' over the building and the park. In other words, whatever occurs within its limits is under the jurisdiction of the Pope alone.

Civil authority does not extend beyond the portals of the Vatican, and that limited area, perhaps thirty acres in all, is still under the temporal as well as the ecclesiastical authority of the Pontiff. No civil officer can enter the Vatican to make an arrest or to serve a legal paper or to exercise any other form of civil authority. Its precincts are inviolate, and no one, whatever his creed, can look upon that monstrous building, inhabited for so many centuries by the venerable men who have exercised so great an influence and borne so important a part in the history of the world without the deepest of interest. Eight grand staircases and 200 smaller ones lead to the upper apartments of the building, the highest of the great conglomeration being seven storeys from the ground. There are 20 courts and 17 chapels for various dignitaries the chief of which is the Sistine Chapel, where the Pope offers Mass on special occasions, and which is also famous for the frescoes of Michael Angelo, and his greatest painting representing 'The Last Judgment.' This picture is in very bad condition, owing to the dampness and the cracking of the walls, so that some parts of it can no longer be distinguished. There are 1000 halls and corridors in the Vatican and 11,000 rooms, counting everything and quarters for the Swiss Guards, the stables for the horses, the store houses for the gardeners' tools, the mosaic factory, and other workshops, and it is said that an average of 2200 people are employed under the roof, most of them being lodged there.

Portraits of Our Lord.

In 1702 a fine brass medal bearing a portrait of Christ was discovered in Anglesea, Wales. It is fully authenticated by a Hebrew inscription upon the reverse side, which declares the portrait to be that of 'the Prophet Jesus.' The workmanship (says the *Arc Maria*) is of the first century, and the features bear an extraordinary likeness to those cut upon the emerald by the command of the Emperor Tiberius.

This last-named portrait is, with the exception of the so-called 'napkin portrait' of St. Veronica, as well known as any in existence, and has the merit of extreme antiquity as well as the cachet of many careful critics. It was pre-served in the treasury of Constantinople, but fell into the hands of the Turks; and about 1483 was given by the Sultan to Pope Innocent VIII. as a ransom for the Turkish monarch's brother.

THE Premier, who leaves for England in a few days, will travel via South Africa. He has been invited to be the guest of the citizens of Capetown during his stay there.

The Primary Duty of Parents.

IN a recent issue the *Arc Maria* had the following remarks on a subject which is of vital importance to Catholic parents in this Colony:—There can be no question that one of the greatest responsibilities assumed by Catholics who enter the holy state of Matrimony is the religious training of the children with whom it may please Almighty God to bless them. Unfortunately, too, there is little doubt the responsibility is one which many incur thoughtlessly, and which in consequence they are inclined to minimise, if not practically to shirk altogether.

True, when the dawn of reason first breaks upon the childish mind, Catholic mothers, as a rule, are faithful in sowing the seeds of elementary religious truths in the hearts of their little ones. The children are taught to make the sign of the cross, to recite short prayers; to speak and think with reverence of God the Father, our Divine Lord, and the Blessed Virgin; to distinguish the broad lines of right and wrong. Once the child has grown old enough to be sent to school, however, too many parents apparently think that the responsibility of his religious education is shifted from their shoulders to those of his teachers or of the parish priest. This is a radical mistake. Home-training in

The Theory and Practice of Christian Doctrine

can not be superseded by the instruction of even the most conscientious teachers or even the most zealous priests. The lesson imparted by a pious and loving mother makes a more lasting and more vivid impression than can be given by any other human agency whatever.

Even where the boys and girls attend parochial schools, in which the catechism forms one of the regular text books, the fire-side instruction cannot safely be dispensed with. Much less can it be neglected in the case of the thousands of our Catholic children who perforce attend the public schools in which religion is tabooed. To imagine that the religious training of such children is sufficiently provided for by their attendance at the weekly Sunday-school is to cherish a fallacy that is patently absurd. It is questionable whether the Sunday-school session can ever do the negative work of quite neutralising the baneful influence of the non-Catholic atmosphere to which the children are habitually exposed; it certainly can not do much more.

The only parents who may hope to have rid themselves, in a very large measure, of their personal responsibility for the effective religious training of their sons and daughters, are they who have confided the education of those sons and daughters to Catholic colleges and convents. The authorities of such institutions really assume parental obligations towards those committed to their charge, and hence relieve the fathers and mothers to a great extent of one of the most essential duties to their offspring. The overwhelming majority of Catholics in this country, however, are precluded by circumstances from sending their children to college or convent, to their personal accountability for the Catholic training of those children can not be shirked. Children who frequent the public schools manifestly

Need Peculiar Attention.

The supernatural being totally excluded from their minds during school-hours, it becomes imperative that, at home, God and the soul, grace and prayer, the Holy Sacrifice and the sacraments, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, penance and good works, sin and death and judgment, should be the subjects of frequent conversation. Family prayer, the Rosary in common, for instance, can in such cases scarcely be considered a negligible act; and no pains should be spared in forming these children to other devotional practices. It is elementary that their parents are strictly bound in conscience to see that they both attend the Sunday-school with exemplary regularity and prepare the Sunday-school lesson with due diligence. To secure either this adequate preparation or this regular attendance will commonly entail the exercise of the paternal authority; and Catholic fathers who

Neglect to Enforce their Authority

on such points are sinfully imprudent. Growing boys who have made their First Communion are especially in need in this matter of a firmness of discipline which comes with best grace, and probably too with best effect, from the head of the family. Too often, unfortunately, the head of the family finds himself sadly handicapped in such conjunctures by his own indifference in religious matters. How many Catholic children there are whose observation of home life has probably engendered some such resolve as was formed by the precocious little fellow who inquired: 'Mother, when shall I be old enough to leave off saying my prayers?' The mother stared in amazement. 'Why, never, of course, Johnnie.' 'Oh,' said Johnnie, coolly, 'when I'm grown up I don't mean to say any prayers! Father never does!' God help all such fathers! They are laying up for themselves unfailing stores of future bitterness.

At best, the Catholic child who attends a godless school is sadly handicapped in the matter of attaining a genuinely useful education; and his parents, not less but even more than his pastor, are obliged to supply the lamentable deficiency of his schoolroom training. They unquestionably owe to the youthful soul whose charge God has confided to their care, not only the example of an upright and devout Catholic life, but the Christian instruction without which his eternal salvation will surely be compromised.

It is reported that the Government is likely to purchase the Mounta estate, near Foxton, for close settlement. The *Marlborough Times* states that the negotiations between the Government and the owners of the Flaxbourne estate have come to a conclusion, and a settlement has been arrived at which will mean the early acquisition of the property by the State for a similar purpose.