

MARRIAGE.

THOMSON—COLEHAN—On June 10, at St. Brigid's Church, Waitati, by the Rev. Father McGrath, William Thomson, Dunedin, to Noney, fourth daughter of John Colehan, Waitati.



*'To promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.'*

LEO XIII. to the N.Z. TABLET.

THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 1903.

COUNTING THE COST



HE world is a great university, and nations, like individuals, are ever at school. But some of them are dullards and some too intent upon chasing political rainbows to make much progress in true knowledge. The lessons of history are, for instance, plainly lost upon lodge-ridden France, whose stunted politicians are in the full fury of a war upon the Church and upon some of the natural rights of man that were respected even amidst the whirl and storm of the great Revolution—which the poet SAMUEL ROGERS likened to the irruption of the Goths. The suppression of the monastic and teaching Orders is no new expedient in history. France's 'cross-Channel neighbor, England, tried it, and with disastrous results, in the reigns of HENRY VIII. and the Sixth EDWARD. HENRY succeeded to a well-filled national treasury, piled up high, by the thrifty management of his careful father, on the contributions of the prosperous and contented England of the day. But the accumulated funds flowed from his hands in monumental extravagance at home and in foolish expeditions abroad in fruitless quest of military fame.

'Rather than miss any part of his will,' said his Minister, WOLSEY, of him, 'he wil endanger one-half of his kingdom.' The wasteful man of many wives endangered and impoverished it all. He ground the faces of the people with taxation to minister to his vanity and ostentation. When this source of revenue was exhausted—after his rupture with Rome—he devoured the patrimony of the poor—3219 religious houses, with the considerable annual income, for the time, of £161,000. Practically the whole of that great capital and revenue was (says a Protestant writer) 'granted to courtiers and favorites, sold at nominal prices, or gambled away by the king and his satellites.' In four years the gains from the plundered monasteries and the stripped and ruined shrines had melted from HENRY's hands and he was again in financial straits. He next debased the currency and produced something like a famine in the land. One other method of plundering the industrial classes still lay open to him—the confiscation of the lands of the guilds or of trades-unions of the middle ages. He did not live to see this through, but it was ruthlessly carried out in the reign of his puny son and successor, EDWARD VI. The monasteries and the guilds had stood between the poor and want. The confiscation of their property was a fatal blow to the English farmer, laborer, and artisan. 'HENRY VIII.'s reign,' says the Protestant writer GIBBINS, 'witnessed the rise of pauperism in a country which had been a few years previously in a state of considerable material comfort.' The erstwhile independent English laborer tasted the bitterness of legal and actual slavery; and the curse of pauperism is the evil legacy which the great pilage of HENRY VIII. and EDWARD VI. has left to the people of Great Britain to this day.

Italy has, within less than forty years, run a similar course. And France will probably be no exception to what

we may regard as the general experience, that a measure of national calamity follows an act of national robbery of the poor. It has been estimated that the suppression and plunder of the religious Orders in France would bring into the coffers of the State some 30,000,000 francs (about £1,200,000) a year. But it would throw upon the Government an annual expenditure of some 270,000,000 francs (about £10,800,000) for allowances to aged and infirm 'suppressed' monks and nuns, for the support of 110,000 old and sick poor, 60,000 orphans, 12,000 penitent women, and 68,000 lunatics, blind, cripples, and deaf-and-dumb who have, up to the present, been maintained in comfort by the unrewarded toil and loving care of the religious Orders and the free gifts of the charitable public of France. In addition to this, the country (as stated in our issue of last week) will be put to the expense of £1,080,040 for the erection 2,257 new schools and £328,128 a year for the stipends of the new teachers. There is a contagion in looting as well as in small-pox. And the principle of plundering property held by monks and nuns as trustees for the poor may be very easily extended to the garnered hoards of private citizens. Writing on this subject, when the Associations Bill was before the French Parliament, the late M. DE BLOWITZ expressed, in the columns of the London 'Times,' the fear that, in this respect, the French people may ultimately prove more logical than their rulers. 'It is a most dangerous precedent,' said he. 'Under this confiscation clause there is no logical reason whatever for not confiscating the superfluous wealth of men who use it for their selfish advantage to the deprivation of the less fortunate.' French legislators have evidently not counted the cost of this fierce war of repression and spoliation against religion. The country which they misrule so grievously may, like Italy and England, soon know the full meaning of the word pauperism. We know that individual nations may fall away from the faith. But the Church herself is indestructible. And the saying attributed to the persecutor DIOCLETIAN may be aptly applied to his puny modern counterpart, M. COMBES: 'The more I seek to blot out the name of CHRIST, the more legible it becomes.'

Notes

A Brace of Silly Tales

It must be the silly season up Marlborough way. At any rate the local 'Express' publishes—apparently in perfect solemnity and seriousness—two phenomenally stupid tales that are more fit for the padded cell than for the columns of a sane newspaper. Briefly, they run as follows. Two wealthy French ladies died and left legacies, one of over £500,000, and the other over £3,000,000. Some unnamed priests and nuns, and an anonymous archbishop got possession of this vast wealth some years ago without the smallest right or title to it and without any legal formality whatever. And all the time there were dozens of people—'six or seven families' in the case of the larger legacy—legally entitled to this colossal wealth and vainly doing all in their power to lay hands upon it! And thus in the France of to-day! As to the writer of this madman's tale: it is about high time that his friends should look after him. The 'Marlborough Express' must have a very contemptuous estimate of the sanity of its readers.

Suppressio Veri

A reverend gentleman described as 'the organising secretary of the Anglican Mission in New Guinea' is at present in Christchurch. Interviewed by a representative of the 'Press' he is reported to have 'explained that there are three missions at work among the natives of British New Guinea—the Congregational, the Wesleyan, and the Anglican.' There are in reality four. The 'Statesman's Year Book' names them all in detail. The reverend organising secretary probably had his own reasons for suppressing all reference to the well established and successful mission conducted in British New Guinea by the Sacred Heart Fathers of Issoudun. British New Guinea and some of the neighboring islands have, in fact, been a separate Vicariate-Apostolic since May-day, 1889. In 1897—the latest year for which we have figures in our possession—there were in the Vicariate 2000 native converts, 16 churches, 13 elementary schools, one Bishop (Dr. Navarre, residing on Thursday

RIDE "ANGLO SPECIAL" CYCLES.