

good and great that bore the cross aloft in their day and have gone to their rest, with

'Life's race well run,
Life's work well done,
Life's victory won.'

The proposed Catholic reader would contain suitable material under both of these heads. The suggestion that a certain American publication—however transcendent its merits—would serve the purpose of our New Zealand schools, must, in our humble judgment, be ruled out. We see no reason why we should be carried away by the voluminous and elaborate panegyric with which we have been favored by one of our correspondents. To begin with, the proposal now under discussion has to do, purely and simply, with a suggested literary reader for our primary schools. In the lengthy dissertation which we publish elsewhere, Father O'Brien still leaves us in complete doubt on the essential point as to whether the publication referred to is really a literary reader, in the ordinary and accepted sense of the term, or merely a book of religious instruction, which may, incidentally and on occasion, be advantageously used as a reader. On the whole, we rather incline to the conclusion that the publication is of the latter character. Boiled down, Father O'Brien's glowing eulogy amounts to this: that the Washington series has been carefully compiled to suit the growing development of the child, and that, of its kind, it is an altogether excellent publication. Whatever is good in it, either as to matter or method, could be taken advantage of in our New Zealand publication. But we have our own history, religious and secular, to give to our children; and for this no outside publication will serve.

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The work of preparing a New Zealand series of readers presents absolutely no difficulty whatever. Should our authorities deem the matter worthy of serious consideration, a small committee of experts might be charged with the duty, first, of obtaining an estimate as to probable cost, and, if that should prove satisfactory, of proceeding with the compilation. Suggestions would naturally be received from the heads of staff of the Catholic schools; and a prospectus of the provisional list of contents might be again submitted to Catholic principals for final consideration. Apart from the ordinary literary classics by Irish, English, and American authors, there is an almost boundless wealth of material, of especial interest to New Zealand children, available to the compilers. The story of Thomas Poynton, the first Catholic settler in the land of the moa—of his efforts to have a priest sent to New Zealand; of his brave and pious Wexford wife, who took her first two children on a journey of over two thousand weary miles of ocean to be baptised at Sydney; and of the scene in Poynton's house when Gaulish Celt and Irish Celt inaugurated the labors which soon made this remote corner of the earth blossom into a land of promise for the faith once delivered to the saints. The rise of the Church in Australia—from that historic Mass on May 15, 1803, when the chalice was of tin, the work of a convict; when the vestments were, like Joseph's coat, of many colors, being made of parti-hued old damask curtains, sacrificed for the occasion; and when the whole surroundings bespoke the poverty of Bethlehem and the desolation of Calvary—to the landing of our Apostolic Delegate, escorted by a flotilla of steamers, and accompanied by the blowing of whistles, the music of bands, and every sign of triumph and rejoicing. Then our missions to the Maoris, with the heroism and hairbreadth escapes of the early missionaries, culminating in the picturesque and romantic scenes described in recent visitations by Bishop Cleary. The Maori Christian of to-day, as eloquently portrayed by Bishop Cleary and as charmingly depicted in an article by a New Zealand Catholic young lady which appeared in a recent issue of the *Catholic World*, might well form the subject of further lessons. Then we have our missions in the Pacific, as simply and admirably described by Bishop Grimes in his *Australian Catholic Truth*

Society's pamphlet. Then there is the story of our schools and colleges—those noble monuments of Catholic educational zeal. The history of the Church in these new lands is in every way a glorious one, exemplifying, as it does, a blessing of fruitfulness unparalleled since the early ages of the Apostles—and our Catholic children are growing up in almost total ignorance of the story. It is to our discredit and our shame that they are deprived—as they have been—of their share in this rich heritage.

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Of the financial aspect of the proposal, it is not necessary at this stage to speak in any detail. We can only offer an opinion, not altogether without some knowledge of the facts; and we are convinced that in time not only would the initial cost be defrayed but the publications would afford a steady and substantial source of profit. We have only to add that in writing as we have done we have had no thought of checking discussion on the subject, or of interposing any sort of decision of the point at issue between our correspondents. We have not written in any official or representative capacity: all that we have said has been merely the expression of a purely personal and individual opinion. But that opinion, for whatever it is worth, is strong and emphatic; and we earnestly hope that the deputation which is to wait upon the authorities will proceed and prosper with its project.

Notes

Held Over

Owing to extreme pressure on our space, a quantity of late correspondence is unavoidably held over.

Some Hindenburg Stories

On the German side, Von Hindenburg is, beyond doubt, the greatest general developed by the war. They are beginning to tell stories about him, which is generally the sign that a man is achieving some sort of greatness. Here is one: He was to have a new general as second in command, and was told to select whatever man he wanted. 'I'll take Joffre,' he is said to have replied, thus indicating his high appreciation of the French commander's ability. Hindenburg is described as the sort of commander that goes to bed with a checker board and dreams strategy all night. They tell of him that during the manoeuvres in Posen, two years ago, he violated precedent and beat the forces commanded by the Kaiser. Then he wrote the Kaiser a letter, telling him that if he had been opposed to Russians in that particular campaign, the German Army would have been annihilated. Not long ago a German cabinet officer wanted to interview him, but Hindenburg was too busy to wait, and asked him to come along in his military automobile. They soon came into the zone of fire, and when a bullet struck the side of the car, the cabinet officer wanted to get out, but Hindenburg told him he was too busy to stop. After the cabinet officer got back to Berlin, he suggested that his daring exploit entitled him to the Iron Cross, and they wrote Hindenburg for his approval. He replied: 'I do not recommend the Iron Cross for a man who is courageous under compulsion.'

The Press and the Pastoral

Most of our dailies have quoted extensively, and with eulogistic comments, from the great Pastoral of Cardinal Mercier, published in our last week's issue; and at least one city daily—the *Dominion*—has found space to publish the deliverance in full. Our judgment upon the document—that it was the most moving and inspiring utterance yet published on the subject of the war—has been fully endorsed by the secular press. Under the heading 'A Wonderful Pastoral Letter,' a Wellington *Evening Post* editorial begins: 'The Pastoral Letter which was issued by Cardinal Mercier from his palace at Malines is one of the most moving documents that we ever read. The full text occupies