

THE CIVILISATION OF TO-DAY

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MEN

Preaching recently in St. Francis Xavier's Church, Dublin, the Rev. Robert Kane, S.J., dealing with the present condition of Europe, said:—

What a sorry figure will not our twentieth century appear when, in a century yet to come, historians will look back and try to judge the worth of the civilisation of to-day. It will be a very difficult task. Our age is very boastful about itself, but a future age may judge our age according to a stern impartial standard. Yet there is much to say on one side and on the other. We are highly civilised in our science and in its application, in our railways, motor cars, telephones, in our machines and in our manufactures, in the costumes of our suffragettes and in the nakedness of our ballets; in the exquisite refinement of our cooking and in the loathsome horror of our slums. We are also highly civilised in the art of lying diplomacy and in the science of murderous war. Alas, alas! what has our modern world made of the brotherhood of men. I dare not sicken you with the recital of the battle scenes where France and Germany, Russia and Japan, played their historic parts. That was only play.

The Real Havoc will Begin

when, in the new war, the demons of our civilised century will be let loose. It costs Germany 60 millions a year for her proud boast of being the first Empire in Europe. Her uniforms and fighting gear of machines and men cost France 47 millions annually. Russia has to pay 62½ millions. England has to pay 62½ millions a year. All this display, all this readiness, all this glorious pageantry of readiness to make the world's women weep with tears and to make the world's men weep with blood has its sad shadow in a hard, practical sense. The loss each year in money which might be spent in useful work, and which is extorted from hungry homes, is in Germany and France 34 millions, in Russia 93 millions, and in Great Britain 37 millions. Mark that this peace of Europe is not a peace of contentment. Russia is only waiting for the moment when England is in difficulties to invade India. England herself has some other spots to annex in order to secure her scientific frontier. France is burning with fierce eagerness to reconquer Alsace-Lorraine and, if possible, to obliterate Prussia. If Germany were only sure that the other Powers would stand aloof, she would at once wring many more milliards from France, seize the province of Champagne, and probably bring Belgium and the Netherlands, with their coveted seaboard, under the paternal rule of the Kaiser. Germany has also another plan: it is no mere dream, but a plan prepared in every practical detail: Her plan is to make a dash for London, paralyse England, annex some of her colonies, and take over an enormous share of her gold. The United States are building a great navy: not for defence—it is no one's interest to invade the States—but for attack. It is not friendship but fear that holds in leash the dogs of war. What will the calm historian write a century hence in his quiet study, as he is reading the records of the civilisation of to-day? Turn over another page. The heading of

The Page of Peace.

It is the story of our industry, the record of our labors in lonely homes or teeming factories. But that record to be true must reach very far and very deep in order to grasp the final threads of our modern finance. Our civilisation is so skilfully elaborating the methods of business as to approach more and more to the finest means of counterfeit, adulteration, fraud, unmitigated, unabashed, wholesale robbery. With all this, there is also that other war of always interrupted feud and often furious battle, the war between capital and labor, the war between the masters and the men. It is a war which, in the words of Pope Leo XIII., 'results in the paralysis of business, and not only injures the men themselves and their masters, but also grievously affects the trade and even unnerves the vital interests of the common weal. Moreover,' the great Pape adds, 'when strikes occur, violence and disorder are close at hand, and the public peace is broken by savage riot, almost by civil war.' Our civilisation in its commercial aspect bears little likeness to a brotherhood of men. There is a blacker shadow still that falls across the near path of the future. Listen to Pope Leo XIII.: 'The effect of civil change and revolution has been to divide society into two extreme and opposite castes. On the one side there is the party that holds the power because it holds the wealth, which has in its grasp all labor and all trade, which manipulates for its own benefit and for its own purposes all sources of supply, and which is powerfully represented in the councils of the State itself. On the other hand, there is the needy and powerless multitude, sore and suffering, and always ready for disturbance.' Thus within every nation there are two hostile camps that wage their war of gold while waiting to wage their war of steel, that clash in fierce conflict of intrigue and of finance while waiting to meet where the bomb bursts and where the city burns. Nor does the existence of a middle class at all bridge over this sharp and extreme separation between the opposing

armies. You will remember what Ferrer said at Barcelona—'Blot out from life those infamous middle classes.' The outlook in Europe is dark indeed. Our civilisation is in turmoil. The modern brain is feverish. Our worldly world has failed.

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From our own correspondent.)

May 27.

The Very Rev. Dr. Kennedy, S.M., B.A., left for Waimate during the week to visit his mother, who is seriously ill.

A retreat for ladies will be conducted by one of the Redemptorist Fathers at the Sacred Heart Convent, Island Bay, commencing on Monday, July 3, and ending on Friday, July 7. No invitation is necessary, and the Rev. Mother would be pleased to see a record attendance of ladies.

With reference to the piano purchased by the St. Vincent de Paul Society at New Plymouth for the old people's home there, the members of the society are grateful for the financial assistance rendered to them by all classes and creeds.

The Rev. Father Hickson, S.M., Adm., is interesting himself in the formation of a public competitions society here. The objects of the society are the encouragement of music, literature, and art, and a public meeting for the purpose was held at the Town Hall last Thursday evening.

The missions conducted by the Redemptorist Fathers at Kilbirnie and Island Bay were concluded on last Sunday. They proved a great success, and the Ven. Archdeacon Devoy, S.M., who is in charge of the district, expressed his gratitude to the Rev. Fathers Creagh and Whelan, C.S.S.R., who have been untiring in their efforts for the past four weeks.

An interesting lecture was given by the Rev. Father Gondringer, of St. Patrick's College, at the meeting of the French Club last Tuesday night on the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The Rev. Father dealt with the Duchy from the geographical, scenic, and historical points of view, and illustrated his lecture with several amusing anecdotes relative to ancient legends and customs. On the motion of the chairman (Hon. J. Rigg) the lecturer was accorded a hearty vote of thanks.

The feast day of Blessed Mother Barat, foundress of the Order of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, was on May 25, but owing to that day falling on Ascension Thursday the feast was kept on the following day, Mass being celebrated by the Rev. Father Herring, S.M., in the Sacred Heart Convent Chapel, Island Bay. The Rev. Father also addressed the community on 'The Providence of God,' and referred to the recent death of Rev. Mother Digby, the Superior-General of the Order. During the day there was Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

In third class Rugby football the St. Patrick's College team beat Karori by 11 points to 8 points, and in the fifth class St. Patrick's College A team beat St. James' by 6 points to 3 points. The College B team in this class suffered defeat at the hands of Melrose by 6 points to 3 points. In 'Soccer' matches last Saturday St. Anne's drew with the Rangers in the fourth division, and in the fifth division the Marist Brothers beat the Institute by 7 goals to 1 goal. In the sixth division the Marist Brothers drew with Brooklyn.

At St. Anne's, Wellington South, on last Monday evening the Rev. Father Creagh, C.S.S.R., addressed a large congregation on the confraternity of the Sacred Heart which was to be re-organised that night. To keep up the pious practices commenced during the recent mission, he exhorted those present to hand in their names and to keep as far as possible the rules of the sodality. Ladies and gentlemen were appointed to act as heads of circles. A large number of names were handed in, and there is every prospect of the society being a very strong one. The first Friday of the month has been appointed the meeting night for the women's branch, and the second Friday for the men.

The next meeting of the Newman Society takes place at St. Patrick's College on Sunday, June 4, when Mr. S. J. Moran, LL.B., will read a paper on 'The Oldest Laws in the World.' The Society has now published the syllabus for the year which contains some very interesting papers by the Rev. Fathers Gilbert, Venning, Schaefer, Gondringer, and Eccleton, and Messrs. T. Boyce, P. J. O'Regan, P. Verschaffelt, M. J. Crombie, Duffon, and Professor Hunter, whilst two mid-week meetings are promised with papers by Very Rev. Dr. Kennedy and Very Rev. Father Keogh.

The pupils of St. Mary's Convent have again been successful in the Trinity College music examinations. At the presentation of prizes and certificates in the Sydney Street Schoolroom on Thursday evening, Misses Cecelia Dwyer (senior medallist), Girdle Gibbs, and Priscilla Miller, of St. Mary's Convent, received, in addition to gold medals, national prizes in the shape of cheques for £5 each, sent