

Current Topics

'Of More than Local Interest'

It is interesting and gratifying to note that Bishop Cleary's Lenten Pastoral on Education and the Education Question—which was so greatly appreciated by the Catholics of New Zealand and which met with such high encomiums from all the Australasian Catholic papers—has attracted attention farther afield, and has now been published in permanent form, and in very neat and tasteful style, by the *America* press of New York City. From the *America* press and under the auspices of the *America* newspaper is issued bi-monthly a publication which is named *The Catholic Mind*, each number of which consists of a specially-selected article, of permanent and more than ordinary value, on some important question of the day; the articles so selected being considered—in the judgment of *America*—the best current statement of the Catholic position on the particular subject discussed. The very high compliment that is implied by the selection of any article for *The Catholic Mind* may be gathered from the editors' official statement as to what it is precisely which the publication undertakes to give to its subscribers. *The Catholic Mind* is intended, they say, to give in popular style the 'best statements of Catholic doctrine; surest results of historical research; latest word on subjects in dispute; documents such as Papal Encyclicals; and Pastoral Letters of more than local interest,' etc. 'These articles,' add the editors, 'are taken from the best sources, and the rule of selection is: *One at a time and the best to be had*,' so that subscribers may keep each number for frequent reading and reference. Bishop Cleary's Pastoral is published as the May issue of *The Catholic Mind*; and it comes in under the double qualification: 'Pastoral Letters of more than local interest,' and, 'One at a time and the best to be had.' What *America* thought of the Pastoral is indicated by the comment of one of the ablest writers on that extremely able paper: 'It is marvellous how, for an old subject, he has put it so differently and so well.' The republication of the Pastoral is highly gratifying, both as a notable compliment to its author, and from the fact that by this means Dr. Cleary's wise, weighty, and well-considered words will be given to thousands of readers throughout the English-speaking Catholic world.

A 'Socialist'—Of a Kind

An esteemed Australian correspondent has sent us a cutting from a local secular paper containing the report of an address by a priest, in the course of which the latter appears to have made the statement, 'I am an out-and-out Socialist'—and our correspondent wants to know if we can explain the phenomenon. The explanation in this case is not very difficult—and as the report of the priest's utterance is sure to travel to some of our numerous New Zealand Socialist papers it is perhaps as well that we should deal with it now. The priest on this occasion—an all too common blunder!—overlooked the importance of defining his terms; and 'Socialism' with him is merely another term for 'republicanism' or pure democracy. There is not a word in his address about economic or industrial Socialism; and it is evident from the context that he is thinking exclusively of forms of government—and, in particular, of democratic as opposed to monarchical government.

Thus, after pointing out that 'We had been fortunate in having very good Kings and Queens on the English Throne, and now, following after such illustrious sovereigns as Queen Victoria and the beloved Edward VII., we had King George V. and Queen Mary—two sovereigns who had already earned the respect and love of the English-speaking world, and with such persons occupying the English Throne there was little danger of the British Empire not prospering,' he continued: 'I am a Socialist, an out-and-out Socialist. I have travelled in various parts of the world since I was a lad, and the older I grew and the more acquainted I became with the various forms of govern-

ment in the world the more dissatisfied I became with the system of having kings and queens as the head of government. . . . I am now one of the staunchest republicans living, and believe in that form of government as being before any other for the great benefit of the masses of any country's people. I came to this conclusion after having paid a visit to the greatest Republic in the world, and that is the United States of America, where they have a President, who is elected by the people, and who is forced to abide by their decisions.' In other words, the 'out-and-out Socialist' merely means that he is an out-and-out democrat. There was a time when the word 'Socialism' was so vaguely and loosely employed as to almost justify the remark—said to have been made by the late King Edward when he was Prince of Wales—that 'we are all Socialists nowadays.' In later years, however, its meaning has become narrowed down and much more clearly defined; and a careless, slipshod, and inaccurate use of the term—especially on public occasions—is certainly to be deprecated.

'Graft'

When the late Mark Twain was in London on one occasion, he was the 'lion' of a dinner given by a literary club in the modern Babylon. One of the rules of the club required that each member should formally and in set phrase introduce his guest to the company. 'I like that custom,' Mark drawled out in his reply, 'for it reminds me of the time I lectured in a little town in the Rockies. My chairman was a well-to-do "cow-puncher," who found the situation evidently irksome. "I'm told I must introduce this yer man t'ye, boys," said he; "but I can only say two things in his favor. One is, that he's never been in gaol, and the other is, that I don't know why."'

The revelation in the *Otago Daily Times* last week of a somewhat bare-faced case of 'graft' in connection with civic affairs in Dunedin has come with a shock on the local community; and the stories now going the rounds as to other instances of the practice are such as to suggest that Mark Twain's 'testimonial' is of very wide application. The *Otago Daily Times* thus states the facts in the case in question: 'Some little time ago, incidental to changes in the system of administration, an official of an important local body retired from the position he had been occupying. The local body, desirous of recognising in a tangible form the services he had rendered, decided to vote him on his retirement a bonus of an amount equal to six months' salary. The official was deeply sensible of this mark of the good-will of the local body and appreciated highly the sentiment that had prompted the members to treat him so handsomely. Nor did he at the time regard as other than jocular the remark of one of the members to him that the vote was worth a new suit to the speaker. This seemed to him to be one of the pleasantries that might be viewed as appropriate to such an occasion. He had no expectation that the member in question really contemplated the acquisition of a suit of clothes at his expense. It came, therefore, as a surprise and rude shock to him shortly afterwards when he received an account for £8, being the cost of a suit that had been supplied to this member. He concluded that the only course open to him was to settle with the tailor and look as pleasant as he could—though he may perhaps have considered that the suit was a more costly one than he was himself in the habit of purchasing,—and to say nothing about it.' The *Otago Daily Times* practically vouches for the facts in this case. It is possible that the other stories we have referred to may be exaggerations; but even if the instance cited is an entirely isolated one it is well that attention should be drawn to it. It is always easier to stamp out an evil at the beginning; and public opinion is strong enough to kill 'graft' in any New Zealand community if only the people can be placed in possession of the facts.

More 'Popery'

Dr. Gibb is right after all. The 'intolerable invasion' and 'subtle encroachment' of 'Rome,' which he is to denounce next November, proceed apace; and