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## Current Topics

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

**MR. STOUT'S STATISTICS.**

MR. STOUT, in a lecture delivered by him a couple of months ago,—fully reported in the newspapers and, moreover, published again in a periodical—stated, as his conclusion, that “the children trained in Catholic schools are not so well behaved as those in State schools are.”—And this statement he based on certain statistics given in a preceding portion of his lecture. But if Mr. Stout's statistics regarding the State schools were as loosely compiled by him, and, if they were founded on so very remarkably false a basis as those he gave with regard to the Catholic schools—they were false and worthless. Mr. Stout's statistics, in connection with the Catholic schools, we are now in a position to say, were false and groundless.—There were not twenty-six children who had attended Catholic schools sent, for misconduct, to the Industrial School at Caversham, between 1875 and July this year. There were not twenty-four children who had attended Catholic schools sent there from Otago alone during the same period, and, if our readers will turn to another column in which we give the particulars concerning the Catholic children sent there from any part of the Colony, they will be able to judge of Mr. Stout's honesty or his common sense, and we confess that, here at least, his common sense seems even more at fault than his honesty—for, after all, he, without hesitation, allowed the list on which he had based his figures to be examined. Let us give him credit for all the good we can give him credit for. The total number of children who had even so much as shown their noses inside of a Catholic school, and who were sent from anywhere to the Industrial School within the period in question was twenty-two. And of these the particulars are briefly as follows: The attendance at school, even for a day of two girls and one boy is doubtful.—One girl was sent by her father to the Industrial School only to keep her from straying away from home into the wild country; one girl, if it be the same, had left school at the age of five; one girl had attended a Catholic school for the equivalent of only thirty-two full days in four years; one girl had been a degraded child before going to the school she attended most irregularly; two girls had been most irregular attendants at a Catholic school for a short time; and all the girls had been junior pupils,—even those two whose attendance is doubtful must have been so, if they were ever at a Catholic school at all. Four boys had been known only as truants; one boy who had attended a State school had afterwards been for a few days only at a Catholic school; one boy had only been at a Catholic school for from four to six weeks; one boy, at a Catholic school in one town for from four to six weeks, had attended a Catholic school in another town for one week, and (with an interval of nearly a month) four days; two boys had been irregular attendants; one boy had probably, as Mr. Stout mentions, gone afterwards to a State school; and all the boys, with one exception, were junior pupils. One boy only, out of the whole lot, boys and girls, had attended school regularly and got into a senior class, and he having been released a few days after his committal, has since been extremely well behaved. So much, then, for Mr. Stout's 26 children who had attended Catholic schools. Twenty-two, in all, as we have said, had ever had their noses inside the door of a Catholic school,—and our readers will see how they had attended there. Again, instead of 24 children trained in Catholic schools sent from Otago alone to the Industrial School, we find that—even including the three whose attendance is doubtful, and the girl sent to be kept safe from rambling in a way dangerous to herself only—there were but 19, and our readers will see from the particulars we have given here, and more fully, from the tables we publish in another column, the justice with which Mr. Stout says these children were “trained” in Catholic schools. Again, Mr. Stout, in his letter to Mr. Perrin, claims that the particulars given by him as to the religion of the children's parent have been admitted as correct.—This is not so, for Mr. Perrin had neither the time nor the opportunity to investigate their religion

or nationality. We may state, moreover, that, out of six cases in which we have some acquaintance with the parents in question—two boys who were set down by Mr. Stout as Irish, are the children of mixed marriages; in one case, the father being an English Protestant; and in the other, an English Protestant, or a Protestant Australian Native, of English extraction.—The mother, in this case, is also an Australian Native.—The parents of another boy whom Mr. Stout sets down as Irish are reputed to be of English extraction. From this, therefore, we may, perhaps, form some judgment of the general correctness of Mr. Stout's calculations as to nationality and religion.—But Mr. Stout asserts that it makes no difference as to whether the children attend the schools regularly or not, and that the effects of religious or secular teaching cannot be determined unless truants and irregular attendants are also considered.—Had Mr. Stout not better include any child reared—say within 100 miles of a Catholic school-house?—But such an argument is really hardly sane, and not worthy of reply. We are quite of the opinion, and had already said so more than once, that the effects of religious or secular teaching cannot be ascertained merely from criminal statistics.—We have, besides, recently been confirmed in this opinion by an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, explaining that a great deal of the crime that is committed in England goes undetected.—The *New York Sun*, moreover, has lately made a similar statement about his own particular city.—Mr. Stout, in conclusion, professes a desire for notes, of which he may make use in another publication he is about to undertake on this subject of morality and secularism.—We do not, however, profess to minister to a mind diseased, and, therefore, we should be unwilling to offer him any assistance. One note, however, we now offer him—it is one of advice, and its substance is that he should, before undertaking his new composition, place himself under some kind of suitable treatment.—Mr. Hume, for example, might for a week or two give him advantageous entertainment at Ashbourne Hall,—for the letter we produce elsewhere seems certainly written by a man who is *non compos mentis*, and this is the only excuse that can be offered for the refusal it contains to retract—shameful, most dishonest, and harmful calumny.—For of that, we say, Mr. Stout is now proved guilty.

It seems that somebody or another named Early, A “CRAM” IN General Agent for some society or another, was MORE lately travelling in a railway carriage in America WAYS THAN ONE, where who should he meet with, but Cardinal M'Closkey. And the Cardinal, as was most natural, finding himself in such good company, was anxious to hear as much as possible of the great Evangelist's conversation, and consequently lent all his attention to listen to it. But the Cardinal, being no doubt thrown in a state of tremor lest the whole Church should topple down on the spot under the powerful preaching of this General Agent for something or another, could not help ejaculating now and then, in an imbecile and witless kind of way, a query as to the grounds the great man had for believing his own particular views to be the right ones. And, as it happened, this went on until the great Evangelist got into a rage—a very godly rage, of course, on which there was no fear whatever that the sun should go down—and he made the following startling reply, beginning in a comparatively mild tone, but ending in a bellow that not only put the Cardinal to flight but caused a sympathetic roar among the other passengers. “Well, sir, since you have asked me that question, I will just tell you how I do know that Martin Luther was right. I know he was right because of what he did. There was the old Pope and his Cardinals and Bishops and priests and all the kings and armies of Europe on one side, and there was nobody but little Martin Luther and God Almighty on the other side; and little Martin Luther just took that old Pope's bull by the horns, and gave his neck such a twist as he will not get over until Gabriel blows his horn, and sends the old Pope, with all his Cardinals, Bishops, and priests down to perdition, where they belong. That, sir, is the way I know he was right.” This was a most elegant bellow, as our readers will perceive, and from the lips of the godly, no wonder its effect was stunning. Still, the Cardinal, had he not been so nervous, might have bethought himself of replying that besides “Little Martin Luther and God Almighty”—whose partisanship by the way seems rather doubtful—there were just a few more—Frederick of Saxony, for example, and Philip on