

A great pilgrimage for Padua, Loreto, Assisi, and Rome is being organised in Belgium. It will be under the personal guidance of Cardinal Goossens, Archbishop of Malines.

The Rev. L. Ryan, O.M.I., Inchicore, has been appointed Superior of the house of his Order at Freemantle, Western Australia.

Despite the intemperate weather, the Holy Father's health is excellent. His Holiness takes frequent walks in the Vatican gardens.

The sum of twelve thousand lire has been given by the Holy Father for distribution amongst the poor in the villages of the Roman province who have been suffering from famine.

On Good Friday, the 12th April, the stars will be in the same position in the firmament which they occupied on the day of Our Lord's death on the Cross. It will be the first time this has happened since the commencement of the Christian era.

We learn from the *Missions Catholiques* of Lyons that, according to the latest intelligence from the Catholics in Manchuria, the Catholic missions have fared well during the war, thanks to the Chinese and Japanese authorities.

## I N V E R C A R G I L L.

(From an occasional Correspondent.)

April 4, 1895.

How fond are geographers of pointing to Catholic countries the finger of scorn in educational matters. With few exceptions one can be sure on opening the text books used in schools that where the predominant religion of a country is given as Roman Catholic there also will be found the unblushing statement, "Education, backward." France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Belgium—all fall under the ban. "No good can come out of Israel" appears to be the doctrine of these genities. It may not then be considered amiss if we examine for a moment the schools of Switzerland, which are unquestionably regarded with pride by the inhabitants of that sturdy little republic, and with admiration by the world at large. Conspicuous among the devoted band of educational reformers shines brilliantly the name of Jean Girard, whose good work stands second only to that high priest of educational reformers—Pestalozzi. Jean Girard was born at Fribourg in 1765. At sixteen years of age he joined the order of Grey Friars at Lucerne, and taught in several convents after completing his novitiate. In 1804 he was chosen prefect of studies of the primary school of his native town. The following encomium will show the extent of his success after ten years' teaching:—"He had trained a body of youth the like of which, perhaps, no city in the world would furnish. It was not without profound emotion that the friends of humanity contemplated a spectacle so new and so touching. . . . If, seeing children approaching you in rage, you approached them thinking that you were about to encounter little ruffians you were wholly surprised to hear them reply to you with politeness, with judgment, and with the accent which bespeaks genteel manners and a careful education." The schools of Switzerland are to-day among the most successful and systematically taught of any in the world. If anyone deserved credit for it is undoubtedly Père Girard, who belonged to that body which, we are told, endeavours to keep its members in ignorance, yet which produced a Galileo, a Michael Angelo, a Columbus, a T. . . ., a Titian, a Raphael; to that body which endeavours to stamp out of its adherents all liberty of thought and action, yet which produced the patriot Tell, the Bruce of Bannockburn. To what then, it may be asked, was the great success of Père Girard's teaching due. The answer is supplied in his reply to Pestalozzi. "I made the remark," he writes, "to my old friend Pestalozzi that the mathematics exercised an unjustifiable sway in his establishment, and that I feared the results of this on the education that was given. Whereupon he replied to me with spirit, as was his wont, 'This is because I wish my children to believe nothing which cannot be demonstrated as clearly to them as two and two make four.' My reply was in the same strain, 'In that case, if I had thirty sons I would not entrust one of them to you for it would be impossible for you to demonstrate to him as you can that two and two make four that I am his father, and that I have a right to his obedience.'"

It seems to me that the above quotation is very pertinent to the present position of educational matters in New Zealand. We are often told that the time for teaching religion is a paltry half-hour on Sundays. In effect this contention means that religion is to be divorced from the ordinary pursuits of life, to be like a garment which is put on or off at will, to be used as an ordinary matter of business when the occasion suits. It is to combat this spirit that Catholics are manfully maintaining an unequal warfare. We wish to see our citizens grow up with their whole course in life guided by a higher purpose than mere business success, by an aim which will raise them out of their sordid selves, which will make their charity embrace all mankind, which will make them "build o'er again the atrium of their souls, so broad that all mankind may rest therein," and by which they will leave on the sands of time

"Footprints that perhaps another  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother  
Seeing, shall take heart again."

That this was the aim of Girard's teaching no one will doubt who reads the purport of Villeman upon the school at Fribourg, wherein he remarks "That only is then the real people's school in which all the elements of study serve for the culture of the soul, and in which the child grows better by the things which he learns, and by the manner in which he learns them." Père Girard spent the concluding years of his life in seclusion, but he still continued to take a deep interest in the cult of education. He published two works "L'Enseignement Régulier de la Langue Maternelle" (Systematic teaching of the mother tongue), and the "Cours Éducatif de la Langue Maternelle" (Educative course in the mother tongue). The former of these two works was crowned by the French Academy, and in France and Italy the influence of Père Girard has been all powerful in determining what shall be the character of their principles and method. Père Girard was also noted for his extreme toleration in proof of which may be cited the fact, that his drawing master at Fribourg was a Protestant, and that all his teachers there were laymen. I cannot do better than conclude with the following clipping from a leading educational journal, when referring to Père Girard:—"For this we shall the more honour and respect the sturdy Swiss, placing him not far below Pestalozzi, because of his championship of education as opposed to instruction, because of his advocacy of the inductive method, because of his recognition of the all-importance of moral instruction, because of his life-long devotion to the cause of education, as well as for the manly stand he made for toleration and large-mindedness, whereby we are compelled to acknowledge that here was not only a true teacher, but a true man, a good and faithful servant, meriting perpetual remembrance."

## O B I T U A R Y.

THE late lamented Mr Thomas McGarva, who leaves a wife and three grown-up children, two daughters and one son, to mourn his loss, was a native of Ayrshire, Scotland. He was fifty-three years of age at the time of his death, which happened on the thirty-first day of March last. Two years after his arrival in Canterbury, thirty-two years ago, in the ship "David G. Fleming," he married, and in the following year, joined the railway service. His first work was to take part in forming a portion of the line that extended from the city of Christchurch to the river Selwyn. The well-known contractors in those days, Messrs Holmes and Co., constructed the work, and when the line was opened the Government took possession of the Canterbury railways, and Mr McGarva was associated with them by being appointed foreman. He succeeded in this capacity Mr Alexander Buchanan, and Mr McGarva held the position for about twenty-four years. He was altogether on the Canterbury and Dunedin sections of the railway for over twenty-eight years, and became most popular, not only with his fellow-employees, but also with all classes of the community. His general and manly straightforwardness, his promptitude at all times to attend to duty's call, and his complete earnestness at his work gained him the good opinion of everyone, and especially of men who were under him, and witnessed his sound sense, tact, and ability. The gravity of Mr McGarva's position will be easily realised by anyone acquainted with the duties of a foreman. Does not on him depend the safety of the travelling public? Any oversight on his part might not only result in a serious interruption of traffic and a loss of public money but also involve a great loss of life. When he was about two years ago removed from Canterbury to Dunedin, his fellow-workmen would not let their foreman depart without giving him a handsome and valuable souvenir of their esteem. They met, and the shop-foreman, Mr Alexander, who had served twenty-one years under Mr McGarva, was voted to the chair. The chairman in making the presentation, which consisted of a splendid gold watch and chain and a beautifully illuminated address, spoke of the many excellent traits of Mr McGarva, and concluded by reading the address. Mr McGarva knew well how to inspire his men with confidence, enthusiasm, and energy, and his private conduct equalled his public. He was a kind and careful husband and father. He was, moreover, a good Christian, and one who regularly attended to the practices of his Church. He took part also in every parochial work. His cool and correct judgment was on these occasions most useful, and his habitually unassuming demeanour endeared him to everyone. He was a member of various parochial societies and sodalities, and among others, that of St Vincent de Paul. To quietly give relief to the needy afforded him a pleasure, and many a person is indebted to Mr McGarva for work or assistance of some sort. His amiable wife and her two daughters deserve especial mention in this particular. Indeed, during the last decade there has been hardly any parish work wherein they have not taken a leading part. On the occasion of his obsequies, Mr McGarva's remains were conveyed from his late residence in Sydenham, to the pro-Cathedral,

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