

## EDUCATION IN SEMINARIES.

ARTICLE BY BISHOP McQUAID.

DR. McQUAID, Bishop of Rochester, has published, in the first article of the May number of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, some very weighty opinions on the everlasting seminary question. Our readers will be glad (says the *Catholic Times*) to have an idea of the chief subjects with which the Bishops deals. After urging that the training of the clergy for their sacred duties is one that, owing to various circumstances, could not be adequately attended to in days gone by, he rejoices to be able to say that things are changed. And he looks back on the past without regret. "The priests of those days, still living," he says, "do not care to recall their sufferings and hardships, nor count up the number of their associates who fell by the way, victims to unwholesome food and unhealthy housing, nor think of the broken down constitutions leaving the seminary that soon succumbed to the exhausting labours of the ministry. They are not over grateful for the miserable pretence of instruction they received, while craving the highest and best to fit them for their Master's work." These words are too true. Thank God that some bishop has had the courage to say them. Dr. McQuaid's admission materially strengthens everyone's efforts towards reform. The past was evil, to an untold extent. An admission of the fact may help to prevent its continuance in future. The Bishop would have the ventilation, light, and heat of the seminary not behind that which the State provides for its criminals and naughty boys. And he knows how to secure his object. "Money, ordinary intelligence, and a disposition to break away from the old-time conserated miseries and needless sufferings on the part of seminaries will effect all desirable changes in buildings, their furnishings and equipments. There is no justifiable reason why Church authorities in America should be hampered by the customs and usage of older countries, where innovations are looked on in the light of sacrileges. Even in some of the old countries the light of improvement is breaking its way into the dungeon-like barracks of seminaries, and the health and convenience of their inmates are taken into account as favouring intellectual progress along with physical growth and development." He would have the young seminarist trained during his early years in a day school, attached to some parish church. Thus he thinks he would preserve to them the home influences and avoid the lengthy seminary life "whose monotony wears them out." And thus, too, would he secure greater parental money support; a fuller supervision by the working clergy, whose experience of life is worth many books; and, lastly, enable the failure to slip back into the world "without a note of reproach." With regard to examinations, he wishes them to be conducted by external and independent examiners, adding: "We shall never have first-class study in our American theological seminaries until the standard of instruction is carried high by competent authority and the examinations are from without and independent of the local teaching body." This would naturally presuppose an unexceptionable body of professors. Whence are they to come? The Bishop, with true American fearlessness, essays to reply. He deals with the difficulty, alleged to exist, in getting the diocesan clergy to lead the regular and studious life of a professor. Dr. McQuaid does not believe there is any difficulty, and especially not nowadays, when a young priest has to wait ten or fourteen years before he can hope to have a house of his own. "If he be a man of more than ordinary intellectual ability and the right opportunities have been given him, he may prefer the professor's chair to the unending routine of parochial drudgery: all the more readily, he slyly observes, "if his position as professor be an honourable one, giving him standing in the diocese, with suitable treatment while filling the professor's chair." And if you won't grant these conditions, face the alternative. "Hunt up professors who can daily teach three or four classes of most difficult matter, each subject requiring several hours of preparation; then try to do with three or four professors what of right should be the work of eight or ten. The experiment will be a failure and the pupils will be entitled to pity." From the chapter on "Teaching" we quote two sentences: "The teaching that fails to develop a love for books and study, not only during a student's seminary course, but in his after years, is defective. A professor up to the mark stimulates inquiry in the minds of his hearers and shows them how to use books and how to investigate for themselves. . . . Careful and painstaking instruction in the English language and literature should be in with the student's first day in the seminary and end with his last. . . . It seems absurd, in striving to give a young man an all-round education, to keep him from familiarity with the very language in which he will have to present his ideas and knowledge to the people for whose souls he is to become responsible. He has a whole chapter on reading at meals. "From the dining-room reading, except during the days of a spiritual retreat, has been discarded. From time immemorial the contrary has been the rule. The change was not adopted without reflection, but after long experience. The reading is of small advantage. Few pay attention to it until towards the end of a meal. The reader is often over-fatigued, is kept from his dinner when he needs it, and then bolts his food in his hurry to rush out to the playground. When time is reading at table, food is disposed of rapidly, and less time is spent in the dining-room. Some look on this despatch as a gain, we presume to think that it is productive of many of the ill-known to seminarists. An important part of a young man's training is learning to converse. No place is better adapted for this exercise than around the dining-table. There is no need to hurry up the repast, and while the courses are being changed the conversation can flow on. The extra time spent at table is not taken from the recreation hour, as pleasant talk is itself recreation. To make the conversation useful as well as pleasant, the talk at breakfast is in Latin, at dinner, in English; at supper, in German. For hygienic reasons, for better relaxation of the mind, for the improvement of the students as conversationalists it is deemed wise to dispense with

reading at meals." Naturally, the Bishop has not escaped objections. He has been told that the nicety and refinement introduced into his seminary will make young men effeminate, and less prepared to endure the hard realities of missionary life. He replies: "My experience has satisfied me that the finely cultured and trained student is the very one of which to make a hero. It is your coarse nature that grovels in selfishness and low ways. The latter never rises to the sublime dignity of the priest-hood nor to the fearful responsibility of its sacred obligations, nor does he ever see his own nothingness in dealing with the immortal soul redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. An arrogant priest is always found among the coarsely nurtured, whose sense of what is due to others never rises above his estimate of himself. It is the former who is ready to suffer for Christ's sake, who is conciliating towards the lowly, who appreciates the sacrifices of the poor in behalf of the Church, who is ready to spend and to be spent for their welfare." The whole article is one for clerical personal, and attention to it will hasten on the day when a wider recognition will be given to the urgent needs for seminary reform.

## Archdiocese of Wellington.

(From our own correspondent.)

August 13, 1897.

At the eleven o'clock Mass at St. Mary of the Angel's, on Sunday last, the Very Rev. Father Devoy, V.G., gave a detailed account of the financial position of the Te Aro parish. In the first place the result of the penny collection for they ear amounted to £165 odd, whilst the total for the five years, since the scheme was started, was a trifle over £870, or an average of about £174 per annum. This is a practical verification of the old saying "that many a mickle makes a muckle." This money is devoted to the maintenance of the schools and incidental expenses connected therewith. During the past year the proceeds of the penny collection were utilised in assisting to paint the Brothers' school and connect it with the drainage system, carrying out improvements at the Dixon street and Newtown schools, etc. During the past financial year St. Mary's Church had been enlarged, improved and painted, and the organ added to, at a total cost of over £900. Of this sum £400 had been received in subscriptions including a donation of £50 from the Vicar-General. To this had been added a sum of £250 received for a right-of-way through the pre-bytory grounds, making a total of £650, leaving a debt of about £250 still on the church. The cost of painting the Brothers' school was defrayed by an entertainment got up by the "old boys" of the school, to whom the thanks of the Vicar-General and the parishioners were due. This entertainment netted upwards of £55. The drainage of the schools cost about £90 which was borne by both parishes—Te Aro and Thorndon. This year the Dixon street school would require to be painted and the infant class enlarged. Father Devoy hoped that the young ladies who had received their education in that institution would emulate the action of the "old boys" of the Brothers' school, and get up an entertainment to assist in defraying the expenses of the necessary improvements. St. Joseph's Church also was contemplating, as it was necessary to alter the gallery for the convenience of the large number of children attending there. The alterations necessary for the Buckle-street Church would cost at least £100. Father Devoy hoped as soon as these improvements had been effected that a sufficient number of donors would give stained glass windows to take the place of all the plain windows now in use. Some of the stained glass windows have already been purchased. Coming to the general financial position of the parish the Very Rev. Father Devoy said that when the suggested improvements had been carried out there would be a total debt of close upon £2000 on the parish. This included the sum of £900 paid for two acres of ground at Newtown, on which the schools were built, and £500 for two sections near the presbytery, Boulcott-street, both of which were worth more now than had been paid for them. In order to pay off this debt he proposed that the parishioners contribute a small sum weekly each according to his or her means. If 200 were to give one shilling or more per week 300 sixpence, and 500 threepence, it would make about £1200 in the course of a year. Besides this he intended to hold a bazaar soon, by which he hoped to raise the balance. In a short time it was proposed that the priests of the parish would go amongst the people and ask them to take up this proposal which he hoped would meet with their usual sympathy and support.

Instead of the usual Vespers at St. Mary of the Angel's on Sunday night the choir, assisted by friends, gave a choral recital, which was the first of the kind given in the church. The sacred edifice was crowded and the choir leader was deeply impressed with the beautiful sacred music. The solo parts in the *Te Deum cantata* were admirably sung by Miss Dorel (soprano), Miss Kimbel (alto), Mr. Tabor (tenor) and Mr. E. Haughey (bass). Mrs. F. J. Oakes's fine soprano voice was heard to much advantage in the solo part of "Laudabatur Grand Magnificat," the chorus being given with marked precision and great devotional feeling. The trio "Jesus et Maria" (Cross) was admirably interpreted by Miss Oakes and Messrs Tabor and Oakes. A feature of the recital was the rendering of "Liberus Ave Verum," by Madame Rosalie Miz, whose fine soprano voice I had heard with a shudder in the devotional nature of the camp session. Mr. Walter Brown played the violin obligato to this item. The next selections were the "Gloria" and "Credo" from Haydn's No. 3 Mass, the soloists being Madame Miz, Mrs. Gate and Messrs Taylor and Hynes. In the impressively devotional "O Salutaris Hostia" the soloists were Mrs. Oakes and Miss Guancy. In the "Tantum Ergo" Mr. L. Dwan sang the solo part with fine effect, the chorus work being admirably given. The choir conductor (Mr. Oakes) and the leader of the orchestra (Mr. W. Brown) are to be highly complimented on the success of the recital and the fine devotional feeling which characterised the whole production. Mr. C. McDonald ably presided at the organ

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