

DOMINICAN CONVENT, DUNEDIN.

The schools which are being erected in connection with the Dominican Convent have now reached a stage at which some judgement may be formed of what they will be when they are completed. The building has reached the third floor, and is about to be roofed in, and already makes a very imposing appearance. The style is pointed Gothic, which is very picturesque, looking to the uninitiated eye something like a series of steep gables, and more than one period of the architecture in question is represented. The technical details, however, we shall leave for a skilled hand to deal with; we have at present no further ambition than that of giving such a description as may be given by an ordinary visitor to the works. The facade of the building, then, which looks out on Smith-street, and commands an Eastern aspect, seems divided into three parts, of which two parts recede, the part next the convent being prominent. The effect of this on the inside may be seen in the windows that, on either side of the three central ones in front apartments of the brick building, look North and South respectively, and in some sort help to reproduce the appearance of a bow window, though on a much larger and more solid scale than usual. We may add that the views commanded from all the front windows and from some of those at the sides, and even at the back, are unsurpassed. The town, the surrounding country, the harbour, the ocean, are each and all of them seen in perfection, and, last but not least, the look-out upon the Cathedral is superb. In the views alone, in fact, great educational advantages are evident. Such scenery must necessarily exercise an elevating influence over the mind, must cultivate the æsthetic perceptions and increase and refine the artistic taste. We may add that abundance of light will be one of the chief features of the building: Nowhere will there be found a dark corner. Even the kitchen, which stands on the ground floor at the back, and is separated by a small yard from the main building, has two large windows, one opening on a view of the Cathedral, and the other commanding the passage that leads behind the Convent into Dowling-street. In fact, if the cook is not exceptionally devoted to her duty, or is at all inclined to let her eyes stray in devious directions, those who depend upon her to prepare their food may chance occasionally to find pepper in their pudding or sugar in their soup. The opportunity of observing what goes on without can hardly fail her. The building immediately adjoins the wing of the convent built some years ago, and the big blank wall, which for so long was an unsightly object, is now a Northern wall on the inside of the new building. It extends from this wall Southwards to within a few yards—30 feet we believe—of the cathedral. The whole construction is built on immensely strong concrete foundations, with brick work above. The portion, however, adjoining the cathedral is on the outside built of squared blue-stone faced with Oamaru stone—a variation generously made at a largely increased cost by the nuns, in order that the pile of buildings should harmonise with the beautiful architecture of the church. Entrance to the new building is obtained in front by a door in the middle portion and on the Southern side. This door opens into a passage off which are, in front, the lavatories of the day pupils, and at the back those of the boarders—who cannot be expected to mount to their dressing room at the top of the lofty house every time they want to wash their hands or smooth their hair. Between these lavatories a passage leads on the right into the refectory, a room of noble proportions—44 feet by 17 feet 6 inches—and which is already in a more advanced stage, the walls and ceiling being plastered, the latter in panels, formed by the boxed girders on which the floor above is laid. We may here state that all the floors are of concrete—crushed brick and cement—those above laid on iron girders and interlaced with hoop iron. The chief staircase also is a massive one of stone with concrete landings—a short flight of wooden steps alone leading from the passage of entrance to the reception rooms on the first floor. All the wood in the building put together would hardly make a shabby blaze, and it is an absolute impossibility that a fire can take place there. The iron girders that support the floors and divide the ceilings are, on the three sides exposed, boxed in wood as we said. From the kitchen which is at the rear of the refectory, the dishes will be handed in by a drum fitted in the thickness of the concrete wall. On the opposite side of the passage of entrance is the room devoted to the Kinder Garten in dimensions 36ft 6in. by 19ft. A door in the Eastern wall of this room leads into the extensive square well where the great stone stairs ascend to the upper floors, and opposite to this door is that of the gymnasium, a room in the back of the building, 21ft 6in by 20ft, and which will be fitted up under the direction of Professor Oscar David, the appliances being already to hand. On the first story over the Kinder Garten, and in the portion of the building faced with stone, is the principal hall of studies, possessing three large windows in front, and another in the Southern gable. The dimensions of this hall are 38ft 6in by 20ft, and it is 11ft 6in. in height. There are on this first floor, besides, parlours, or reception rooms in front, and at the back, completely isolated from all communication with the building, is a suite of apartments forming infirmary. Entrance to this is obtained from the cloisters, which, an arched in concrete on the side next the building, and resting on concrete walls that beneath go to form outer offices, scullery, larder, coal hole, and such like, run all along at the back of the building, leading from the rear of the convent to a flight of steps descending to a walk in the garden at the North side of the cathedral. The cloisters at present are roofed with galvanized iron, which, however, will in process of time give place to fluted glass. There is also on the first floor a bath room. The most remarkable room on the second floor is a large apartment which will be arranged as a series of music-rooms, in a manner as novel as it is ingenious. The plan has however, been found to work excellently in the old country. There will be two compartments each divided by glass partitions into four rooms. Between will be a passage where the directress of the musical studies can take up her place, keeping under her eye eight pupils at practice. The sound of each instrument will be confined to the music room in which it is played, an invention which is a palpable benediction in a boarding school. On the third floor are the dormitories, the principal, a room 44 feet 9 inches by 18 feet three

the dressing room, 37 feet six by 18 feet four; and which will be fitted up in a very admirable style. Besides these rooms of which we have spoken in detail, there are numerous others—class rooms, cloak-room, rooms for luggage, wardrobes, and conveniences of every kind that can be required. We have spoken of the light and the views. The ventilation also will be perfect—plenty of fresh air, but also abundance of warmth, secured by a spacious fire place in every room.—The drainage and sewage of the building have, likewise, been thoroughly well arranged. It is impossible that there can be any infection such as there commonly is from this source. Neither stagnant pool nor sewer-gas can produce any effect—for neither will be found within reach. It is, finally, a matter for congratulation that the Dominican Nuns, whose efficiency is so fully testified to, as will be seen, for example, from a report of the educational department in the Exhibition, published by us elsewhere, are, at so early a date, to become possessed of all the requisites and appliances which will enable them to put forth their utmost skill as teachers, with every prospect of adequate results. The architect of the building is Mr. Frank W. Petre, and the contractor Mr. D. W. Woods.

AFTER DEATH—WHAT?

(Brooklyn Catholic Review.)

THIS is the question posed, though not answered, by the school of unscientific philosophy represented to-day by the somewhat learned Messrs. Renan and Huxley, and the comparatively unlearned "Bob" Ingersoll and Johann Most. There is an answer. Let us hear it as it comes from the unwilling lips of the dead.

Everyone remembers Paul Bert—a famous man among men who would prefer not to be called infamous. The son of a good Catholic father and mother, he gained a worldwide notoriety as the noisy follower of the conscienceless leader of that atheistic radicalism whose first principle was self, and whose second and last was the exploitation of the ignorant, the mercenary, the vicious, in the interest of ungodliness, tricked out as liberty and progress. During this century no apostate showed a more bitterly ingenious enmity to the Church and to all religion than Bert. His shameful writings, his war against God and Christian morality in the schools were—are—a blot on civilisation, and their evil effect on the youth of France can only be measured fully in the future.

To Christians in France there came a moment of sad joy when the necessities of bad government banished Bert to Tonquin; but we can readily imagine how little comfort the news of his coming brought to the faithful missionaries who were labouring there. What, indeed, is the savagery of an ignorant pagan compared with that of an intelligent hater of Christ?

Strange to say the new governor seemed to have put off the old man. To a devout Catholic, M. Vial, he entrusted native Christian affairs. When M. Puginier, head of the French missions in Western Tonquin, paid Bert a visit of courtesy, he was kindly received, and the visit was promptly returned. Three months later, the man who as Minister re-echoed the brutal cry of his master against "clericism," went to Keso, the Cathedral town, to assist at the consecration of a new bishop, Mgr. Pineau. Did all this mean a change of heart, or merely of politics? Probably we shall never know.

In September, 1886, Bert went to Hué to see the Emperor Dong-Dang. A steamer failed him, the rainy season came out of time, the roads were broken up, the streams overflowed. Bert was impatient, and insisted on making the journey by land. He was overcome by fatigue; a dysentery from which he had suffered for several months now became acute. He reached Hanoi. There he died on November 16.

A few months after his death the rumour spread that Bert had made his peace with the Church on his death-bed. Stranger things have happened. Catholics were only too ready to believe the story. They are always rejoiced when a lost sheep returns to the fold. In due time the story was denied; but it is only in a recent number of *Le Correspondant*, November 10, 1889, that we have met with an authoritative statement of the facts. In a valuable and interesting article on "Christianity in Tonkin," M. Pierre de L'Huy—a name that was once more familiar than it is of late—reports that when he was at Hanoi in the April following Bert's death, he saw Father Lepage, procurator of the mission, and questioned him about Bert's end. "Paul Bert died without the sacraments," said Father Lepage. "The Bishop and I called to see him twice during his illness. On our first visit we saw Mme. Bert, who informed us that her husband did not need our services. The second time we called we saw M. Obailly, his son-in-law, who gave us the same answer. All we could do was to withdraw." Would it were otherwise! Bert's friends made as sure of his ending as Victor Hugo's friends made of the poet's. There are friends and friends, thank God?

Now comes the straightest, saddest, most instructive part of M. de L'Huy's narrative. Of course there was no Christian prayer, no blessed light, no Cross, no holy rite. But the family admitted a Buddhist priest, if priest we dare call him. In the chamber of death an altar was set up before a graven image of the Buddha, and the flames and the fumes of burning bamboo arose as incense and praise in its nostrils. A tragedy, indeed! A man of intellect, God-gifted, and yet too proud when living to acknowledge the One, True, Merciful God; and there his lifeless body pays forced tribute to a stock, a stone, a fool's deity, that, when living, he would have despised himself for worshipping.

Messrs. Huxley, Ingersoll, Most, right reason and revelation long ago answered your terrible question! After death God—or the devil. From Paul Bert's corpse there issues a warning voice giving a no less solemn answer. Hark ye! "After death—the glory of the Cross, of the loving Redeemer, or the shame of a senseless, heartless, grinning idol."

At a mission given by Jesuit Fathers in Altoona, Pa., a few weeks ago, ten Protestants were received into the Church.