

# New Zealand Gabel

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## Current Topics

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

CATHOLIC  
HEROISM IN  
NEW ZEALAND.

A CORRESPONDENT who writes to us over the signature, "An Admirer of Devotion," gives us some particulars of a heroic life and a heroic under-taking, which should have for our readers a very special interest. Our correspondent begins by a

reference to some details recently quoted by us, relative to the White Sisters, founded by Cardinal Lavigerie, and their work in the desert. They, says our correspondent, were settled in the desert of Sahara, and had received in their Hospital of St Elizabeth a goodly number of sick people. The accommodation becoming too narrow, the Sisters could not bear to see so much misery unaided, but spent their last farthing on enlarging their buildings. Then the question arose as to how they could feed their sick, whose number was considerably increased. These brave pioneers of African civilisation, forgetting the weakness and delicacy of their sex, armed themselves with spades and called upon the ground to furnish them with what they needed. The spade, however, did not answer for all their wants, and, therefore, they bought a plough. Cardinal Lavigerie himself turned the first sod, and the Sisters continued the work, not ashamed to undertake a labour which is generally looked upon as the privilege and duty of men. Our correspondent goes on to explain that heroic work of this kind is not confined to Africa, but actually finds its counterpart in New Zealand, and that, he says, not in the persons of simple peasants, having no fear of hardening their hands, and otherwise accustomed to labour, but in the person of a titled lady, brought up in luxury and wealth. In the year 1861, continues our correspondent, there landed at Auckland a young lady, who, in her humility, concealed her aristocratic birth. She was a niece of Monsignor Perier, Archbishop of Avignon, and a cousin of the famous statesman, Casimir Perier. She was descended from a noble family whose escutcheon went back to the Crusades. Mademoiselle Suzanne Aubert de Laye, more generally known now as the Mother Mary Joseph Aubert, has signalled herself for over 30 years in this Colony, by an education of the highest order, exceptional talents, a knowledge alike varied and solid, an extraordinary medical skill, and, above all, by a boundless devotion. For over thirty years, in Auckland, in Hawkesbay, and especially at Jerusalem, on the Wanganui River, she has not ceased to lavish on the poor and the sick of all denominations her enlightened care and the aid of her purse, always open to the necessitous. His Grace, the Archbishop of Wellington, desirous of extending in his diocese the good done by her, gave his approval to the wish expressed by several of his clergy, and commissioned her to found at Jerusalem a new Order of nuns who, under the name of Sisters of our Lady of Compassion, should devote themselves specially to the relief of all sufferers, and more particularly of those who were the most neglected. Our correspondent explains that the first work of the new Order took the shape of schools for the Native children. Next Mother Mary Joseph, whose heart was thrilled by the thought of the neglect from which certain old people suffered, opened an asylum for them. Two blind men about 80 years of age, and a woman of 85 who had been permanently injured in a fire, formed the commencement of the new undertaking—but soon there came, to swell the number of the adopted family, the orphaned, the crippled, the rickety, the incurable of all sorts. Our correspondent goes on to allude to the difficulty of providing, without settled means, for the needs of so many poor people. Up to the present, he adds, Mother Mary Joseph has not received any aid. The greater part of her "orphans" are of a class for whom the State makes no provision, because, unfortunately for them, their wretched parents are alive. Mother Mary Joseph does not think of sending them back to corruption and misery. She takes up her needle,—and her spade, and, in spite of her years, in spite of a very different training, she calls on the ground to give her food for her proteges. "There are beggars enough of both sexes," she said one day to her nuns. "The Protestants round about as need to see workers. If we are gratefully to accept the alms that charity thinks

well to bestow on us, we must know how to gain our living and that of the members of Christ with whom we have charged ourselves. Let us reckon first of all on God, and afterwards on our own arms." The example shown by the mother, our correspondent says, is faithfully followed by the daughters. If manual labour is not proscribed by the rule of the Sisters of Compassion, love and zeal subject all the nuns to it. Who, asks our correspondent, would be cowardly or fastidious in the face of such a heroic example? "What edifies me above all in the Sisters of Compassion," said a priest who had several times witnessed what goes on at Jerusalem, "is their devotion to and their practice of holy poverty." Another eye-witness added that what astonished him most was to see the contentment and cheerfulness of the Sisters in the midst of their poverty and the thousand sacrifices inherent in their sublime vocation. Our correspondent rightly believes that it will be of interest to our readers and ourselves to learn that, as soon as the aid of the charitable has made it possible for her, Mother Mary Joseph Aubert will erect a special building, where she will receive all those incurables, who, because of their deformities, or of the disgusting nature of their sores, or of the slight chance of ameliorating their condition, are refused admittance elsewhere. In France she made a particular study of such cases at an hospital for incurables. Our correspondent, in conclusion, appeals for aid towards this noble work so repulsive to human nature, but so beautiful in merit and in devotion before God. He proves his sincerity by a donation of £20, and that, as we are aware, from no very great income. The community, we are told, numbers eight professed nuns, one novice, and three postulants. Honour, exclaims our correspondent, and we heartily join in his sentiment, to these true spouses of Jesus Christ; honour, above all, to their venerated superiors and foundress, who has shown us to what extreme a great soul can devote itself when it is inflamed by the love of God and charity towards the neighbour. We need hardly say any more to recommend this appeal to the sympathy of our readers. The simple facts narrated are the most eloquent advocates of the great undertaking.

THE Adelaide Register declares that secularism in THE FARIBAULT his colony has been attended by most excellent PLAN AGAIN. moral effects. The public school teachers in South Australia, it would seem, have hit upon quite a Gospel method of giving moral instruction without the aid of religion. But, in fact, it may be gathered that secularism varies in its moral effects with climate. In one place, it is authoritatively stated that the criminal statistics have improved immensely since the system was introduced; in another place it is shown beyond contradiction that they have become much worse. And yet we should not have thought that there was any such marked difference between the climate of South Australia and that, for example, of Victoria. In the latter colony, nevertheless, we found one of the judges protesting, the other day, that, notwithstanding the liberal provision of education, crime among the younger members of the population was excessive. The Register takes much comfort from the interpretation he places upon the action of Monsignor Satolli, in America, and the manner in which he supposes him to be supported by the Pope, Catholics, indeed, who should depend upon the view of the matter given by the Register might suppose that Catholic schools were to be supported in America by way of a harmless amusement, or for some other fancy purpose. They are to be supported, he admits, but nothing is to be done towards inducing Catholics to send their children to them. The fact is, nevertheless, that the Pope leaves the matter in the hands of the Bishops. It is for them to determine under what circumstances the children may be sent to secular schools. We, in these colonies, are not especially concerned with the action of Monsignor Satolli. His Grace's mission is a special mission to America, and the Australasian colonies are not included in it—but, if they were, the education question among us would remain exactly as it is at present. The state of the case in America was not the same as that in these colonies. We had no Faribault Plan, such as that whose existence, under Archbishop Ireland, led to the whole controversy. No, nor, though, to all intents and purposes, that champion of secularism, Sir Robert Stout, pledged himself to the