

self in the position the French Government now occupies in refusing to pay the salaries which in 1801 it pledged itself to pay in return for great financial advantages it received from the Holy See consenting to remove the cloud that rested upon very valuable property.' But that is not all. All church property of every kind in France (presbyteries, seminaries, episcopal residences, churches, public oratories, institutes of charity and education, etc.) have been confiscated, with the sole exception of what came into ecclesiastical possession since 1801. Moreover, public worship is now placed in the hands of associations. 'What,' asks a French Senator, Admiral de Courbeville, 'will be the character of the associations? No one can tell.' But (as the New York 'Freeman' points out) it is safe to predict that an attempt will be made to utilise them in such a way as to disorganise and impede the Church in her work in France. 'The Law for the Separation of Church and State,' says our New York contemporary, 'has been so framed that the Government can bring great pressure to bear upon these associations, which henceforth will have the control over Church property that formerly was vested in the hierarchy.' Any doubt as to the intention and temper of the Freemason and Radical 'Bloc' that are the real rulers of France may be deemed to be set aside by the recent editorial declaration of one of its organs, the 'Lanterne': 'It is foolish to hope for a rapprochement, or even for a simple truce. Whether the Clericals accept the Law or revolt against it, we shall none the less continue to combat them without mercy.'

The secular press in the United States views the situation in France with more editorial sympathy than that of Great Britain and the Australasian colonies. In Australia and New Zealand, silence has become, on this theme, practically 'a mother-tongue' (to use Goldsmith's bold expression). In the 'Reformed Church Messenger' (American), Professor Vollmer, a non-Catholic, recently summed up the situation in the following words:—

'Let no American reader suppose that the separation of Church and State in France is of the self-same nature as in our own country. Far from it. The motive in France is deep-seated hatred of all religion, and the Bill in its final shape will work more hardship to the Protestants, for whom it was not intended, than to the Catholics. As in the so-called 'Culturkampf' in Germany in 1873, the Catholics are meant in the passage of several provisions, but while they will find means of escape, the Protestants will suffer the most. But even in its imperfect form, the Bill will prove a blessing in disguise to all religious bodies. They will become more independent, and being so, will be able to exert a more powerful, distinctly religious influence upon the people, although they may lose some political influence.'

So may it be. But the object of the enemies of all religion in France is the extinction, not the revival, of religion. We find a star of hope in the demonstrations now being made in France against the sacrilegious hands of the Government menials who have been sent to grope and burrow and fossick and make inventories even of the contents of the Holy of Holies. Such resistance was not expected. It has upset some of the calculations of the Ministry and compelled them to threaten and explain. The lessons of the early eighties have not been forgotten. And Brittany and the Auvergne are yet to come. Catholicism in France, like Catholicism in Germany, may, after all, march to victory and peace through defence of her sacred fanes and the rude but chastening experience of blow and bruise and prison-cell.

On Thursday evening at Wellington Captain R. Seddon, son of the Premier, was presented with an address expressing warm appreciation of his qualities, and hearty congratulations upon the vindication of his character. Accompanying the address was a cheque for over £700.

Notes

Our Suicides

We are 'getting on' in New Zealand. In 1900 there were 68 suicides in the Colony. In 1901 the number had risen to 70. The current 'Year-Book' counts just a hundred persons in New Zealand who threw aside the burden of life without waiting for heaven to give the summons. It appears, on the other hand, that self-slaughter, once so prevalent among the Maori, is now on the decline among the brown-skinned men. So may it be. But it is a curious reversal of conditions to see the Maori setting a lesson in civilisation to the pakeha. Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States are content to sit humbly at the feet of Japan and learn from the lately despised 'yellow monkeys' the art of war. Well, the degenerate white man may learn some lessons in a still nobler art from other 'inferior races' that we know of—the art of bearing patiently the big mischances as well as the smaller blisters of life.

A Warning Lesson

California does not allow into its public schools the Protestant or any other version of the Bible, or any 'emasculated caricature' thereof. But the spirit of our (Protestant) Bible-in-schools movement has got its grip upon the western State. And it 'gets there' in its own way. The School Board of Pasadena, for instance, makes careful inquiry into the religious beliefs of candidates for appointments to the teaching staffs under its jurisdiction. The religious tests for these public appointments is made to operate so consistently against Catholics in that Catholic region, that for the past ten years not one member of the proscribed creed has held the position of teacher in Pasadena. It seems to be an attempt to perpetuate in the West the open and scandalous boycott of Catholic teachers that constitutes the disgrace of the Bible-in-schools States of Old New England. Catholics in Pasadena are starting a crusade against this violation of the national Constitution. If such things can happen in the green wood of California, what might not occur in New Zealand under the sectarianising scheme of Dr. Gibb and his friends?

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The parish schools re-opened after the Christmas holidays on Monday.

The new Catholic church at Centre Bush in the parish of Winton will be blessed and opened by his Lordship the Bishop on Sunday, February 25.

The Rev. Fathers Carey and Murphy, of Melbourne, arrived in Dunedin in the early part of the week and left on Tuesday for the cold lakes district. They return to Melbourne early next week.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday from the last Mass until Vespers, after which there was the usual procession. The preacher in the evening was the Rev. Father MacDonald, of Christchurch, who delivered an impressive sermon on 'Penance.'

The annual schools' picnic took place at Wingatui yesterday. The children, accompanied by a goodly number of adults, were taken in a special train, which left for Wingatui at a quarter to ten o'clock. An energetic committee had made very complete arrangements for the entertainment of and catering for the children. The day was fairly fine, and young and old enjoyed themselves.

A bazaar in aid of the Gore Catholic church is to be held some time about the beginning of June (says the 'Mataura Ensign'). This is the first call of such a nature that has been made upon the public for fully four years, and no doubt the effort to be put forth will be liberally supported. At a meeting of the congregation held recently, when a bazaar was decided upon, Mrs. Poppelwell was appointed president, Miss Fraser treasurer, and Miss N. Johnston secretary.

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