

Judges Tierney and Lawlor, in the course of recent utterances, spoke, each from a different standpoint, of the decadence of present-day American domestic and public life. Well, Uncle Sam, like some of his younger brothers, sowed the wind. His sickle is now in the whirlwind. And the harvest of the others is beginning to turn yellow.

Notes

The Choke-Damp 'Cure'

Some years ago we wrote: 'The age that condones pre-natal murder will soon "light out" after bigger game. The incurable, the imbecile, the decrepit, the old, and the merely undesirable will, in this order, next go to the shambles.' In the light of recently attempted legislation in the United States, our prophecy seems in a fair way of being fulfilled. Here is a cable message that appeared in the daily papers just as the present week had reached the midway of its course:—

'Doctor Gregory has introduced into the Legislature of the State of Iowa a Bill legalising the painless killing of hopeless incurables at the instance of the patients themselves, and also of hideously deformed and idiotic children at the instance of their next of kin.'

A short time ago a similar Bill was brought into the Ohio Legislature by another choke-damp Solon. We commented on the matter some weeks ago in our editorial columns. We do not know what chances these Bills have of passing. But they indicate a murderous trend of the New Paganism that will need watching. It would be poetic justice if the movers and seconders were to be the first victims of the (Choke-Damp 'Cure.' The new Thuggism—the poisoning-off of deformed children and imbeciles and incurables—would remain a violation of the law of God and a disgrace to the medical profession, even though it were sanctioned by every Legislature from China to Peru.

The medical profession in America will, we presume, as a body, repudiate a project which proposes to turn the physician and surgeon, on occasion, into a worse kind of Jack Ketch. We have said 'a worse kind.' For the public hangman must await a judicial death-sentence and the sheriff's call; but the medical executioner (according to the Ohio and Iowa proposals) is not to be trammelled by any such rational safeguards. He is to be a sort of licensed roving executioner. By the law of God, and natural right, human life is equally sacred at every stage. The right to life is forfeited only by grave and unjust aggression. It can be lawfully taken by the individual in necessary self-defence of life and limb, and by the State against (for instance) such unjust aggressors and dangerous enemies of good order and the public weal as assassins, traitors, and those who levy against it a wrongful war. Said Bishop Ludden of Syracuse, speaking of the Ohio Bill: "To wilfully take human life in its beginning, progress, or ending, is murder, and cries to Heaven for vengeance. The doctrine that human life is to be treated the same as that of pugs, puppies, and pet cats will hardly prevail outside of fanatical and sentimental doctrinaires, sceptics, infidels, cowardly suicides, and gamblers. The time of suffering and sickness unto death is precious, and ought not to be wantonly abused or tampered with. Sufferings, when rightly borne, have their precious value and a purifying process that eliminates the dross and baser metal and leaves the pure gold refined.'

Catholic Encyclopedia

Italian, French, and German Catholic literature are rich in works of ready reference on all manner of subjects relating to the Ancient Faith. Thus far, English literature has been singularly barren in supplying a ready means of information on Catholic subjects to the Pro-

testant inquirer and to the Catholic man of thought and action. Two or three meagre Catholic Dictionaries represent the sum total of effort in that direction. The long-standing need is met and the old reproach is removed by the forthcoming 15-vol. Catholic Encyclopedia, to which reference has already been made in our columns. The new work embraces within its generous scope practically every subject pertaining to the Church on which Catholics could well desire information. Its Departments embrace Religion, Scripture, Apologetics, Dogmatic Theology, Patrology, Canon Law, Moral Theology, Pastoral Theology, Liturgy, Catechetics and Homiletics, Music, The Saints, Asceticism and Mysticism, Christian Archaeology, Church History, History and Historians, Civil History, Biography, Ecclesiastical Statistics, Civil Law, Ecclesiastico-Civil Law, Ecclesiastical Geography, Missions, Christian Art, Religious Orders, Science, Political Science and Economy, Philosophy, Sociology, Bibliography, Education, Languages and Linguistics, and Literature. The foremost Catholic scholars of America constitute its Editorial Board, and a partial list of their collaborators runs into over four hundred names of men of various nations that have made their mark in Catholic science and literature. The publishers are the Robert Appleton Company, 1 Union Square, New York.

The inaugural volume will shortly see the light, and the others will follow in due and rapid course. Each will consist of 800 pages, and the complete set of fifteen will consist of 12,000 pages, 15,000,000 words, and over 2000 fine illustrations. The specimen pages received by us by the last American mail are a splendid example of the perfection to which the printing of maps, colored plates, half-tone engravings, and letterpress work is brought among our go-ahead cousins beyond the Pacific. In these respects, we know of no encyclopedic publication issued in Great Britain or on the Continent of Europe that can compare with the specimen pages of the work now before us. Australia and New Zealand will occupy their due place in the new Catholic Encyclopedia. Within its broad purview, this notable publication will include 'what the Church teaches and has taught; what she has done and is still doing for the highest interests of mankind; her methods past and present; her struggles; her triumphs; and the achievements of her members not only for her own direct interests, but for the broadening and deepening of all true science, literature, and art.' The new Catholic Encyclopedia is right up to date. Its publication will be a notable event of Catholic literary activity in English-speaking countries. And no priest's book-shelf or parochial library will be properly furnished without a copy of this fine new work.

DIocese OF DUNEDIN

His Lordship the Bishop celebrated Mass and preached at Riverton on Sunday morning, and preached in the evening at Otautau. Seventy-five candidates have been confirmed in the parish of Riverton.

The members of St. Patrick's Choir, South Dunedin, held their annual outing at Woodside in the early part of last week. An ample spread was provided, and a very pleasant day was spent in exploring the pretty bush and admiring the charming scenery. The party reached town on the return journey about half-past eight, and all agreed that it was the most enjoyable outing yet held by the members.

The committee in charge of the arrangements for the St. Patrick's night concert, which is to take place in His Majesty's Theatre to-morrow (Friday) evening, have everything in readiness, and there is every reason to expect that from an artistic and attendance point of view it will surpass all previous entertainments in connection with the Irish national festival. Those desirous of securing seats should do so immediately, otherwise they may be disappointed as the accommodation is being rapidly filled up.

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