

Some Good New Books.

(Louis Gille and Co., Liverpool St., Sydney).

Mother M. Salome (of St. Mary's Convent, Cambridge, England) has brought out in book form 44 of her 'Good-Night Stories Told to Very Little Ones.' The title sufficiently indicates the contents of this well-printed and neatly bound volume. The stories appeared originally in the English 'Catholic Fireside.' They are well and simply told, are sure to interest the little ones, and in practically every case convey some religious truths or useful lessons adapted to the budding child-mind. (Pp. viii-104, 8vo., cloth gilt, 2s 6d).

'Memoir of the Life of Sister Mary Genevieve Beale.' Compiled by a Sister of St. Louis. (Pp. viii-106, 8vo., cloth gilt, 2s). This is a well-told story of the birth, early life, travels, and conversion of Priscilla Beale, foundress of the Sisters of St. Louis in Ireland. It is an interesting biography, and parents, teachers, and superiors of religious houses will find in the volume many wise maxims for their guidance. We should like to transfer some of these 'wisdoms' to our columns, did space permit. But here is an everyday lesson in firmness by that remarkable nun which those concerned should mark, learn, and inwardly digest: 'Never promise to a child without performing; do not threaten a punishment which you do not intend to inflict, or promise a recompense which you do not intend to give.'

A timely and very welcome work is 'The Religious Persecution in France, 1900-1906.' The author is Mr. J. Napier Brodhead, author of 'Slav and Moslem' and favorably known in the United States for his contributions on the trials of religion in France. The author has long been resident in the Republic. He is a close observer and writes a facile and at times caustic pen. In one respect his recently published work stands in a class apart: the thirty chapters that sum up the story of the six years' persecution were each written upon the spot, at the time that the events they describe were happening under the writer's eyes. Each chapter has thus the freshness and directness of a sketch from nature. And the whole work tells the story of the Atheist-Freemason-Radical-Socialist onslaught on religion as the various stages of the attack developed before the author's vision. He lived through it all, saw it all evolve, and as an observant and intelligent student of social and religious problems he sets vividly before the reader the preparations for the Associations Law, the fate of the Congregations, the gyrations, inconsistencies, despotism, and guile of the fanatical Jacobinism of the time, the part which Freemasonry played in the persecution and the steady progress of violence and anarchy which led to so-called 'separation' of Church and State, the inventories, etc., down to the close of 1906. In the circumstances of our time, Mr. Brodhead's book deserves a wide circulation, and a place in every public and parochial and society library, where its plain and direct narrative will serve as an antidote to the misrepresentations that have been for so long oozing from the cables into our secular papers. (Pp. viii-260, 8vo., cloth gilt, 5s).

The 'Ave Maria' Series.

The admirable series of 'Ave Maria' publications have been time and again recommended by us for the family bookshelf and the school prize-list. The latest addition to the series is entitled 'Essentials and Non-Essentials of the Catholic Religion.' The author of the book is the Rev. H. G. Hughes (Sheffield, England), who has been long and favorably known to readers of our bright contemporary, the 'Ave Maria.' The object of the work is (says the author) 'to aid in the removal of a very common misconception amongst those not of the household of faith—a misconception arising from a confusion of those things in belief and practice which are of obligation, and those things in which Catholics are left free.' The author answers the following four questions: (1) What are Catholics bound to believe? (2) What are Catholics free to believe or not? (3) What are Catholics bound to practise? (4) What are Catholics free to practise or not? The answers are, for the scope of the book, given in a clear and concise way; and those within, as well as those without the fold of the faith will find Father Hughes's book instructive and helpful. Some common misconceptions of our separated brethren, and even of many Catholics none too well instructed in their faith, are, for instance, clearly dealt with under the headings (I) Opinions of theologians; (II) Pious beliefs; (III) Private revelations and particular ecclesiastical miracles.' (Price 75 cents

retail, 3s; obtainable from 'The Ave Maria,' Notre Dame, Indiana, U.S.A., or through any Catholic book-seller).

THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND

A FORWARD STEP

In the House of Commons last week, Mr. Birrell's Administrative Council (Dublin) Bill, after the closure had been applied, was read a first time by 416 votes to 121.

Mr. Redmond said he received the bill with qualified approval. He disapproved of nominated members, but accepted them in the hope of allaying the fears of the minority. He withheld his final judgment of the bill, but would not repel any device for lessening his countrymen's sufferings.

The Irish Unionists vehemently denounced the measure, predicting religious strife, and that the minority would be at the mercy of the permanent Catholic majority.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Mr. Birrell (Chief Secretary for Ireland) explained that the only way the Administrative Council (Dublin) Bill could lead to a larger policy was in affording triumphant proof of the capacity of the Irish masses for governing themselves and governing the minority ably and impartially. The council would consist of 82 members elected by local government electors, and 24 members nominated by the Crown, with the Under-secretary to the Lord Lieutenant added as an ex-officio member. It would have complete control over and exercise powers now or hereafter vested in eight departments, including those of local government, congested districts, public works boards, and the new Education Department.

Mr. Birrell emphasised the fact that the Board of Works under the new bill could perform its duties only by taking wide views and resisting pressure. The pension rights of existing public servants would be safeguarded and a separate Irish Treasury under an Irish Treasurer would be established. There would also be an Irish fund of £4,000,000, consisting of the £2,000,000 now spent by the eight departments, with an additional £60,000 per annum from the British taxpayer, which was due to the large expenditure, and would be a charge on the Consolidated Fund, and, finally, £1,400,000 for local grants to be paid to the Irish Treasury and administered by the council. Any act due to preference shown to religious denominations would be invalid. Parliament's final authority would be secured by empowering the Lord Lieutenant to reserve the council's resolutions. Roman Catholics would be eligible for the position of Lord Lieutenant.

Mr. Balfour doubted whether Mr. Birrell regarded his preposterous scheme seriously. He predicted it would be unworkable. It would create constant friction, besides which it would not relieve the House of Commons of one hour's work. It was unsatisfactory that any party should be used for Nationalist ends.

The 'Westminster Gazette' says that the bill is different from Home Rule, and strictly in accordance with the pledges given before the elections.

The 'Times' says that had not the Nationalists openly exulted in the bill as a clear step to the larger policy they would not have been playing up to their partners. It is in entire accordance with Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's policy to arm them with an effective though skilfully-disguised engine enabling them to prosecute their aims.

There is a great Nationalist outcry in Ireland against the party leaders acquiescing in what is regarded as an unsatisfactory and inadequate Council Bill.

Mr. Timothy Healy, M.P., when interviewed, declared that none of the Dublin Castle Boards had been transferred to the Administrative Council. The bill was an effort to transfer to Irish shoulders England's difficulties. The measure was utterly mischievous and objectionable from both the English and Irish point of view.

The Earl of Crewe (Lord President of the Council), speaking at Cambridge, said the Irish Council Bill was a moderate measure. Doubtless a great many Liberals were disappointed at the small scope of the bill, but a considerable number thought it went far enough. He did not believe that in matters of constitutional change it was wise to go far ahead of the party, and whether in increasing the self-government of Ireland or dealing with the relations between the Lords and Commons caution was needed in order to secure the party's general support.