

The eternal school question' might have been settled a generation ago on equitable or tolerable lines, so far as religious instruction is concerned, had this attitude been taken up by the Reformed denominations and pressed in season and out of season upon the country. In the meantime, the heavier loss has fallen upon them, and the mischief still keeps working. Here, as beyond the Pacific, the conditions largely prevail which Bishop Boyd Vincent (Protestant Episcopalian) recently described as follows at Pittsburg: 'We give one hour a week to the education of children for eternity at the hands of Sunday school teachers, frequently incompetent, and then wonder at the falling off in church-going and the lack of interest in spiritual things. Part of the time devoted to study in the public schools could be taken to advantage for instilling the principles of Christianity into the minds of our youth. In this respect the Catholic Church has distanced Protestants.' Catholics in New Zealand will ever be willing to consider any fair and equitable scheme for allowing 'part of the time devoted to study in the public schools' to be taken up in 'instilling the principles of Christianity into the minds of our youth'. And some such scheme as that outlined in the circular quoted above would bring the Catholic body and the Bible-in-schools movement into closer and more friendly touch than they have been at any time since secularism was made an integral part of our Education Act.

Notes

Catholic Marriages

The holidays—and influenza—combined to prevent the issue of our pamphlet on marriages for Easter. Advantage has, however, been taken of the delay to throw additional matter into it, so that readers will benefit by the unavoidable postponement of publication. The pamphlet will run into quite respectable proportions, and will be issued at the close of the present week.

A Railway Horror

On Easter Monday Victoria achieved a railway disaster which seems to make a 'record' for Australasia. In the extent of the butchery, and in the circumstances of special horror that surrounded it, this crowning Australian calamity recalls the great catastrophes that occur from time to time in the land which is said to slay more passengers and pile its railroad cars higher and blow their locomotives further up, than any other country on the face of the earth. A few years ago, in Sydney, an accident of a similar nature tore and harrowed public feeling—accompanied, as it was, by fire that tortured the imprisoned victims, some of them to death. But neither in its death-roll, nor in other of its accompanying circumstances, was it comparable to the ghastly tragedy that made night hideous at Braybrook Junction and injured sixty people, and by 'a short, sharp shock', or by slow agony, severed, for thirty-seven persons the partnership of soul and body. To the bereaved, we tender our heartfelt condolence; to the living injured our sympathy and best hopes; and for the dead we pray eternal rest.

Our Coming Cockney Accent

Educationists up Auckland way are getting 'onaisy in their minds' at the extent to which the Cockney accent is getting a hold upon the tongues of young Maorilanders in that region. Even further South we have noticed a tendency among the young to drop into the perverted and multiple vowel-sounds and the blurred consonants which mark Cockney speech, and which have already got a strong hold on young Australia. Two or three examples of the former will suffice. 'Bad', for instance, in young Australian speech, becomes 'bay-ud' (a dyssyllable)—the 'u' sound of the latter syl-

lable being tripped so lightly and rapidly off the tongue that it is rather suggested than spoken. Then we have such familiar Cockney perversions as 'kike' for 'cake', 'gripes' for 'grapes', 'kime' for 'came', and 'flaah' for 'flower'. 'Winder' and 'feller' and such like versions of final 'ow' sounds are not peculiar to Cockneydom, nor to England, but are found in every English-speaking country except Ireland—we are not sure about Scotland. 'Idear' for 'idea' is a blunder into which even educated people (except Irishmen) lapse without qualms of conscience; and the words 'raw oil' might almost be used as a 'shibboleth' for determining whether or no a man is a Briton. If he says 'raw roil', the chances are that he is. The young Australian's pronunciation of such words as 'cow', 'now', 'allow', etc., is a fearful and wonderful thing. The 'ow' sound is invariably (as in the case of the 'a' in 'bad') turned into two syllables, the first with a strongly-marked accent, the second extremely rapid and slurred—like a grace-note in music. We may represent this second syllable either by 'oo' cut very short, like the snapping of a cap. Thus 'cow' becomes 'kay-oo' or 'kay'w'—with the accent on the first syllable, and the second almost closed quite off, but yet decidedly indicated.

Ten years ago, when fresh from the sound of the Australian language, we noticed what seemed to us at the time quite a remarkable absence, in the young New Zealander, of the Cockneyisms which are so observable in the speech of his cousin beyond the Tasman Sea. But, so far as our observation (especially among State school children) goes, Cockneyisms, and the tendency towards Cockneyisms, are much more marked than they were ten years ago. Where they come from, we cannot say; for we are unable to ascertain that persons born within the sound of Bow Bells constitute, numerically, anything beyond a negligible proportion of our population, or that many of them are engaged in the responsible work of teaching New Zealand's young idea how to shoot. One of the most curious results of the new tendency is the hold which, to our knowledge, certain Cockneyisms of speech have got upon the tongues of one or two Irish acquaintances of ours whose accent, in all other respects, is as sweet and mellow as every word dropped from the mouth of a Western Celt.

Some Warning Wisdom

There is a world of warning wisdom in the facts set forth in the course of an able and lengthy article on the Catholic newspaper in the March issue of the 'Month'. 'French Catholics', says the writer; 'neglected the press, and French Catholics have been swept off their feet by the rising tide of secularism. It is absurd to imagine that the present Government in France has to deal with a majority, or even a well organised and substantial minority, of practical Catholics. The bulk of the people simply do not care about religion. And this state of affairs could scarcely have arisen had they been sustained and fortified, instructed and organised, by a Catholic press. The Catholics of Germany, on the other hand, are a very considerable power in the country. They are thoroughly well organised, they have their religion at heart, and they bring it to bear upon the world about them. In spite of severe persecution and overwhelming difficulties, they have drilled themselves into an invincible army. And they have done so mainly by means of the Catholic press, to the support of which bishops, priests, and laity devote themselves with untiring energy'.

Here, in the opposite fortunes of the Church in two adjoining nations, we have an illustration of the truth of the words spoken by Pius X., on a recent occasion, to a French journalist: 'In vain will you build churches, give missions, found schools—all your works, all your efforts will be destroyed, if you are not able

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