

of Australia and New Zealand in the early part of the present year. Well, the 'scandal' has had the usual sequel of those sensational anti-clerical stories that the snappers-up of the Continental cable agencies gather with such eager care and send on the wings of the lightning to the ends of the earth. Here is the end of the Chevallier 'scandal,' as told by the Paris correspondent of the *Edinburgh Catholic Herald* of October 31: 'The tribunal of Anney has just acquitted Canon Chevallier and M. Belleville, a sacristan, of a charge of embezzlement. For more than eight months the anti-clerical press and public have made bitter and venomous attacks on the accused. It was the great scandal of the year, related in all the provincial papers, and complacently copied by the Paris journals. The enemies of the Church gloried in it, but from beginning to end the charge was a mass of fabrications. Now the Court has exposed these lies, and the Canon and the sacristan have been found not guilty. The inventors of the charge should feel overwhelmed with shame and remorse if they have any redeeming feature in their character, which is doubtful. In any case, it is satisfactory to learn that certain papers are to be sued for libel.'

It is hardly necessary to state that, true to their customary policy in such matters, the cable agencies did not give so much as a hint regarding the happy termination of a bogus 'scandal' which they had so long and so strenuously exploited. We venture the hope that responsible and respectable New Zealand secular papers that published in good faith the story of the Chevallier 'scandal' will now give the benefit of equal publicity to its upshot at the Anney Court.

### R. L. Stevenson and the Church

The home of Robert Louis Stevenson's widow in San Francisco has just become a convent of the 'barefooted Carmelite' nuns. The house was saved with great difficulty from the besieging flames of the great earthquake conflagration, that circled it with a red wall of circumvallation; it is henceforth to be a home of prayer and fasting, and penance for the benefit of erring humanity. Robert Louis Stevenson's famous defence of Father Damien (the apostle of the lepers of Molokai) from the coarse calumnies of an easy-chair missionary of Honolulu, is a classic that should live as long as the letters of Junius. In its October number (p. 472) the *Ave Maria* says that Stevenson 'was at heart a Catholic. He had made up his mind,' adds the *Ave*, 'to join the Church, and was about to enter upon a course of preparatory instruction when the last summons came. Peace to his gentle soul! We like to believe that the brave defender of Father Damien is a sharer in the "riches, rest, and glory" that must now be the heroic missionary's eternal portion. The assertion so often repeated, that Stevenson had regrets for publishing that famous open letter of his is absolutely false. Of this we hold quite satisfying proof.'

### A Christian Union Society

One of the signs of the times is the groping of the Reformed denominations after the Christian unity which they rent asunder during the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century. Some thirty years ago the *London Times* hung the following label upon the endless jarring divisions of the Protestant creeds in England: 'Eight hundred religions and only one saviour.' Full many a new sect has risen since then, and earnest and thoughtful men of various creeds have been casting about for some remedy for those scandalous divisions which rend the seamless robe of Christ, clog Christian progress, and make a laughing-stock for the heathen. A report in the *New Zealand Herald* (Auckland) of December 9 conveys the information that a number of clergymen of various Reformed faiths in the Northern Province have formed a Christian Union Society, 'which shall afford to all who join it opportunities for common prayer, mutual study and discussion, and the cultivation of a spirit of Christian brotherhood.' The circular convening the meeting expressed a 'deep sense' of 'the dangers of the unhappy divisions which so seriously delay and obstruct the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth.' Canon MacMurray appealed for union 'because of the weakness and comparative failure of the Church, as a result of her unhappy divisions.' It is becoming more and more clear,' added he, 'to thinking Christians of every name, that the weakness and injury from which Christ's kingdom is suffering, through our unhappy divisions, ought to be ended.' 'In the face of the trend' of events to-day,' said the Rev. W. Gray-Dixon, 'there is evident need of Christian unity. . . . The forces of Anti-Christ are marshalling at our very doors, and I believe the Church should present a united front against them.' And so on.

The 'reformers' threw down the apple of discord in Western Christendom. We wish God-speed to every effort

of our Reformed brethren to undo the work of disunion that was done by the Reformation.

### Cardinal Moran and State Aid

At the opening of the Christian Brothers' Training College at Strathfield (near Sydney), Cardinal Moran suggested a *modus vivendi* which would terminate the religious difficulty in the public schools. 'He trusted,' says a press message, 'that the day would come when the Commonwealth would extend to Catholic institutions the blessings of State-aided education, to which the country was entitled. Cardinal Gibbons, head of the Catholic Church in America, had formulated a scheme of compromise which, in the speaker's opinion, would be very suitable for Australia. It was that the State should appropriate funds, so much per capita, to support all denominational schools and look after their management. Examinations, tests, etc., and text-books on all non-religious matters should be identical with those of the public schools. Then children attending Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and other denominational schools might be instructed in their respective religions by teachers of their own faith. By this system there would be no taxation without representation, and each would get a just return from his taxes in accordance with the truest principles of just government.'

### Crime in France

A cable-message from Paris in last week's daily papers ran as follows:—'After discussing a proposal to abolish the death penalty, the Chamber of Deputies, in view of the increase in crimes of violence, decided by 330 to 201 votes that capital punishment should be maintained.' We commend this message to the attention of the writer of a recent letter in the *Wanganui Chronicle* alleging the phenomenal decrease of crime in France as evidence of the blessing of godless public instruction. We also invite his consideration to the significance of the choice made by the (French) Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques (Academy of the Moral and Political Sciences) for its prize essay for the present year—'Des Causes et des Remèdes de la Criminalité croissante de l'Adolescence' ('The Causes of, and the Remedies for, the increasing juvenile Crime'). So much we learn from the October number of the *Ave Maria* (p. 570). The removal of the basis on which moral education has hitherto rested, has (says the *Ave*) proved disastrous to the Third Republic, and 'all Frenchmen who deserve to be classed as sane deplore the warfare against religion, and are asking themselves when will it end, and what will its results be.'

Here again history repeats itself. In his *Origines de la France Contemporaine (Le Régime Moderne, vol. ii., p. 118)*, Taine wrote as follows regarding the results of crippling the action of those wings of Christianity, which alone enable fallen man to rise above himself: 'Always and everywhere, for eighteen hundred years, whenever those wings fail or are broken, public and private morals are degraded. In Italy during the Renaissance, in England under the Restoration, in France under the National Convention and the Directorate, man seemed to become as pagan as in the first century; he became at once as he was in the times of Augustus and Tiberius, voluptuous and hard-headed; he misused others and himself; brutal or calculating egoism regained ascendancy, cruelty and sensuality were openly paraded, and society became the abode of ruffians and the haunt of evil.'

### PILGRIMAGES TO ROME

The English National Pilgrimage, conducted by the Catholic Association (writes the Rome correspondent of the *Catholic Weekly*), was received in audience by the Holy Father at midday on October 26. The pilgrimage was introduced by the Archbishop of Westminster. The pilgrims assembled first in the Court of San Damaso, carrying their banner with the English, Scotch, Irish, and Welsh arms, and from there proceeded to the Sala Regia, where the Masters of Ceremonies and the Papal Private Chamberlains assigned them their places. His Holiness appeared shortly after, accompanied by Mgr. Bisleti; Archbishop Stonor; the Bishops of Birmingham, Northampton, Auckland, Salford, and Portsmouth; the Auxiliary Bishop of Portsmouth; Mgrs. Giles, Tynan, Brown, Courtenay, Gandy and Hill. The Pope was followed by his Domestic Prelates, and was escorted by the Noble Guards, while the Swiss Guards rendered military honors. His Holiness was greeted with the heartiest warmth on his entrance, and at sight of him many of the pilgrims wept tears of emotion. The pilgrims, who had carried with them many religious objects to be blessed, knelt, forming a line along which the

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