

obtain a place in an institution like the Athenæum.' To a smug Pharisee who contended that he had read without mental or moral harm the novel complained of, 'Catholic' makes reply: 'This is certainly a comfort. I hope it is not to be explained on the principle that you cannot spoil a bad egg—not even by pointing at it the finger of scorn.' And again: 'If "Freedom" has a habit of sampling literary garbage it is not the Athenæum, I should conceive, that must act the part of a scavenger for his convenience.' Here is another bit of practical wisdom and enlightened common-sense from the hard-hitting letters of the writer referred to: 'People deficient in mental training or, what is more important, mental ability, who go in for "reading everything" invariably become illustrations of a truthful adage, "Set a beggar on horse-back and he will ride to perdition." Liberty to do so no one will deny them, but surely it is not public subscription that is to provide the horse.'

Meantime the local Athenæum Committee have acted a straightforward and honorable part. They have withdrawn the offending book from the Library shelves pending a meeting of the Committee and have requested 'Catholic' to bring or send to the Librarian a list of the books to which exception is taken, and a meeting of the general committee will be at once called for the purpose of dealing with the complaint.' 'Catholic' has raised a question of far more than local interest. We shall watch with interest the further course of the affair, and in the meantime shall have something to say upon the matter in an early issue of the N.Z. TABLET.

Notes.

An Australian exchange says: 'The New Woman will soon rule in Maoriland. She has votes for parliamentary and municipal elections. She is entitled to sit in municipal councils—and has sat. She has even been mayor—very much—at Onehunga. And in a brief space we may expect to hear of women sitting in Parliament.' Our contemporary's information is a bit antiquated. Every one in New Zealand knows that there are a dozen or so of women sitting in our Parliament—old women, of course.

It is well for the Treasury of various countries that there is a conscience abroad with a sjambok in its hand or a sharp goal, and—among other things—a confession to apply the rawhide or the keen point to the quarter where it is calculated to do most good. The Colonial Treasurer probably realises this; for, in last week's *Gazette*, by his direction, the Receiver-general (Mr. J. B. Heywood) acknowledged the receipt of £2 in bank notes from an anonymous person, with the following words: 'Whoso covereth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.'

'A bookless house is a desert,' says the *New Century*. 'But a house where books have not been chosen with care, is a field of luxuriant and poisonous weeds. A list of the best one hundred books, chosen from the Catholic point of view, ought to be made by some professors of books, as Emerson phrases it. The spiritual life must be fed by the sacraments and prayer, but there must be food for the memory, the imagination, and the judgment. We do not want to encourage a race of polemicists, but there is great need that the young should have their minds stored with reasons for the faith they hold. A well-chosen book never grows stale or tiresome. It is a perpetual and good friend.'

There is scarcely anything in the air above or on the earth or in the waters beneath the earth but some curious statist with plenty of time on his hands has counted and classified and catalogued. An English enthusiast of this kind has been probing the present century with the following results: It will (he informs us) have twenty-four leap years—the greatest number possible. February will have five Sundays three times—1920, 1948, and 1976. The earliest possible date on which Easter can occur is March 12th. The last time it occurred on that date was 1818. The latest date that Easter can occur is April 27th. It will occur but once in the twentieth century on that date—1943. The middle day of the century will be January 1st, 1951. And the century will be marked by a grand total of 380 eclipses.

Stray donkeys and frolicsome ghosts should not be allowed to be at large at unseasonable hours. No self-respecting ghost ought to be seen abroad earlier than midnight, otherwise his presence is likely to frighten nervous people. Neither should he be found at any great distance from some grim castle or antiquated pile of buildings, otherwise the unsentimental people of this prosaic age

will cast doubts on his genuineness, and question his *bona fides*. A 'ghost,' who did not keep proper hours, was haled before the Wellington Stipendiary Magistrate the other day, and severely admonished. This was much better than to have received the contents of some pea rifles, with which a few irate individuals, whose friends had been scared, awaited his coming.

Belgium is, *par excellence*, the Catholic country of Europe. By all the theories that have found favor in some non-Catholic pulpits and newspapers in this Colony Belgium ought, therefore, to be a melancholy example of ignorance, unprogressiveness, all-round villainy, and general chuckle-headedness to the rest of Europe. But, alack for the theorists! it is the most thickly populated, the most contented, the most progressive, and probably the best educated country on or off the Continent. The Paris Exposition awarded to the Belgian teaching method in primary schools the first and highest award. And now comes the administrative commission of the Pedagogical Museum of Switzerland, and says: 'On the occasion of the Universal Exposition we intend to complete our educational collections by adding to them what in Paris appeared to bear the seal of progress. On this point the exhibit made by the Kingdom of Belgium was considered by us as being without rival; everything is worth noticing in the different sections in which the Belgian State has admirably synthesised what it does to realise its noble motto, "The School for Life." We may add that Spain, with less than half the population of the United Kingdom, has, according to Mulhall's *Dictionary of Statistics* (ed. 1900, p. 232) absolutely more students in its universities than England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland combined. Mulhall adds: 'The number of university students compared with population is much greater in Spain and Belgium than in other European countries.'

MARIST BROTHERS' FUND.

THE Rev. Father O'Shea, Wellington, hon. sec. Marist Brothers' Indemnity Fund, informs us that the total amount received to date for the above fund is £334, this being about half of the expenses incurred in defending the Brothers.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN.

Mr. J. B. Callan, jun., has passed the first section of the B.A. and first section of the LL.B. degrees.

We understand that the amount received at the laying of the foundation stone of the Convent of Mercy, South Dunedin, and the subscriptions since come to hand, bring the total up to £500.

On Sunday next Rev. Father Coffey will be in Mossburn, after which he will visit Dipton and Winton, and will take up subscriptions throughout the mission in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage, South Dunedin.

In the list of successful candidates at the recent Junior Civil Service examination will be found the names of the following pupils of the Christian Brothers' School, Dunedin:—John F. O'Leary, Otakia; John Seaman Milson, J. A. Knox, Dunedin; J. J. Delargey, Waiakia.

We are pleased to hear that Dr. Hall, son of Mr. W. J. Hall, registrar of births, deaths, and marriages at Dunedin, has been appointed senior house surgeon at the Dunedin Hospital, in place of Dr. O'Neill who went with the sixth contingent to South Africa. Dr. Hall had been for some time acting as assistant house surgeon at the Christchurch Hospital.

The retreat for women, conducted by the Very Rev. Father Boyle, C.M., Sydney, was brought to a close in St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday afternoon, when there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and renewal of baptismal vows. The attendance at the various exercises during the week was very good, and the unprecedentedly large number of persons who approached the Holy Table at the early Masses on Sunday was not only most edifying, but gave ample evidence that the labors of the Very Rev. Father Boyle during the previous week had borne good fruit. On Sunday evening a retreat for men was opened, and will be brought to a close at Veppers on Sunday.

THE HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

OPENING A NEW BRANCH AT WAIMATE.

(By one of the Delegates.)

ONE more branch has been added to the many already existing of that excellent organisation, the Hibernian Society, this time at Waimate. The credit of the starting of the new branch is due to Rev. Fathers Regnault and O'Connell. It was at the former's request that the district officers, on their way northwards after attending the Dunedin conference, visited Waimate. They were met on arrival by the zealous pastor, who heartily welcomed them. The executive officers comprised the D.P., Bro. M. O'Sullivan; P.D.P., Bro. Flynn; D.S., Bro. W. Kane; and D.T., Bro. M. J. Sheahan, who were accompanied by P.D.P., Bros. Sellars (Christchurch),