

the Catholic boys to reconcile the non-Catholics to the hour's or half-hour's religious instruction they received. This was to be done by keeping the Catholic boys at secular studies, not for their benefit, but for the solace of their companions. And there was much more than this involved. The Catholic children would, without doubt, in many cases be morally compelled to attend the religious instruction given to the Protestant children. That was done at present. It would be done more frequently under the proposed arrangement. Now a Catholic parent must formally declare in writing that he does not wish to have his children become Protestants by attending Protestant religious instruction. From the uncontradicted statement of a Catholic parent, published a short time ago, it was not enough for the parent to sign a printed form sent to him by the head teacher declaring his unwillingness that his children should attend. In addition, it was required that the children should have with them a letter stating the same fact, otherwise they were required to attend religious instruction. Nothing could show the spirit in which the system was worked more clearly than the defence made by a lay reader lately for detaining children known to be Catholic. The defence was that he was only giving an orthodox exposition of the Lord's Prayer. But the next day his subject might be the number of the sacraments, or the Lord's Supper, or Justification by Faith. To reverse the picture, suppose a Catholic teacher gave an exposition of the Hail Mary or the seven Sacraments, and addressed his remarks to Protestant children, and then defended himself by saying that such orthodox doctrine could harm no child. He was not surprised, however, at such a defence being urged by a lay reader. A leading Protestant divine, in discussing this question with him (the Archbishop) a few days ago, had said, after all, there are not many points of difference between Catholics; in fact, he added, if you took away the adoration of the Blessed Virgin nothing else would exist. (Laughter.) It was shocking that a gentleman in his position should not know that the Catholic Church absolutely repudiated the "adoration of the Blessed Virgin" as being one of its dogmas, and that it should be thought that there were no other points of difference between Catholicism and Protestantism. If the proposal which was suggested by the Legislative Council were to become law, the State schools would become places for proselytising Catholic children. But he relied upon the general—indeed, he might say the generous—public to prevent anything of the kind happening.

### Catholics Led the Way.

The following paragraph is going the rounds of the secular press:—

'The Ministry of Agriculture, St. Petersburg, has just decided to found an agricultural high school for women, which will be the first institution of the kind in Europe. The women who pass through this institution will enjoy the same rights as the successful male students of the existing high schools.'

Our secular contemporaries are in error here. The Russian Minister of Agriculture had not to go far afield to find 'institutions of the kind' already in full and flourishing operation on the Continent of Europe. He probably caught the idea from the admirable *Ecoles Ménagères* of Belgium, in which all the domestic arts, and even the highest and most advanced forms of scientific agriculture, have been for many years past taught by experts to the budding maidenhood of that rich and prosperous little Catholic kingdom. The work was first suggested by a Catholic priest. It is carried out with great success by various religious orders of women. In our issue of January 21, 1898, we devoted a lengthy editorial article to those admirable Belgian Catholic schools, and in the course of our remarks we said:

The *Ecoles Ménagères* are intended to meet the needs of a large class: for the children of farmers and well-to-do people. Children are received into them at as early an age as five or six; but it has been found by experience that the maximum of useful work is done by the pupils from their thirteenth or fourteenth to their eighteenth or nineteenth year. There is no place in these schools for mere butterflies—for the ornamental creatures who would fritter away their lives in fashionable loafing, elegant idling, or playing at work. Father Temmerman acts on the principle that 'it is necessary not only to teach the girls how to work, but to train them in the habit of working.' 'A few rebel at first,' says Miss Crawford, 'but after some months' practice they all enter with zest into their active duties, and find them a pleasant relief from the tedium of class-work.' The largest of these institutions is conducted by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, and is pleasantly situated on rising ground close by the old university town of Louvain. The building is of vast size, and well it needs to be, for it contains 750 pupils and 60 nuns, besides a staff of sturdy Flemish servant girls and of working men who look after the extensive farm, gardens and orchards, which provide most of the viands used in the four daily meals of over eight hundred busy people. The course of instruction is comprehensive to a degree. The ornamental is not excluded, but the useful is set in the very forefront. A good general education is imparted; but 'miss in her teens' at Haverlé is also initiated into the mysteries of dressmaking, washing, ironing, cleaning, mending, cooking and needlework in all

its branches. If she has a bent for a commercial career, she will be amply provided with a due outfit of special knowledge for the desk or working room. But perhaps the most heroic protest made against the ornamentalism of our school systems is reached when we find the certificated teachers of Haverlé grounding the young womanhood of Belgium in a thorough theoretical and practical knowledge of dairy-work, poultry-rearing, bee-keeping—even the feeding of the prosaic but profitable pig receives its meed of grave attention. The daughters of the Flemish farmer are, moreover, taught to keep farm accounts, and instructed by experts in every branch of scientific agriculture. Verily, this is the glorification of the useful. And all this, be it noted, with board and lodging thrown in, for the surprisingly small sum of £10 a year! It is difficult for us Antipodeans to realise how this can be done. 'It indicates,' says Miss Crawford, 'a veritable triumph in good management and domestic economy, which should have an admirable effect on the pupils. Nor, indeed, would the feat be possible save for the large number to cater for, and for the important fact that, as regards both farm and garden produce, the establishment is self-supporting. But even so, and bearing in mind the Government grant of £120 a year, judging merely from external appearances, I should unhesitatingly have placed the school fees at £40 or £50 a year.'

The Belgian Schools of Housewifery are an object lesson in educational methods. In the first place, they have dealt a serious blow to the one-sided system which looked merely to the intellectual and ornamental side of a girl's education. They fit their pupil, not merely for the drawing-room and the social circle, but for the sterner work of life—for the due performance of the plain domestic duties which add a charm to the poorest cottage home. But there is another aspect in this comparatively new departure. The practical curriculum of the Belgian *Ecoles Ménagères* has opened up a new and vast field for woman's industry. They are sending back into the farm-house of that thriving little State an army of highly-trained and economical workers, who must be counted with in the already keen competition for the world's markets.

## IRELAND AND ROME.

### ABLE AND INTERESTING DISCOURSE.

BY CARDINAL MORAN.

(Continued.)

The German scholar, Dr. Zimmer, of Berlin, is even more explicit in his testimony:—

'We must not forget,' he says, 'that the Irish from the seventh to the tenth century were the schoolmasters of Europe.' And, entering into details regarding this important statement, he adds: 'In the second half of the sixth century, the Irishman Columbanus, with 12 companions, amongst whom was Gallus, left his fatherland, penetrated the kingdom of the Franks, and finally founded at Bobbio, beyond the Alps, a nursery of culture in the widest sense of the word. And what an energy and perseverance is implied in such an undertaking as this! Crowds of his countrymen followed him; we meet them in all parts of the Frankish kingdom—even in their old abode beyond the Rhine, as St. Kilian of Wurtzburg. They were everywhere the pillars of Christianity and of culture, and the foster-fathers of learning.'

Amongst these learned pilgrims he specially names 'John Scotus Erigena, the most original thinker of that century, whose philosophical works were epoch-making, and who stood at the head of the High School of Charles the Bald, whilst another Irishman, Cærolaus, taught in the Cathedral School of Liège from 840 to 860; and another, Dicuil, between 800 and 830, as a grammarian, astronomer, and geographer, was heard of in every part of the Frankish kingdom.'

Regarding Germany, the Rev. Charles O'Connor attests:—

'The Germans themselves avow that letters were unknown in their country until introduced, together with Christianity, by Irish monks.'

This influence of our Irish missionaries will be the better realised when we call to mind that

#### 35 Irish Saints

sanctified Germany by their martyrdom. There were sixteen Irish monasteries in Bavaria and surrounding districts; six others in Franconia and Thuringia; and fifteen in Alsace and its neighboring territory. It is not easy for the mind to grasp how vast and far-reaching was the religious influence which such foundations imply.

So widespread was the influence thus exercised by those Irish missionaries, that the festival of St. Brigid was kept in every cathedral church from the Grisons to the German Sea for almost a thousand years.

Wallfridus Strabo was so struck by the rush of Irish scholars to Germany that he writes: 'The habit of emigrating has become in the Irish a sort of second nature.'

The words of Rev. Dr. Lynch, in his 'Cambrensis Eversus,' will suffice to put this matter in its proper light:—

'Germany,' he writes, 'was the most flourishing vineyard of the Irish Saints. St. Albin, or Witta, is honored as apostle in Thuringia; St. Disibod at Treves; St. Erhard in Alsace and Bavaria; St. Fridolin in the Grisons of Switzerland; St. Gall among the Suabians, Swiss, and Rhetian; St. John in Mecklenburg; St. Virgil