

peting for positions in one of the great railway corporations, and thus breaking down the long-standing monopoly of place and pelf that was enjoyed by members of the favored creed. In Australia the Rev. Dill-Macky and a few other clerical firebrands have been conducting a furious electioneering campaign which was openly and undisguisedly intended for the exclusion of Catholics from public life—from Parliament, from municipal honors, from every position of honor and emolument in the public gift. The leader in this evil crusade scourged the Protestant majority in the Commonwealth for having drifted away from 'the principles of the Reformation' and accorded equal rights to citizens, irrespective of creed. 'They have tolerated Catholics in public life,' said the indignant strife-raiser, 'and allowed them to enter the public service. They have treated Catholics as though they possessed equal citizen and public rights under the Constitution. In short, they have understood the doctrine of religious liberty and equality without the mental reservation practised by the sectarian ascendancy party.' This is a variant on the declaration of 'the accredited organ of the Loyal Orange Institution of Victoria' that the Catholic Emancipation Act was 'a fatal error.' And throughout, that bitter crusade against the adherents of the Old Faith was accompanied by that worst form of persecution—persistent and shameless calumny. It is a comfort to Catholics to know that the great and sane body of Protestant lay and clerical opinion and feeling is opposed to the intemperate and menacing violence of black-coated fanatics such as we have described. But it still remains a puzzle to us that a set campaign of such extraordinary virulence should have passed practically without editorial comment by the secular press—even by the very newspapers that gave the frothy utterances of the strife-mongers to the world. If even one Catholic priest in the Commonwealth had so far forgotten himself, he would not alone have found himself promptly placed under ecclesiastical censure, but the submarine cable would have tingled with the news to the uttermost parts of the earth. In all the circumstances we think that our northern contemporary could easily have found nearer home a concrete clerical cranium to caress with its editorial club, without having to travel so far afield in search of a vague and shadowy 'priest in politics.'

Notes

Scavenging Skirts

When will the tyrant Fashion relieve the gentler part of our population of the odious duty of using their skirts to scavenge the streets? 'The peacock,' says Josh Billings, 'has one of the beautifullest tails in the world, but I tak notis he don't drag it on the ground when he walks about.'

The New Syllabus

The new school Syllabus, which proposes to garland the necks of teachers and taught with fresh strings of little millstones, is meeting with strong opposition from the Educational Institute and from the profession generally throughout the Colony. As a result it is hung up for the present. Government is about to do at last what it ought to have done at first—to receive suggestions from the New Zealand Educational Institute and from the inspectors, and afterwards to submit the Syllabus for revision to a conference of inspectors and teachers. Between the hammer and anvil of discussion it will, we trust, be licked into proper shape, and become, in its revised shape, a really useful Syllabus instead of the cumbersome and unworkable thing with which the primary schools of the Colony were threatened.

Military Brutality

Many years ago, while yet a slender student, the writer of these lines sat day by day and watched the

rough process by which German army recruits are licked and kicked into the splendid military engines that they, at last become. The old-time Irish hedge-school master depended for educational results about as much upon the stimulus of 'a bet of a kippeen' as upon the more direct method of positive instruction. The German drill instructor, in like manner, seems to regard the free application of cane, open palm, closed fist, and boot-toe as almost indispensably necessary aids in turning the yellow haired, broad-shouldered recruit into a presentable wisp of cannon fodder. Cable messages published during the past week report no fewer than three sentences passed on German sergeant-instructors for long-continued cruelty to soldiers. In one case an unfortunate young soldier committed suicide in order to escape from the brutality of his sergeant.

War-time seems to most develop the demon that is in the private soldier. Barrack life raises the devil that has his residence in a certain class of military officers. Witness, for instance, the gross 'ragging' scandals in some 'crack' British regiments, and the 'hazing' barbarities that still exist, despite official ukases, in the American army. And yet the lot of both officer and private is better in all armies than it was in days not far gone by. Till Mr. Parnell succeeded in abolishing flogging in the British army, the lash was made an instrument of torture for hapless Thomas Atkins. And beyond living memory, but so recently as the last half of the eighteenth century, systematic and aimless torture was the lot of the common soldier who lapsed from the grace of his superiors or transgressed the savage military code of the time. 'Picketing' was a favorite military torture in those days. A sharpened stake (termed a picket) was driven into the ground. The naked heel of the country's luckless defender was rested upon it. His right wrist and right leg were drawn up and fixed to a hook in an adjoining post. The whole weight of the body was thrown upon the sharpened stake, which' (says an authority on that period) 'though it did not break the skin, inflicted exquisite torture. The only means of alleviation was to rest the weight on the wrist, the pain of which soon became unbearable.' It seems as hard to banish the old tradition of brutality from military life as it is to wean the heart of the general public from pugilistic and other exhibitions that savor of the combats of the ancient pagan arena. There seems, after all, some ground for Marion Crawford's statement, that, but for the deterrent force of Christian sentiment and the tremendous power of modern law, there are in our populations elements that would revive the spectacles of the Coliseum.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The Rev. Father McGrath left Port Chalmers on Sunday afternoon by the 'Waikare' for a trip to Ireland via Melbourne and Suez. He expects to return in invigorated health in December, 1904.

The Bishop's scholarship in connection with St. Dominic's College, Dunedin, has been won by Miss Maggie Bourke, and the Dominican Nuns' Scholarship by Miss Tilly Swanson. Both candidates are pupils of St. Joseph's School, Dunedin.

On Christmas Day great numbers of persons approached the Holy Table at the early Masses at St. Joseph's Cathedral, St. Patrick's Basilica, and the North East Valley. At 11 o'clock Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by the Bishop. The assistant priest was Rev. Father Cleary; deacon, Rev. James Liston; sub-deacon, Rev. Father Buckley; while the administrator of the cathedral (the Rev. Father Murphy) was master of ceremonies. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Father Murphy. The choir (36 members), specially augmented for the occasion by the presence of an efficient orchestra of 14 performers, under the leadership of Mr. O. Naumann, rendered the beautiful music of the Mass in C by Beethoven in capital style. Mr. Albert Vallis (the choirmaster) wielded the baton. Miss M'Croirie presided at the organ with marked ability. The solo quartet consisted of Miss Violet Fraser (soprano),