

handful sits in the chilly churches which once housed flourishing congregations. Millions are growing up without even an intelligent knowledge of God, of Christ, of religion, of spiritual life. The press, the stage, the street are flooded with living proofs of a spiritual decadence which can bring only social and national ruin.

The play, the magazine, the ballroom, all give evidence of an ever increasing disregard of even the rudiments of common decency of dress, of deportment, of conversation, and of conduct. Little by little the bars have been lowered, letting out the few influences which held society in restraint and letting in a very flood of folly, of insatiate greed for amusement of any and every kind, until what even a few years ago would make a decent woman blush to see in others has become so common that even decent women now accept it as a matter of fact for themselves and their daughters.

We need be neither prude nor Puritan to see and to realise that something is passing in the heart and the mind of the women to-day which is leaving them hard and unwomanly, and that year by year this transformation goes on until, if it continues, there will be neither home nor family, nor normal womanly nature left. If this is the new woman, then God spare us from any further developments of an abnormal creature. Certainly this is not the Catholic woman who is true to her faith and is not easily influenced by

These Modern Fads of a New Paganism.

She has her standards and she stands by them unchanged. And what, in the last analysis, is the cause of all this moral degeneracy, evident on all sides? Why, it is simply the natural result of the decay of even the external semblance of Christianity outside the Church. For fifty years we have witnessed a battle royal against all these principles which held together what was left of Christianity among those who had deserted the true faith.

The preacher was derided, his sermons plucked to pieces, the Bible was dissected and torn page by page, until nothing but the cloth cover is now left. The rich controlled the pulpit and the sermon did not attract the poor, and without the poor there never can be a church. The minister was paid starvation wages to preach sermons which extolled the virtues of coal barons and steel kings, and oil emperors. Even royal salaries cannot produce sincerity in a preacher. And no man could go on for long leaving out of his sermon the only thing his soul longed to say—that Christ came to bring justice to the suffering and that riches are oftentimes the result of injustice to some one.

So the poor deserted these temples of a cold, respectable creed where the pews were owned by stockholders and the pulpit controlled by wealth. Without sincerity in the pulpit and poor in the pews, there never has been, there never can be any moral influence in any church. And so no wonder to-day they are empty. No wonder the few sincere men, doubtless in good faith, struggling still to keep alive the little spark of Christianity left in their congregations, are disheartened.

But if the Bible is nothing but a bit of Oriental poetry, if faith is only superstition, if, as again and again we have been told by some of the intellectuals, miracles and magic are all the same, and God is an electric current, then what wonder

That the Churches are Empty

and what wonder that men are few to think any more of God, or of religion, or of moral law! The leaders of this false and crude intellectualism have lost all that is best in life. They have killed the heart in men because they themselves have no heart.

What do they know of real life—they who have never for a single day lived among the poor, the laborer, the struggling artisan—they whose whole existence has been spent among chemical formulas or in the prim sedateness of a university board meeting, where an error in grammar is a mortal sin, and where a soft voice passes for conviction and principle?

Why, this is all sham. How can men who know nothing of hearts, nothing of feeling, nothing of the trials of poverty, of affliction, whose whole creed is a conceited notion of their own importance, and whose whole life is a sort of flawless cycle, know anything of real life, of real need, moral and spiritual; in fact, what can they know of real men? If they would confine themselves to chemistry we should have some respect for their opinions. But when they invent a new religion each year—a thing which is as old as error and has nothing of religion in it, they simply make themselves ridiculous.

We men of the Holy Name need no go-to-church Sunday, and we need and will have nothing of a new religion and their conceited inventions.

Let men find the old and only religion—the Christian faith which has answered to every need of every man in every age. Let them find a sincere pulpit, a preacher who seeks to know the doctrine as Christ taught it; let him speak that out in love and tenderness to the poor, the wayward, the struggling, let him look over the heads of the merely respectable who have only selfishness for their creed; let him go to the homes of those who need to hear the consoling words of Christ and not the conceited invention of some professor of chemistry, and then the churches will be filled to overflowing as ours are, as this Cathedral is to-day.

Let them all drop the fads and frills of a false social and moral standard of life and get down to the hearts of men and of things. We are tired to death of theories which never solve anything and only breed confusion. The world is being talked to death with a new sociology and a new religion and a new system of pedagogy at the end of every public dinner.

Amid all this riot of talk, who can really think? It is thought, not talk, that is most wanted and most needed. It is consideration of old and eternal truths, truths eternal and immutable, that will bring back to those even outside the true Church respect for Christian principles and Christian ideals.

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From our own correspondent.)

March 14.

I am pleased to record the success of one of our Catholic ladies as a teacher in the recent Trinity College of Music theory examinations. Miss Fagan, the lady in question, was successful, six of her pupils passing the examination.

The St. Patrick's Day Celebration Committee has been successful in securing the services of Mr. Paul Dufault and his concert company for the St. Patrick's Night concert. Sir Joseph Ward has also consented to give a patriotic oration at the sports gathering at Newtown Park.

A meeting of the Wellington Catholic Education Board took place at the Federation rooms last Thursday evening, his Grace Archbishop O'Shea presiding. The question of physical training in the schools under the jurisdiction of the Board was discussed, and it was eventually decided to deputationise the Minister for Education on the subject.

A mission for children by the Marist Fathers commenced at both of the Te Aro churches (St. Mary's and St. Joseph's) last Sunday, and concluded on Wednesday. On Thursday the women's mission commenced, the Very Rev. Father O'Connell preaching the opening sermon at St. Joseph's and the Rev. Father McCarthy at St. Mary's. Last evening the Rev. Father Taylor preached at St. Joseph's, and the Rev. Father A. T. Herring at St. Mary's. The missions for the women will last ten days, and at their conclusion missions will be preached for the men. The attendances at both

Langford and Rhind

Address—HERBERT LANGFORD, 19 London St., Richmond (Phone 689).
JOHN RHIND, 196 Montreal St., Sydenham (Phone 1605).

(Late W. & H. LANGFORD), FUNERAL FUNISHERS & EMBALMERS
LONDON STREET. P.O. Box 523.

TOWN OFFICE—104 Cashel St
(Phone 813).