

The Catholic World

ENGLAND

CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

On January 21, his Eminence Cardinal Logue was present at the opening and blessing of schools at Rock-terry, Shrewsbury. In an address on the occasion he expressed his deep interest in elementary education, which, when conducted on proper lines, was, he said, the foundation of society. It was this close connection between the Church and the school that had been the chief factor of whatever progress the Church had made in any age and in any country. He himself had been greatly stimulated to do something for education in Ireland by the work of the Catholics of England and their sacrifices for their schools. There was a spirit abroad in some parts of the world which banished God from the schools, and the result was already showing in certain Continental countries, where juvenile crime was increasing by leaps and bounds. The people of England differed as to the amount of religious education they wanted in the schools, but they were not driving out religion altogether, as were some of the infidels on the Continent. The hierarchy, priests, and people of Ireland, he added, were determined to do everything they could to preserve the English Catholic schools.

CATHOLIC UNIONISTS AND ABUSE OF THE CHURCH.

Mr. James Britten, writing in the London *Tablet*, replies to a letter in the previous issue of that paper from Mr. James F. Hope, M.P., regarding a vulgar Unionist chant sung at Sir Edward Carson's Perth meeting. While noting that this polite melody was not sung in the presence of Sir Edward Carson, that it was not submitted for approval, and that 'it would not have been approved if it had been submitted,' Mr. Britten continues: 'But all the same it was sung, and apparently elicited no disapproval or disavowal until I called attention to it, although it was printed in at least one Glasgow paper, from which my extract was taken. And some one in some kind of authority must have printed the programme of the meeting on which the song appeared, with a request that the audience should join in singing it. Mr. Hope suggests that in such cases of what he calls "local ineptitude," complaints should be made "to the Central Offices of the Unionist Party." But cannot these "ineptitudes" be prevented? In your columns for April 26, 1913, Mr. Hope told us that a committee had been formed in the previous autumn "to investigate such complaints of political utterances offensive to the Church, and take suitable action thereupon." Where is that party now? and what "action" has it taken in the present instance?'

CATHOLIC POPULATION ESTIMATES.

Rev. Father Thurston, S.J., in the course of some interesting articles appearing in the *Tablet* on the question of Catholic population statistics, points out that while the 'crude' birth-rate of Ireland is not much higher than that of France, the 'corrected' birth-rate of Ireland is the highest of any country in Europe. The 'crude' birth-rate is the number of infants born in any country per thousand of the population. The 'corrected' birth-rate is the number born per thousand of married women of early and middle age. In 1901 the percentage was 36.1 under the latter heading for Ireland; Scotland was 33.4; England, 28.4; France, 21.6. While the Irish in other countries as a rule marry early, only 32½ per cent. of the women in Ireland between 15 and 45 years of age are married. In England the corresponding percentage is 46.8. Father Thurston's articles discuss in detail the Catholic population of Great Britain in the early part of the 19th and in the 18th century. The most divergent figures (remarks the Glasgow *Observer*) have been printed regarding the number of Catholics in Great Britain at those periods. In some cases the figure was put as high

as two millions. Father Thurston, who is an acute commentator and a reliable judge, says that 600,000 seems to represent as nearly as can be estimated the number of Catholics in Great Britain in 1840. Of these 50,000 were assigned to Glasgow and the district. The present Catholic population of Great Britain, as given in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, is put down at over two millions, which is, if anything, an underestimate, but which shows that Catholics have more than trebled in England and Scotland during the past eighty years.

FRANCE

THE NEUTRAL SCHOOL.

At a moment when the evil laws framed against the free schools are going to be discussed in the French Chambers, it is interesting to notice how the so-called 'neutrality' that should reign in the Government schools is observed by its representative, the village schoolmaster. Attention was drawn some months ago to the fact that the copies and dictations proposed to his pupils by the schoolmaster of Blajau, in the department of Haute Garonne, were a tissue of insults against the Church. In consequence, the *Association des Pères de Famille* of the district decided to bring an action against him, neutrality in religious matters being commanded by law. The trial is now pending. The extracts read before the tribunal show how the incriminated schoolmaster understands and practises neutrality. His pupils were required to write sentences like the following: 'In the bosom of the Catholic Church have always been found the greatest liars, hypocrites, and criminals that the world has seen, the cruellest and most tyrannical men,' etc., etc. It is expected that this schoolmaster, who is openly protected by the Government, will be condemned to a fine to be paid to the *Association des Pères de Famille*. At the trial, the evidence against him was so overwhelming that the chief magistrate was obliged to confess, with some reluctance, that in his case the laws of neutrality were undoubtedly violated.

GERMANY

CATHOLICS AND SOCIALISTS.

A remarkable thing happened recently in Berlin, in which the charges brought by the Socialists against the Catholic Labor Organisations were made the subject of a judicial enquiry. The Socialists are never tired of saying that Rome sells the cause of Labor to the capitalists. A test case was taken to the courts. The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* says:—'The result was a triumph for the Catholic unions. The Socialist editors failed to substantiate any of their statements, and were fined amounts ranging from £2 10s to £25 apiece. The court gave the defendants the benefit of various mitigating circumstances—the fact that there was much doubt about the meaning and application of the Papal Encyclical, the absence of any evidence that they did not bring their charges in good faith, the fact that the articles were part of a violent political controversy, and—most curious of all the considerations recognised by the court—the fact that the readers of German Socialist newspapers are accustomed to find strong and abusive language in them. The writers had certainly not minced matters.'

GENERAL

THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY.

In the recent election of a President General of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, no fewer than 7835 Conferences in all parts of the world intimated unanimous concurrence in the election of the new President, M. de Hendecourt, who succeeds M. Paul Calon, who retired on account of ill-health. The vote was 93 per cent. of the total 8382 S.V.P. Conferences in existence all over the world. His Eminence Cardinal Vincent Vannutelli, who is Cardinal Director of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, has sent his felicitations to the new President on his election.