

sulted had the charges been established, so Victorian Catholic institutions generally will share in the enhanced reputation which accrues on the triumphant vindication of the South Melbourne Orphanage. The only point which has not yet been finally cleared up is the question as to how such venomous statements could find their way into an influential and reputable daily like the *Melbourne Age*. That aspect of the matter is still under investigation, and doubtless before very long the responsibility for this cowardly and unmanly attack will be duly and definitely sheeted home.

## SPAIN AND ITS PEOPLE

### CARDINAL MORAN'S VIGOROUS DEFENCE

Speaking a few Sundays ago at the opening of a new church at Watson's Bay, his Eminence Cardinal Moran delivered an effective reply to recent attacks on the clergy and people of Spain. "During the past few weeks (said his Eminence) virulent attacks have been made on the Catholic Church in Spain—attacks that would appear to be inspired by demoniac hatred of the Catholic Church, and not by any desire to make known the true state of things. We were told that 75 per cent. of the Spanish population were illiterate, the whole people being benighted and ignorant, the clergy as bad as the people, wholly intent on shutting out from their flocks the light of evangelical truth, and depriving them of the blessings of modernism. Now, in all this there is hardly a particle of truth. I take an interest in the Spanish people, for they are a noble race. From the coasts of Spain the Celtic race came to Ireland, and during the terrible era of the Penal Laws it was in the sunny lands of the Peninsula that very many of the suffering exiles of Erin found a secure refuge and a home. The fame of Spain for chivalry and patriotism is unsurpassed. When overwhelmed by the Moorish invasion, the people kept the national flag unfurled in the mountains and in the Basque provinces. For 800 years they never relaxed the struggle, till at length every trace of Moorish dominion was banished from the Peninsula. The literature of Spain surpasses that of most other countries of Europe. Her Cathedrals and other mediaeval monuments are unrivalled in the splendor of their architecture. Her school of painting rivals that of Raphael. Her whole people are distinguished for perfect manners, for nobility of character, for a cultivated taste for the fine arts. They are hospitable, brave, generous, chaste, sober, and honest.

"If, for a time, her people were illiterate, the reason is not far to seek. During a great part of the past century the country was overwhelmed with all the ruin and miseries of civil war, and became a prey to revolutionary factions. The Church property was confiscated, the religious bodies exiled or scattered, the clergy were reduced to absolute penury, and oppressed in every possible way. Yet, amid all the phases of persecution the Church kept alive the lamp of knowledge, and preserved to the people the blessings of religion. A report presented to the United States in 1900 gives the illiterates as 30 per cent. But in that very year the illiterates of North Carolina are set down as 28 per cent. And yet North Carolina is not an ignorant and benighted State. In the latest educational returns that I have seen, the average attendance in the primary schools of Spain was 106 per thousand of the population. In Canada the average attendance was only 100 per 1000 of population, and in Mexico it was still less. Mulhall states that the number of University students in Spain surpasses that of almost every other country in Europe. The United States Commissioner reports the number of students in the Spanish Universities as 16,000. In England, with double the population, the University students were only 9802. Assuredly the Spaniards are not an ignorant people.

"Honesty and morality hold their own in Spain. Divorce in some countries at the present day is undermining the very foundations of family happiness and social order. Divorce is unknown in Spain. Suicide has its votaries and its victims in England, in Germany, and elsewhere. It is almost unheard of in Spain. Deaths from drunkenness are a terrible blot on our civilisation. In England of every 10,000 deaths 21 were from drunkenness, as we read in Mr. Mulhall's Statistical Return. In Copenhagen alone they were 70; in Stockholm 90; but in Spain they were zero.

"In the Statistical Society's Journal, I find in England and Wales one criminal set down for every 190 in the population. In Scotland it is "something worse than England." Whilst in Spain there is only one criminal for every 10,000 of the population. In other countries visitors often complain of the contagion of vice. A correspondent of the *New York Herald* writes that in Spain you can with difficulty escape "the contagion of virtue."

"Of all the people in the world the Spaniards are most remarkable for honesty. Sir Hiram Maxim, of Maxim gun fame, made public the results of his observations during a tour in Spain. He has an English factory near London, and a Spanish one in the Basque country, the most thoroughly Catholic province of Spain. In the heart of that entirely Catholic country such a thing as a lock was unnecessary. By night and by day the doors of the factory and of every compartment in it stood open. And Sir

Hiram adds: "Had this laxity been practised in England, the factory would have been gutted the first night it was unlocked." It is not surprising that when an agent of one of the proselytising societies called on Sir Hiram to request a donation for the "Spanish missions" he not only refused, but added that he would willingly subscribe instead to any movement which would make the morals of England like those of Spain.

"It is particularly, however, the clergy of Spain who are criticised and held up to ridicule as men without learning or piety, like their flocks ignorant and benighted, solely intent on keeping the eyes of the people bandaged lest they would see the evangelical truth. Far different is the true character of the Spanish priest. He is a man of piety and enlightenment, devoted to the sacred ministry, and intent on preserving to his people the blessings of Catholic faith. At the Vatican Council 40 Spanish Bishops assisted, and held a foremost place for their eloquence and profound knowledge of Divine Truth.

"One fact will serve better than many words to illustrate the genuine character of the Spanish priesthood. I take it from Mr. Borrow's book, entitled *The Bible in Spain*. This gentleman was the head of the colporteurs whose mission it was to spread the Protestant Bible in Spain. He was no friend of the Catholic priesthood of Spain. On the contrary, he goes out of his way to attack them and malign them in every possible manner. Nevertheless, on one occasion he felt constrained to confess the true state of things. In an intensely Catholic district he was obliged to throw himself on the hospitality of the local padre. This priest had nothing to distinguish him from the thousand other priests he had seen throughout the country districts of Spain; he appeared to be as unintelligent and benighted as the rest. In Mr. Borrow's words, he was "a plain, uninformed old man, almost simple, and as incapable of emotion as a tortoise within its shell." However, he received the English clergyman most kindly in Spanish style, "embraced him very affectionately," and, without hesitation extended a whole-hearted hospitality to him. To Mr. Borrow's surprise the good country priest proved himself a man of wide information and solid learning; and Mr. Borrow writes: "I soon saw that I was in the presence of one of those remarkable men who so frequently spring up in the bosom of the Romish Church, and who, to a childlike simplicity, unite immense energy and power of mind—equally adapted to guide a scanty flock in some obscure village of Spain, or to convert millions of heathens on the shores of Japan or Paraguay." Mr. Borrow further informs us that this Spanish priest lived in a small cottage, singularly neat and clean. His whole income was 800 dollars (about £200) a year. Of this amount he spent only £25 annually on his own maintenance; the remaining £175 he dispensed in charity among his flock. Such, even as painted by an avowed enemy, is the much-maligned but most zealous and devoted Spanish priest.

"The secret of the unceasing torrent of abuse and obloquy poured out in the English press upon the Catholic Church in Spain is the utter failure of the English and American agencies to make any impression on the faith and piety of the Spanish people. During the past 80 years millions of Bibles and Testaments and Protestant tracts have flooded the cities and country districts of Spain. Hundreds of agents have been employed in carrying on the work of evangelical proselytism. Nevertheless, the latest census gives to Spain a Catholic population of almost 19 millions, whilst the whole number of Protestants is less than 7000, many of whom are the families of the agents or otherwise employed by them.

"Spain has suffered intensely from the dissension that prevailed, and from the various factions that assumed the Government from time to time," said his Eminence, in conclusion; "but I trust under the present illustrious King and Queen—the Queen belongs to our own Empire—progress will be made every day, that the resources of the country will be developed, and that Spain will enter once more into competition with the greatest powers of Europe in spreading around it the blessings of religion."

## CHIEF JUSTICE AND CRIMINAL STATISTICS

In the course of a letter to the *New Zealand Times* of July 5, the Rev. C. J. Venning, S.M., takes the Chief Justice to task for his remarks regarding education made at a meeting over which he presided the previous Saturday evening. Father Venning writes:—

"When Sir Robert Stout donned the mantle of Chief Justice he ought to have doffed that of the partisan and done what lay in his power to maintain alike the dignity and the impartiality that are properly due to his exalted and responsible position.

It is unworthy of the Chief Justice, and to the last degree unbecoming the office he bears, to descend into the arena of party strife, to engage as a partisan, to so far forget himself as to make unjustifiable attacks upon any section of the community. But it seems that he must air his old traditions lest they become blue-mouldy. Sir Robert Stout is a prejudiced witness on matters affecting religion or religious schools. It is the red flag to the bull to even mention the subject in his presence. His utterances on Saturday night were marked by a discreditable lack of that judicial mind which we have a right to find even in

'Best for the money!' Hondai Lanka Tea is full of Quality and Delightful Flavor. It goes furthest.

'Naething new?' Ma certes, 'Cock o' the North's a new pleasure tae folks wha hinna tasted it!