

district where any organised sports' competition exists.

I, therefore, leave the matter to your generosity of spirit, and earnestly appeal to you to admit the Marist Brothers' School.'

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One would have thought such a reasonable, fair-minded, and earnest appeal would have proved irresistible; but it was not so. 'Mr. Darroch's appeal failed,' continues the *Dominion*. 'On the motion of Mr. D. M. Yeates, the application for the admission was not entertained.' No reason was advanced for the decision, the official letter to Bro. Virgilius containing merely a bare intimation of refusal in the following terms: 'Dear Sir,—Your application for admission to the Wellington Public Schools' Cricket Association was duly considered at the annual meeting on Saturday last, and as secretary of that body I have to inform you that the application was declined.' No excuses this time about shortage of grounds or the necessity for making an alteration in the constitution of the Association—just pure bigotry, naked and unashamed. There are few characters so contemptible—and so exasperating—as the individual who has not manliness to 'play the game' and be a sport, let come what may; and we have always had considerable sympathy with the attitude of the brawny rustic spoken of in one of Dean Hole's anecdotes in such a case. An unfair and unsportsman-like umpire had given a man 'in,' who certainly was so when the verdict was uttered, but not when the wicket went down, when a voice came from a distant part of the field, 'Mestur Umpire, I doan't want to have no unpleasantness with you; but if you come that little gam' again, I shall just step in and pull out your mustassios by the rewt's.' In the present case, the Brothers can do nothing but possess their souls in patience, and make a fresh application each succeeding season. In this way, and by bringing the white light of publicity to bear on the situation, they may perhaps in time make the churls who masquerade as 'sports' in some degree ashamed of themselves. In the meantime, the prospect of a successful application in the near future has, unfortunately, been materially weakened by the retirement of Mr. R. Darroch, president of the Public Schools' Association—the Catholic boys' staunch friend, who has fought their battle against all odds, and who has shown throughout a broadmindedness, spirit, and tact, worthy of the highest praise. Mr. Darroch's presence on the Association has been the one factor which has redeemed that chuckle-headed body from utter ignominy.

#### How it was done

Everyone has heard of R. L. Stevenson's immortal defence of Father Damien—the sustained popularity of the work being shown by the fact that at the present moment quite a number of new editions are being placed on the market. Everyone knows, too, in a general way, why the book was written; but a detailed account of the exact circumstances under which it was penned and published has only now been furnished by Mrs. Stevenson. It is contained in a preface supplied by her to *Lay Morals* in the Biographical edition of her husband's works. The *Open Letter* volume was written in Sydney, and was finished, apparently, in the course of two or three hours. Stevenson had studied the life of Father Damien from every possible source of information; and with his very soul revered the dead priest's memory. One can imagine, therefore, what his feelings were when he read in a Sydney newspaper the letter of an easy-chair missionary of Honolulu containing coarse calumnies against the apostle of the lepers. 'I shall never forget my husband's ferocity of indignation,' says Mrs. Stevenson, 'his leaping stride as he paced the room holding the offending paper at arm's-length before his eyes. In another moment he disappeared through the doorway, and I could hear him, in his own room, pulling his chair to the table, and the sound of his inkstand being dragged toward him.' That afternoon he called together his wife and her son and daughter, and told them he had something serious to lay before them; 'and then we three had the incomparable experience of hearing its author read aloud the defence

of Father Damien while it was still red-hot from his indignant soul.' Having finished the reading, he pointed out that the matter was highly libellous, and its publication might involve the loss of his entire substance; but 'there was no dissenting voice—how could there be?' An eminent lawyer was consulted, and pronounced it 'a serious affair,' as indeed it was. 'However, no one will publish it for you,' he exclaimed. This was true enough; but the author hired a printer by the day, and the job was rushed through; then the family turned in and helped address the pamphlets, which were scattered far and wide. And thus 'Father Damien was vindicated by a stranger, a man of another country and another religion from his own.'

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It is true that, at the time, Stevenson was of 'another religion' than that of the heroic Damien; but later he was much drawn towards the Church, and the *Ave Maria*—which is able to speak with special authority on the subject—some time ago made the statement that Stevenson 'was at heart a Catholic.' 'He had made up his mind,' added the *Ave*, 'to join the Church, and was about to enter upon a course of preparatory instruction when the last summons came. Peace to his gentle soul! We like to believe that the brave defender of Father Damien is a sharer in the "riches, rest, and glory" that must now be the heroic missionary's eternal portion.'

#### Bible Ignorance

There was a time when our Protestant friends—if they did talk rather loud and long about the Bible—at least possessed a close, first-hand acquaintance with the Scriptures. Of more than one eminent Protestant of a former generation has it been said, that if by any conceivable or inconceivable calamity every existing copy of the Bible were destroyed, he would be able—at least in regard to the New Testament—to restore the whole of its contents from memory. There is still much of the same stereotyped talk about 'the Bible and the Bible only' on the part of our non-Catholic friends; but the personal, familiar, intimate acquaintance with the substance of the Sacred Volume—once so common—is now rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Our separated brethren still scatter Bibles as the sower scatters seed, and there are Bible-sellers and Bible-societies by the hundred; but the ranks of those who personally read and study and know their Bible—as Protestants once did—are becoming attenuated almost to vanishing point.

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The latest illustration of the increasing ignorance of the Bible amongst the later Protestant generation is furnished by a recent report from the University of Michigan, where seventy-eight students were candidates in a Biblical examination. The examination was a written one; and the candidates were allowed ample time to do their best. The results were something in the nature of a revelation—the answers in many cases being reminiscent of the man who thought that 'Sodom and Gomorrah' were 'husband and wife.' One (says *America*) volunteered the valuable information that the Old Testament was written B.C., the other was not; another affirmed that 'the Old Testament represented Hebrew fable,' while 'the New dealt with historical characters.' Another, again that 'the Old was composed largely of stories and proverbs, which are not any longer believed to have actually happened.' 'By the Law,' said one wise youth, 'is meant the laws given by Christ to his disciples, while the Gospel simply means the Scriptures as taught to the people.' Here are a few out of many of the ridiculous replies received. 'The Gospels were the letters which St. Paul wrote to the Churches.' 'The temple of Solomon was in Babylon.' 'Sinai was the place of the landing of the Ark, or the mount from which Christ spoke.' 'Nazarene was the Mother of Christ; Nazareth was his Father.' 'Levi was a name applied to Jews who were small in stature compared with Leviathan, which meant large.' 'Levi was a Jewish male; Leviathan a woman.' 'The Isle of Patmos was the place where the children of Israel were fed in the wilderness.' 'Thou art the man,"