

## Current Topics

### Our Catholic Laity

As we remarked last week, instances are continually coming under our notice of the fine Catholic spirit which, in ever-increasing measure, is being developed amongst our New Zealand laity, and of the splendid example which they are showing in many places by their intelligent grasp of Catholic principles and by their sturdy and unswerving loyalty to the teachings of their holy Faith. The latest case in point is furnished by the members of the Catholic Club at Karangahake—60 strong—who, according to the testimony of our travelling correspondent, are, from every point of view, as fine a body of men as New Zealand could produce. They have shown, and are showing, their high intelligence and sterling character, not by loud talk, but by quietly doing the things that count. For some months past the whole of the northern gold fields districts have been passing through a particularly difficult and trying time. In addition to the critical situation created by the Waihi strike, there has been active propaganda work by the N.Z. Federation of Labor, and a development on the part of that organisation in the direction of affiliation with the Industrial Workers of the World, a representative of the I.W.W. having been engaged in lecturing throughout the gold-fields on the methods and principles of the American body. For the Catholic workers to have identified themselves with the exponents of this violent form of extreme Socialism would have been a betrayal of Christian principles and of common morality; on the other hand, to have made a single false step in the direction of the opposite extreme would have been to lay themselves under the imputation of being reactionaries, and of being, also, disloyal to their class. To steer an even keel under such circumstances—to maintain and vindicate sound trade union principles and at the same time to keep clear of all complicity with methods of violence and disorder—required not only courage and loyalty to principle, but required, also, level headedness, tact, and a large measure of quiet, practical common sense. This very rare combination of qualities the Catholic men of Karangahake have displayed to the fullest degree; and they have come out of the long and trying ordeal with flying colors. Small wonder that their beloved priest, Dean Hackett, is genuinely proud of them. Their sterling worth is universally recognised in the community; and it is admittedly due to their steadying influence that in the recent election of trade union officials in the district the representatives of violence were utterly worsted. Our representative assures us that in speaking to the Catholics of Karangahake one realises at once that he is talking to men of exceptional intelligence; and that in defending and vindicating their faith, as they are doing, under conditions calculated to try both their principles and their patience, they are doing a work of which the Church at large has good reason to be proud. We have no difficulty in accepting our correspondent's statement; and we very heartily congratulate Dean Hackett and the district on having a body of such sturdy representatives of manly and virile Catholicism.

### A Married Person's Problem

When the Sadducees of old tried to puzzle and entrap our Lord by propounding to Him the case of the woman who had had seven husbands, they submitted a purely fancy and imaginary instance, no doubt, but one which—in spite of its extravagance—had underlying it, at least for the natural man or woman, something of a real problem and difficulty. 'There were with us seven brethren,' said these subtle disputants, 'and the first having married a wife, died; and not having issue, left his wife to his brother. In like manner the second, and the third, and so on to the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. At the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven shall she be?' Seven husbands for one wife is not a common allowance, even in these progressive days; but

second and third marriages are a frequent occurrence, and are celebrated, of course, without the faintest stigma being cast upon them. The problem which occurs to the modern mind in such cases takes a somewhat different form from that suggested by the question of the Sadducees, and may be thus set forth: A couple marry, and live very happily for a number of years, both frequently declaring that they could not by any possibility have loved anybody else but their present partner. After a time one of them dies—let us say, for illustration's sake, the husband, though all remarks we may make apply equally to both parties. For a while the widow is inconsolable; but time is a great healer, and she is very lonely, and the children would be the better of some one to control them, and so, for one reason or another, she takes a second husband, and, if he should die, perhaps also a third. If all four parties should have the happiness to get to Heaven, will the wife's affection for her last husband subtract from or interfere with her love for her first; or, to express the matter in the mildest possible way, will there be any feeling of awkwardness or embarrassment between any or all of the parties? The idea is not often expressed or talked about; but some such thought must, we believe, at least occasionally have passed through the minds of people in the circumstances named.

The Rev. Father Hull, S.J., of the *Bombay Examiner*, who has a genius for unravelling tangled questions of the sort, cuts the knot in the following simple and lucid fashion, in an answer given by him to a Hindu inquirer on the subject. 'As regards the life after the grave, Christ our Lord once had a case proposed to him. A man marries seven wives in succession. Which of them will count as his wife after the resurrection? The case is a fancy one, of course, but the answer was clear. "After the resurrection there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage, for they are as the angels in heaven." This means that marriage is essentially a provision for the earthly life; and its object is achieved and ceases at death. In a future life the principal and all-absorbing love of the soul will be the love of God the infinite good; and all creatures will be loved in him, and only in him, and in the same ratio in which God Himself loves each one. It will be purely spiritual state without sex or passion. The love of creatures will, as far as we can imagine, lose its idiosyncracies of sentiment and emotion. That there will be some special relation of love between those who have been specially related in this life we can easily assume; but all such love will be freed from its exclusiveness and other earthly limitations, so that the love of a first wife and of a second wife will not spoil each other.' That is clear and conclusive; and is comforting to all parties.

### The Labor Party and Secular Education

The following cable, which appeared in Friday's papers, is one of the most important and significant items that has come to us over the wires for many a month past: 'London, August 21.—The Miners' Federation has given notice of resolution that at the forthcoming Trade Union Congress at Newport they will move to eliminate secular education from the future programme of the party. The movers are convinced that secularism is seriously endangering trade unionism in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Scotland.' The decision of this numerically strong and in every way influential organisation is manifestly an outcome of the agitation which has been carried on by the Catholic Trade Unionists of Great Britain with steady determination for several years past. Year by year a resolution in favor of secular education has been passed by the Trades Union Conferences in the face of reiterated and strenuous protests from the Catholic members. Latterly the Catholic trade unionists have agitated chiefly in the direction of appealing from the official Labor leaders to their masters—i.e., to the members of the unions—by means of a ballot of all the affiliated societies on the question of retaining or dropping the secular education plank from the Labor programme. Some two and a

# Better Teeth

AT HOWEY WALKER'S,

QUEEN STREET, AUCKLAND.

Less Pain. Less Expense.