

FEATURES OF THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

Leader, p. 33; Notes, p. 34; Topics, pp. 22-23; Complete Story, p. 11; Catholic Germany To-day, p. 13; Sketches Grave and Gay, p. 15; Diamond Jubilee of Mother M. Clare, p. 17; The Church in N.Z., pp. 19-21; Are You Saved? p. 45; The Catholic Bible, p. 49; Sunday Afternoon Readings, p. 51; How I Became a Catholic, p. 57; A Great Catholic Editor, p. 57; The Late Cardinal Logue, p. 25.

MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIII TO THE "N.Z. TABLET."

Pergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiae causam promoveri per vias Veritatis et Pacis.

LEO XIII, P.M.

Die 4 Aprilis, 1900.

TRANSLATION.—Fortified by the Apostolic Blessing, let the Directors and Writers of the *New Zealand Tablet* continue to promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.

April 4, 1900. LEO XIII., Pope.

The New Zealand Tablet

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1925.

EARLY TRAINING

EXPERTS tell us that the human brain attains its maximum weight about the age of fifteen, and in the case of girls a little earlier. It is conceded that among the more favored classes the growth may go on up to the age of twenty, or perhaps even a year or two more; but on the whole, the period of nerve plasticity is not extended beyond youth. As years go on the weight of the brain decreases, although in the case of eminent men it has been known to remain fairly constant into old age. But eminent men are exceptions, and the general rule is that the decrease sets in about the age of thirty-three. From this fact it is argued that the most important period for the training of youth are the years between the ages of seven and fifteen, and that it is a great mistake to say, as some people do, that it is well to defer education until the child can reason out for himself the why and wherefore of things. Much more depends on memory, habit, and association than is commonly thought, and the best season for developing these is the most plastic period of brain growth. The great psychologist, Wundt, said: "The old metaphysical prejudice that man always thinks has not yet entirely disappeared. I myself am inclined to hold that man really thinks very little and very seldom. Many an action which looks like a manifestation of intelligence most surely originates in association." Professor Menge says: "We find that . . . at about fifteen the average boy, and from ten to thirteen, the average girl has a brain as large as he or she ever will have; that at thirty-three all the *that reminds me* part of the brain has finished growing, that is, that the association fibres have assumed the form and position they are going to assume for life."

The deduction made from these premises by Professor Halleck is that if we do not get our foundations for training before, we are not going to get them after, we are fully grown. This means that the principles must be instilled early or never, for if they have not taken hold during the plastic period of the brain, in after life life itself will be regulated only from the outside. Hence, it is of maximum importance that the young should acquire their guiding principles even before they are fifteen years of age, and there is real danger that if they fail to do so they will never acquire them. Hence again the need of drilling into the minds of the young the fundamental things which will determine the lines of their moral and intellectual growth in after years. The next question is what sort of principles are to be instilled? At present there are two diverging systems, two ways of teaching boys and girls that they ought to be moral. There is the penal system which holds up to the young imagination the horrors of vice and the terrible consequences of an evil life; the system referred to by Mr. Chesterton when dealing with the assertion that the exhibition of a drunkard's liver would be a more efficacious way of teaching temperance than prayer or praise. The other system is that based on religion, the system which teaches us to be moral because it is the Law of God, which teaches us to respect our bodies because they were made to be temples of God's Holy Spirit, which makes us see a brother in our neighbor, and makes the love for the neighbor the test of the love of God. This system is based on principles, on ideals. It points out to the young girl the beautiful example of the most chaste Mother of God, whereas the other points to the lower motive of social ostracism or physical degradation. The Christian system produces pure and moral men and women; the other only promises hygienic animals—promises and seldom fulfils. Only a debased and perverted mind can have the least hesitation about deciding off-hand which system is the best and noblest. Unfortunately, the fact that the "hygienic animal" system is the one in vogue in our present day secular schools is ample proof of the debasement and perversion of society as a whole.

*

The conclusion of all this is that teachers must aim at making the most of the child during the plastic period of the brain. And if it is their duty to prepare the young people to become good citizens in after life, it is clearly their duty to drill into them sound guiding principles which will mould their characters on right lines. The hygienic appeal is frankly nonsense: it never did and never will make moral men and women, for morality must have a deeper and greater foundation than fear or human respect. The one thing, the one thing alone, that can make for good-character formation is an early training on the old-fashioned Christian lines, a training that will teach children to aim at being good and to shun vice because to do so is God's will in their regard, and because in no other way can they work out their end in being, here and hereafter. God wants the man or the woman who can conscientiously say, "I have tried to live up to

the Ten Commandments, I have obeyed the voice of conscience, I have practised virtue." But we cannot imagine anyone wanting the man or woman who can only say, "I am an immoral being but I am quite hygienic." Experience teaches us that they who try to be merely hygienic are seldom even that. As a rule it is a case of being either moral or immoral. It needs no deep study of modern society to realise that much.

Tragic Death of Father Francis Marlow

RESULT OF A MOTOR ACCIDENT.

While motoring on Saturday evening, accompanied by his brother (Rev. S. Marlow) and Father Martin, of Invercargill, Father Francis Marlow, who was relieving at Wai-kiwi during the absence of the pastor, Rev. Father James O'Neill, on a holiday tour of the Old Land, was struck on the head by a passing motor car, and so severely injured that he passed away on Sunday afternoon. From accounts received of the sad occurrence it would appear that having trouble with his car Father Marlow alighted and was in the act of hailing an approaching car with the object of soliciting help when he was struck down as related above. He was removed to a private hospital where he subsequently succumbed.

The deceased was a son (one of twins) of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Marlow, of Musselburgh, South Dunedin, and received his early education at the school of the Sisters of Mercy, South Dunedin, and afterwards at the Christian Brothers' School, Dunedin. He was educated for the priesthood at Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, and was ordained by his Lordship Dr. Brodie at St. Patrick's Basilica, South Dunedin, five years ago last November. For several years he was stationed at the Cathedral, and at intervals was engaged on relieving duty in various parishes of the diocese. He was an exceedingly zealous and popular young priest, and much loved by the children.

The first news of the sad occurrence was announced at the eleven o'clock Mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday, the prayers of the congregation being solicited for him. When, at Vespers, the announcement was made of his death that afternoon, all present received a grievous shock. In concluding his sermon, Rev. Father Loughnan, S.J., made very feeling reference to Father Marlow's death, and at the close of the devotions, Mr. A. Vallis played the "Dead March" from "Saul." Mr. and Mrs. Marlow motored south to their dying son only to find that he had expired before they reached him. Deepest sympathy is extended to the bereaved parents and family in the great sorrow that has stricken them; also to his Lordship the Bishop in the loss of so devoted a member of the diocesan clergy.

Masses for the repose of the soul of the deceased priest were celebrated at the Cathedral, and chapel of the Dominican Nuns on Monday. The solemn obsequies will be observed at St. Patrick's Basilica, South Dunedin, on Wednesday morning, the interment taking place immediately afterwards.—R.I.P.

J. E. Taylor & Sons

THE CATHOLIC UNDERTAKERS. Telephone (day or night) CAMBRIDGE TERRACE and KARORI. — 26073. —

Wellington