

pressed by the Government for some weeks in 1919. It made a third start, and raids by Black-and-Tan and Republicans were incidents in the final stage of its career. At last the inevitable end came. It had done good service to Ireland and to Catholic interests in Ireland during the greater part

of its career of 161 years, and it is to its honor that during so much of this long period it so often made a good fight for unpopular causes that seemed doomed to defeat, and when the skies were darkest like the Consul of Cannae it deserved the honor of those who "refuse to despair."

be led to a progressive appreciation of the significance of Church Ritual and of the Sacraments; and finally to assist them in every possible way in their preparation for their First Communion, which took place in the school chapel.

We have no space, here, to enter into a detailed description of the very beautiful and suggestive work which was done in this connection. We will conclude, however, with a brief quotation from Doctor Montessori's own pen, which bears directly on the subject we have been considering.

She is speaking with reference to two priests who had become interested in her method—one, Father Casullera, a missionary who had returned from Central America (Guatemala), the other, Father Clascar, a man of scholarly repute, who had translated the Psalms and other parts of the Scriptures into the Catalan language. She says:—

"Neither of these Fathers knew me, nor was aware that I was a Catholic, and although in my book I made no direct profession of religious faith, it seemed to them that my method was *Catholic* in its very essence.

"The humility and patience of the mistress; the stress laid on things rather than words; the surrounding atmosphere of sensorial objects as the beginning of psychic life; the silence and recollection of the little children; the freedom to perfect itself permitted to the infant mind; the minute care in anticipating and correcting whatever is evil—even the simple error, the slight imperfection, the immediate control of the error through the material of development; the respect shown to the inner life of the child, professed almost as a cult of charity,—all these were principles of Pedagogy which seemed to them directly to emanate from, and be inspired by Catholicism."

The Montessori Method and Catholicism

(EDWIN M. STANDING, B.Sc., in the *Irish Rosary*.)

(Concluded from last week.)

The statements made by Dr. Montessori and her supporters—which seem so extravagant to those who have not seen her schools—claiming that through her method a new and higher type of child has been revealed—these claims should not cause any misgivings to Catholics, when it is remembered that they refer only to *natural faculties and graces*, which have hitherto been smothered by the senseless treatment to which small children have been subjected. To quote Dr. Montessori again:—

"The fact has been proved too many times to allow of further doubt, that with our methods many of the defects and many of the characteristics of childish inferiority disappear almost as though by magic, and we are able to observe a new type of child. . . .

"However, this does not touch the intrinsic question of real goodness; the child who has had the spiritual treatment offered by our method has found an environment better adapted for his development; he is not, however, really good because of this, from the point of view of virtue. . . .

"The voluntary rising towards the good, a sacrifice made out of love, heroism, sanctity, cannot be attained by means of a rational psychic treatment, but a strong, clean man will be more ready to receive Divine grace and to make it bear fruit."

On the other hand, Protestants have no cause to be disturbed by the tendency which we have noticed amongst students of her method to gravitate towards Rome. In view of what we have said with regard to the similarity of method between the two systems, this is no more than would be expected by any disinterested observer. A discerning infidel, looking at the matter simply on the natural plane, and by the light of natural reason alone, would expect no less.

It should, however, be a matter for gratification to Catholic Montessori Students that a method so successful in developing the opening faculties of the human mind, should bear such a striking resemblance to that which, under the Providence of God, has been set up to assist him in his supernatural progress.

This similarity is only what "*a priori*" one would expect to find. For the supernatural does not contradict the natural order, but rather transforms it. Or perhaps it would be better to say that it takes it up into itself, absorbing it into its own higher sphere, where it remains itself and yet not itself, but shot through with a meaning and a beauty not its own.

And, therefore, of necessity, the Ideal Montessori School must be the Catholic Mon-

tessori School—where the development of all the natural faculties is looked upon merely as the preparation for their sanctification and adoption, through the influence of Divine Grace, into the Supernatural order.

That such a school is the ideal for which the Dottorressa is striving, no one who knows her intimately could ever doubt. And if any one did doubt, his doubts would be quickly dissipated by a perusal of Dr. Montessori's little booklet entitled *The Child in the Church*.

It is to be regretted that this valuable and suggestive essay has not yet appeared in an English form. For in it she deals with experiments which were made—under competent ecclesiastical authority—to apply the principles of her method to the religious education of the very small child.

These experiments—in which she had the co-operation of two priests—were carried out as the result of a paper read by Signorina Macheroni, Mme. Montessori's ablest assistant, at a Liturgical Congress, before the Abbot of the Benedictines at the Monastery of Montserrat.

The main object of this work was to devise practical means whereby small children from the ages of four years and upwards should

WEDDING BELLS

WHITAKER—SAMPSON.

The wedding was solemnised at St. Patrick's Church, Greymouth, on December 30, 1924, of Ignatius Francis, second son of Mrs. Agnes and the late Bernard Fear Whitaker, Northland, Wellington, to Mary, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Sampson, Greymouth. Nuptial Mass was celebrated by the Rev. Father O'Regan. After the ceremony a reception was held at the residence of the bride's parents, where only relatives were present. The bride was dressed in white satin and wore the orthodox white veil and orange blossoms. The bridesmaids were Miss Lily Sampson (sister of the bride), who wore pink satin marocain, and Miss Genevieve Whitaker (sister of the bridegroom), who wore shot green tafeta. The bridegroom was attended by Mr. Cyril E. Heaphy as best man, and Mr. Gordon White as groomsmen. Mr. and Mrs. Whitaker left for Christchurch and the North Island, where the honeymoon was spent, prior to taking up their residence in Wellington.

We do not ask in the name of our Master what we ask otherwise than by our Master's rules.—St. Augustine.

H.A.C.B.S.

ST. PATRICK'S BRANCH, SOUTH DUNEDIN.

The president (Bro. J. F. Kerr) presided over a record attendance at the fortnightly meeting of St. Patrick's branch (No. 643) of the H.A.C.B. Society, held in the branch's club rooms on Wednesday evening week. A hearty welcome was extended to Bro. M. Ford, of St. Mary's branch, Timaru. Bro. Ford, who was greeted with applause, in acknowledging the reception accorded him, congratulated the members of St. Patrick's branch on their fine new rooms. Six new members were initiated and two candidates proposed for membership. After correspondence had been dealt with, the evening was devoted to social entertainment. Keen interest is being evinced by members in the billiard tournament, prizes for which have been donated by Bro. C. Meekin, St. Patrick's, and Bro. F. Behrens, St. Mary's branch (No. 624), Christchurch.

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Trouble not at the loss of thy bodily eyes. Thou hast the eyes with which the angels see, by which thou mayest behold God.—St. Anthony.

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