

Current Topics

Big Business

During the past two years there has been a great deal of preparation and organisation for the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, to be opened in Dunedin this month. How to accommodate several thousand visitors is part of the problem that is causing keen anxiety. Perhaps our Exhibition authorities will be comforted if they compare their task with that of the Catholics of Chicago, who are now making preparations to receive 2,000,000 Catholic visitors to their city next year on the occasion of the twenty-eighth International Eucharistic Congress which is to be held there. More than 3000 priests will be required to hear 2,000,000 confessions and to give a like number of Holy Communions. Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, spoke to the priests of the gigantic nature of the task before them. "Half of the Catholic world," he said, "will empty itself into our city for this occasion. This means that they must be housed, sheltered, fed, and otherwise accommodated. It will be the duty of you priests who have been appointed to the various committees to see that this is accomplished. Catholic writers express the opinion that Chicago is already profiting by the ease with which the vast crowds assembling this year in Rome are being handled, for even at this early date seating accommodation for practically fifty-thousand has been arranged. This, of course, is big business, but the beauty of it is that as it is all designed to glorify God the objectionable features of big business in the secular order will be entirely eliminated. The artists engaged to prepare advertising posters for the Congress are warned that the mammoth undertaking "is to glorify God for and through the great Sacrament of His Love. It is a reception to our Eucharistic Lord and King. Read the hymns of St. Thomas for sound doctrine, figures of speech and comparisons, genuine poetry and devotion. Look up or inquire what happened at Amsterdam, Montreal, London, or Antwerp, where similar programmes were carried out in recent years. Become absorbed in the subject from every angle. And then go to work." There should be something doing in Chicago in the middle of June.

Bigotry and Birth Control

It would seem that bigotry on occasion may produce good results. Ardent birth controllers in England are torn between their desire for race suicide and their fear of a Catholic majority. In some cases, at all events, fear of Rome proves the stronger. The other day, at the Liberal Summer School, Mr. J. M. Keynes, whose *Economic Consequences of the Peace* created such a furore in Juuker circles after the Versailles Treaty was signed, proposed to make birth control and the regulation of population a plank in the platform of the Liberal Party. The Liberal politicians, however, are not altogether in love with the proposal, not indeed because they dislike the idea of birth

control but because they fear that provision for it in their political programme would prejudice the chances of the party "coming back" at the next General Election. Politicians usually measure all things by votes. Some of them, however, are opposed to the proposal of Mr. Keynes for other equally expedient reasons. For instance, Mr. W. M. R. Pringle, who represented a Yorkshire division in the last Parliament, thus justifies his opposition:—"Birth control is repudiated by the Roman Catholic Church. The result is that while the Anglo-Saxon Protestant population tends to be stationary, the Roman Catholic population, mainly of Irish origin, is growing. Already 27 per cent. of the school children of Glasgow are Roman Catholic. It is not wise to give an official stimulus to this change of the character of the population. The regulation of population would restrict the liberty of people who, on conscientious grounds, abhor contraception. Our knowledge of the whole problem is imperfect. While methods of contraception are well known, the effects of their constant use, both on the individual and on society are not ascertained. In this state of our knowledge the alleged social benefits merely represent a sophisticated justification for immediate comfort and gratification. In every case where restriction of population has been adopted it has been a symptom of racial decadence. The people who are unwilling to sacrifice present comfort and convenience to incur risks and face responsibilities for the future are bound to go down. They have lost faith in progress."

Catholic Schools and Criminals

Catholics are familiar with the type of bigot who goes to inaccurate prison statistics to prove that Catholic education did not save John Smith, who was confirmed by Father Jones, from becoming a criminal. A correspondent wrote to *America* to say that he had heard of several young men who, after passing four years in a Catholic college, drifted into gaol. Our contemporary is not disposed to dispute the statement, but it ventures to add that if the correspondent were to extend his researches he would find more than "several" Catholic college men in gaol, some of them guests of the State for life. "For no one can be compelled to be virtuous, not even a college student. Four years at a Catholic college confirm no one in grace, and attendance at a Catholic college is not an infallible certificate of high moral character. The best we can do for the young student is to give him, in a decent environment, a training in religion and morality of the kind that is calculated to awaken in him a lasting desire to co-operate with the grace of God and save his soul. The Catholic college does that much, but it can do no more. Nor can the Catholic Church. Further, it does not seem to be part of the Divine economy, as we know it in this present dispensation, to force anyone. God made us free, and He always respects that freedom. If men do not wish

to use the means of grace, and while living as good citizens in the world, to prepare themselves for citizenship in the world to come, Almighty God will not coerce them. They have forged the chains of their captivity, and their loss is upon their own heads. It is quite true that some Catholic college graduates are in gaol, and probably enough that some are in Hell. For them the Catholic college assumes no responsibility. It was no fault of the college that they rejected her teaching, jeered at her laws, and did what they could to change the religious atmosphere they found there into the atmosphere of a den of vice. Some men are adepts in cunning and dissimulation. It cannot be fairly contended that Peter, always in some degree the head of the little band of twelve, was responsible for the fall of Judas; much less can his defection be traced to some defect in the training which the Master endeavored to give him. Judas simply took his fate into his own hands, and went to his place. If among the twelve members of the college of the Apostles, there was one traitor, no one should affect surprise at finding a traitor among the thousands who have come forth from the Catholic college. In what then lies the superiority of the Catholic college? In this: all that can be done to help the student to become an upright man is done by the Catholic college, whereas the secular college does not even pretend an interest in his religious and moral development. In the Catholic college the student will meet with no professor who blasphemes God or scoffs at God's law; he will find, however, men who maintain that the most important aim in life is to praise, revere, and serve Almighty God, and who by precept and example will teach him how this aim may be encompassed. All that the Church can furnish is at his disposal: a clean environment, a training in religion and morality, prayer, easy access to the Sacraments; and for those who seek it, individual spiritual guidance. The difference between the Catholic and the secular school is the difference between Heaven and earth, when it is not the difference between Heaven and hell."

"The Soul of China"

The Catholic Church is the only power on earth that can with advantage promote even material culture in those countries which are farthest removed from the influence of western civilisation. The reason for this is that the Church was instituted for all nations. Hence, she is at once national and international, and can without the least difficulty or inconvenience become part of the nation in which she finds herself, without forfeiting in the process any of her truths or fundamental characteristics. This truth is graphically illustrated by Mr. Raymond Radclyffe, in a timely article entitled "The Soul of China," which appeared in a recent number of *G.K.'s Weekly*. We have become so accustomed to the stereo-typed misrepresentations of troubles in China, India, Egypt, and elsewhere, which appear with tedious regularity and oppressive sameness in our newspapers, that Mr. Radclyffe's wholesome

United Friendly Societies' Dispensary

Price: 2/8 per bottle; posted 8/2.

YES: The United Friendly Societies' THAMES STREET, Oamaru
Hair Renewer positively restores grey or faded hair to its natural color, and removes dandruff.