

is now "clerk", and "almons" have become more bitter by calling them "almonds", but we may be thankful that "cupboard" remains "cubbard", "waistcoat" is still "weskit", and "stomach" still "stummick". "Preston" and "Clifton" were, of course, "Cliff'n", and "Press'n", "Berkshire" and "Derby" were "Barkshire" and "Darby". "Clergy" was "clargy", and "sermon" was "sarmon". We do not think sensitive people will ever take readily to the modern corruptions that pass with dunces for polite usage. Old literature is spoiled by new readings and did Shakespeare, Jonson, and Malory live in our time they would have to do a deal of polishing in order to satisfy the exactions of board-school ma'ams and masters. The writer in the *Nation* whom we quoted, tells us that his particular teacher once warmed his jacket thoroughly for saying "Wed-nes-day"; and R.L.G. admits that he deserved what he got. It is a pity we have not more of that type of teacher to-day.

Luridness in the Pulpit

Slang is right in the right place; it has its uses as well as its abuses. Most people, indeed all people, in whom the sense of reverence is well developed, will agree that if there is a wrong place for slang it is the pulpit. Billy Sunday and his imitators may draw crowds and amuse them, but that they help religion in any way is not so clear as that they disedify a great number to whom religion is dear. In New Zealand we have little or no luridness in churches so far. What there is of it is perhaps confined to the Christchurch busybody who tries to fill his conventicle by publishing notices of sermons under sensational headings. In Australia it has a few scattered exponents even in Catholic pulpits. Father Bernard Vaughan descends to it not infrequently in his sermons to Society that is not Society and to Sinners that are as a rule not Sinners to any remarkable extent. We believe the use of slang by preachers is a sort of passing disease which the healthy opinion of the *senior et major* portion of church-goers of all denominations will stamp out speedily. And when slang in churches has died a natural or a violent death the world will have lost little. Long sermons are bad enough; ill-prepared sermons are an affliction of the spirit; inaudible sermons are among the unpardonable sins against humanity; but slangy sermons are worst of all.

Slang in American Churches

A Presbyterian clergyman collected a number of slangy and lurid titles for sermons from a Western paper. A perusal of some of them is enough to make us sit up vigorously. J. J. North has not advanced so far on his way of futility as to advertise as some American brethren of his do. Even those who do venture to go and hear him would be horrified if he announced such titles as the following: "Has God Got your Number?" "Pussy-Cat, Pussy-Cat, Where Have You Been?" "The Man in the Moon," "A Wonderful Invention: A Lunch-Box, Hand-Mirror, and Bath-Tub in One." In America there is a reaction already. The same clergyman writes; "Happily there are hosts of ministers who are upholding the dignity of the Church, who are above the miserable vulgarisation of religion." Of those who fill the church-columns of secular papers with disgusting advertisements, suggesting a "riot of department-store bargains, a printer's ink scramble for business," he says: "We must either correct them to a belief in the power of the Gospel of Christ, or, in the event of our failure to do this, escort them out of the ministry." W. C. E. Newbolt regrets that even in London pulpits slang has obtained a hold: "We hear in sermons, in close juxtaposition with the most sacred things, the words and the phrases common in the camp and the barracks, which the army chaplains brought home with them. . . . An oath or a profanity is not unknown; it adds point to the discourse, and wakens the languid interest of the audience." It is something to be thankful for that Catholic pulpits in New Zealand are free from such faults, even if at times they are gently soporific.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

Solemn Requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of the late Mr. John Coffey (father of Very Rev. Father Coffey, Adm. St. Joseph's Cathedral, and of Rev. Mother M. Margaret and Sister M. Austin, O.S.D.), will be offered at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Tuesday, January 4.

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL, DUNEDIN.

At St. Joseph's Cathedral on Christmas Day Masses were celebrated continuously from 6 till 9 a.m., each being attended by a large congregation, and practically the whole number present at each separate Mass approached the Holy Table. There was Solemn Pontifical Mass at 11 o'clock, his Lordship the Bishop being celebrant, Very Rev. Father Coffey, assistant priest; Rev. Fathers Kaveney and Marlow, deacons of honor at the throne; and Rev. Father Ardagh and Rev. J. Fenton, deacon and subdeacon respectively of the Mass. Very Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., preached an impressive discourse on the subject of the day's festival, and, as he did at the earlier Masses, extended to the parishioners his sincere good wishes for all the blessings of a joyous Christmas and a bright and happy New Year. The choir, with Mr. A. Vallis at the organ and Signor Squariso conducting, gave a fine rendering of Gounod's Third Mass. The "Adeste Fideles" (Novello's arrangement) was sung by the choir at the Offertory, the various parts (solo, duet, trio and quartette) being admirably rendered. At the conclusion of Mass his Lordship the Bishop imparted the Papal Blessing. The high altar was very beautifully adorned, and in the evening brilliantly illuminated, and reflected great credit on the painstaking and devoted workers who were responsible for producing such tasteful and striking effects. The "trib." too, was very realistically arranged, and proved an object of devotion which attracted large numbers.

In the evening, after the recital of the Holy Rosary, a number of sacred selections were rendered by members of St. Joseph's Cathedral Choir, in the presence of his Lordship the Bishop at the throne. The time-honored anthem, "Adeste Fideles" (Novello's arrangement) was beautifully given by Mrs. Sandys (soprano), Miss M. Drumm (contralto), Mr. M. Coughlan (tenor), and Mr. J. McGrath (bass), and the choir. Mr. D. Fogarty gave a good rendering of Santley's "Ave Maria." Mrs. F. Woods sang "The Blind Ploughman" admirably. Mr. J. McGrath's rendering of "Nazareth" was in keeping with the fine standard of vocalisation with which his name is always associated. "Incline Thine Ear" was splendidly given by the choir, Mr. F. Woods taking the solo. "Per Signum Crucis" (a 16th century composition) was well rendered by a double male quartette. Stephen Adams's "Holy City" was very pleasingly given by Mrs. Sandys. Mr. A. Vallis contributed an organ solo in his usual artistic style, and in conclusion the choir was heard to great advantage in "Joseph Fili David" (Santley). Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given by his Lordship the Bishop, the incidental music including Elgar's "O Salutaris," O'Donovan's "Tantum Ergo," "Divine Praises" and the "Adoremus" (Plain Chant).

The members of the choir were afterwards entertained by the Bishop, Very Rev. Father Coffey and several others of the clergy being present. His Lordship cordially thanked the choir for its devoted services during the year, and expressed appreciation of its fine musical renderings of that day (Christmas) as also on the occasion of the recent episcopal consecrations. Dr. Whyte also spoke interestingly of sacred music and eminent composers, his remarks very much impressing those present. Mr. Vallis (organist) and Mr. H. Poppelwell (secretary) voiced, on behalf of the choir, sincere thanks to his Lordship for his kindly sentiments and much appreciated recognition of the choir's efforts, a work in which they (the members) took an individual pride.

OBITUARY

MR. JOHN COFFEY, TIPPERARY, IRELAND.

On Friday last a cable announcing the death of his father in Cappel Hill, Bird Hills, Co. Tipperary, Ireland, reached the Very Rev. James Coffey, Adm., Dunedin. Mr. Coffey had reached the threshold of 80 years, and almost up to the end had been in splendid health. The death of his son, Rev. John Coffey, a few months ago was a great shock from which he never entirely rallied. Mr. Coffey gave of his large family two sons to the priesthood, and two daughters to the Order of St. Dominic—Mother Margaret Mary, North-East Valley, and Sister Austin, Teschemakers. To his devoted wife who shared his joys and sorrow for nearly 60 years and to his children at home and abroad the good works and the solid piety of his full life bring now an assurance of eternal happiness which is the only real consolation in bereavement. To Father Coffey, Mother Margaret Mary, and Sister Austin we offer our profound sympathy. Solemn Requiem Mass for the deceased will be celebrated in St. Joseph's Cathedral on Tuesday, January 4.—R.I.P.

Jack Metcalfe

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