

not know his head from his heels, it will not even amuse us that he should stand on his head. There would be but faint amusement in an amaeba standing on his head, because we are a little vague about which is his head. If we met some monster on the syclic pattern of certain animalculae, but swollen to monstrous size and rolling down the road, we might show a shade of surprise; but we should hardly be overwhelmed with really hearty laughter. There would be nothing comic about his turning a cartwheel; he would be too like a cartwheel. It is amusing to see a little boy turn a cartwheel (in moderation) precisely because a little boy is not a wheel, and is designed by his Creator for a loftier end than that of drawing a cart. Now the modern world cannot make head or tail of itself, and therefore cannot see the fun itself, even when it is engaged like a kitten in chasing its own tail. The little boy cannot become funny by being upside down, because his earnest and thoughtful teachers are by no means certain about when he is right side up. At any moment a professor of the new hygiene or the higher athletics may prove that a child standing on his feet is in a strained, unnatural posture, throwing too much weight on the ankle-bones, and undermining the whole nervous system. And then all the children will rest standing on their heads; and we should all be expected to take it seriously. And if the image be considered exaggerative, I recur to the example I have given before; that in certain educational institutions in America, children are actually taught to cultivate a meticulous and medicinal care of their health; and that a eulogist of this extraordinary system actually used, as part of his eulogy, the statement that the children were "health-mad." You cannot get anything madder than that. You cannot get anything regarded as mad where that is regarded as sane. You cannot get anything treated satirically where that is treated seriously. Satire is necessarily dead in a society so incapable of any natural reaction; in a society that has no kick in it, even when it has such things to kick. Imagine what a satirist of saner days would have made of the daily life of a child of six, who was actually admitted to be mad on the subject of his own health. These are not days in which that great extravaganza could be written; but I dimly see some of its episodes like uncompleted dreams. I see the child pausing in the middle of a cartwheel, or when he has performed three-quarters of a cartwheel, and consulting a little notebook about the amount of exercise per diem. I see him pausing half-way up a tree, or when he has climbed exactly one-third of a tree; and then producing a clinical thermometer to take his own temperature. But what would be the use of blazoning to the whole universe, in all imaginative colors, the manifestation of this idiot's madness, when he himself praises it for being mad?

JUST PUBLISHED

'AROUND THE BORELOG' AND OTHER VERSES

By "JOHN O'BRIEN."

This is the book of the Irish settlers in Australia. In its verses are enshrined the best and most characteristic of their ideals and their surroundings—the home life, full of intimate affection and instinct with true piety; the intercourse, gay or humorous or comradesly, with neighbors and friends; the ties of religion and family unity that bind to the home hearth even those who wander farthest from it, and the "Church upon the Hill" that is the centre of all. The heroine is the "Little Irish Mother," keeping her tireless vigils in the outback hut, mothering her children (and "himself" as well) through the years. The tale of her doings appeals most strongly to the deepest humanity in all of us. After her we remember best the fine old priest, Father Pat—ministering at the Altar, or driving behind "Currajong" to the bed of pain, or with his fellow pioneers daring "a wide, weird waste of world." And the Little Mother and Father Pat and all the rest of the healthy, happy folk among whom "John O'Brien" brings us are true Australians also, as he is himself:

An Australian, ay, Australian—oh, the word is music to me,
he says in his poem on St. Patrick's Day, and his every utterance confirms the claim.

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MANAGER N.Z. Tablet. Posted for 6/6.

Popes and Bull-Fighting

In the eighth volume of his *History of the Popes*, only recently from the press, the noted historian Ludwig von Pastor treats of the condemnation of bull-baiting pronounced by Pope Pius V. in a decree dated November 1, 1567, and relates the difficulties encountered by the Papal Nuncio in Spain, Castagna, in consequence of the ban. In view of the letter of congratulation sent last Christmas twelvemonths by the Papal Secretary of State to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals at Toulon in France the facts related by Pastor regarding the step taken by Pius V., are of particular interest.

In the recent communication regarding the letter from Rome we are told that Cardinal Gasparri declared: "If human barbarity is still openly manifested in bull-fighting, the Church will no doubt maintain a ban, as in the past, on all such shameful and bloody shows. Consequently the Holy Father takes pleasure in expressing his deep satisfaction to the Toulon Society and also conveys his earnest wishes for a full success in all subsequent endeavors which are as worthy as they are necessary." Cardinal Gasparri could have referred to the above-mentioned general prohibition of bull-fights, as it had previously already obtained in the Papal States. The ban imposed by Pius V. decreed that whosoever arranged a bull-fight came under the censure; and whoever lost his life in such a fight was to be denied Christian burial.

In Spain the decree of Pius V. met with a most unfriendly reception. Pastor writes: "Justified though the measure was, grave difficulties were raised against its enactment. At the very first notice of the decree the Spanish grandees raised their voices in protest against it, and King Philip II. likewise championed the national pastime which the Papal decree endangered. As was his wont he sought out pliable theologians, who, acting upon his suggestion, advanced proof that bull-fights were not sinful. In their condition of dependence on the Government the Spanish Bishops dared not promulgate the decree, so that Castagna was forced to do so himself. Unfortunately there were many defenders of the barbarous practice, among them even an Andalusian Franciscan, whose treatise was severely censured by Pius V." (Pastor, *History of the Popes*, etc., 1566-1572, vol. 8, p. 303.)

Obituary

MR. THOMAS H. WIXCEY, WANGANUI.

There passed away at the Wanganui hospital on the 11th ult., one of the oldest and most highly respected Catholics of the district, in the person of Mr. T. H. Wixcey (writes a correspondent). In the early days of colonisation the late Mr. Wixcey settled in the parish of Onehunga, and for a lengthy period, during the pastorate of the late Mgr. Paul, was associated in all movements in the interests of Church advancement. Coming later to Wanganui, he again identified himself in every good work, and rendered valuable assistance to the late Dean Kirk, S.M., in his arduous task of establishing schools, and in parish undertakings generally. In his commercial life he was associated with the firm of Hogan and Co., and was known as the "father" of the commercial travellers in the Wanganui district. The late Mr. Wixcey was a Maori war veteran, having served with the colonial troops. Very Rev. Father O'Connell, S.M., officiated at the interment, a pathetic sight at the graveside being the remnant of an army numbering six, with their venerable grey heads uncovered, reverently standing in tempestuous weather, as their comrade was laid to rest, while the bugler sounded the "Last Post."—R.I.P.

It is not the work we do on earth that makes the whole of life, but it is the way in which we do that work—it is the motive.

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