

Current Topics

Slander Punished

The editor of the *Crusader*, an American No Popery paper, was sentenced at San Francisco to six months in the county gaol for publishing the libel called "The Fourth Degree Oath of the Knights of Columbus." The trial took place before Superior Judge A. M. Woolley, a non-Catholic, and a non-Catholic jury. This editor, one David Gordon, was of the type of bigot too common in P.P.A. circles in New Zealand. Such oaths have been published in this country in several of the P.P.A. papers, but there is no danger of the libellers getting their due here. They are too useful to the Reform Party about election times. Americans have some respect for justice. In New Zealand it is a mere farce. If the mention of certain Cabinet Ministers is enough to raise a loud laugh among us, the name of certain judicial luminaries is a charge of laughing gas, and the higher they are the longer the laughter.

Obregon and the Delegate

President Obregon has the power to expel from Mexico any inconvenient foreigner without giving any reason whatever. He expelled Mgr. Filippi, but he made the mistake of giving a reason which does not stand. He said that the Delegate broke the Mexican Constitution by performing an act of "exterior" worship. Mgr. Filippi broke no law, nor does the Constitution forbid acts of "exterior" worship at all: it forbids "public" worship outside churches, which is a very different thing. Here are the facts concerning Mgr. Filippi's alleged offence: In the private estate of and domicile of Mr. Macias there is a hill on which the owner wished to erect a statue of the Sacred Heart. He invited several bishops and the Apostolic Delegate. On the private estate of this gentleman, and in a tent, the ceremony was performed. Mr. Macias lived in the State of Guanajuato, and he consulted the State Governor to make sure that he was within his rights. The Governor declared that he had a perfect right to hold the ceremony, and it was held with his approbation. The State of Guanajuato is a free State and Obregon had no right whatever to intrude therein. As President he had a right to expel an inconvenient foreigner, but he had no right to tell lies in order to excuse and defend his action. That is what he did do when he said that Mgr. Filippi broke the Constitution.

Catholic Education

We hope all our readers read with attention Father Gilbert's article on Catholic Education, which appeared in our Jubilee issue. For parents who might be tempted to take the bait offered by a godless government it is a grave warning: for those who have already done so, it is a plain exposition of the attitude of the Church on their disloyalty: for us all it is a clarion-call to action, timely and necessary.

As the able writer of the article points out, where is the use of insisting on Catholic principles for children of primary schools if we are not going to carry out our insistence to its logical conclusions? The danger is even greater in the case of children of an age at which secondary education is usually begun. The voice of the Church is as imperative in their case as in that of their juniors. Hence, loyal Catholics will not hesitate.

Father Gilbert's suggestion as to the establishment of parochial scholarships is worthy of deep consideration. It is a thing every parish could easily do. It offers a scope for the manifestation of Catholic generosity of the people, and of apostolic zeal on the part of the pastor. It is a practical suggestion; and in this cause it is practical things that matter.

As he points out, our people are wonderfully wide-awake to the reality of the danger. They are also

wonderfully loyal and wonderfully generous. Hence there is solid foundation for hopes that public opinion amongst us might be aroused to such a degree that hesitating parents might be influenced in the right direction and that those who have already swallowed the gilded bait might be shamed into a recognition of the meaning of their action.

Which of us does not recall sad instances of faith lost, of lives wrecked owing to the unfaithfulness of parents in this matter? They have sent their children to a non-Catholic school; they have given them what they call a "respectable" education; they have put them in the midst of daily temptations which are calculated to undermine their faith. And these worldly people forget all the time the awful warning issued by Christ Himself to such as they are:

"What will it avail a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?"

"Respectability" forsooth! There is laughter in hell at the airs of some of those parents. Once when asked why she sent her sons to a non-Catholic college, a lady replied to her questioner, who was a parish-priest: "I do not consider that clerical teachers belong to the class of gentlemen." The parish-priest was too kind-hearted and too gentlemanly to remind that "lady" that her boys' grandsire on one side pushed a vegetable-cart as the foundation of his fortune, and that common rumor attributed what blue blood there was on the other side of the family to a less reputable origin.

When such pleas are advanced in excuse for wrongdoing there is sure to be "something rotten in the State of Denmark." They emanate only from people to whom a nod from a lord is more than doing the will of their real Lord—from people for whom clothes are more than character, and an O.B.E. more than righteous living. Like the honest poor, these dishonest rich will always be with us. Warnings availing not, we can but pass them by with the scorn of Virgil:

Non ragioniamo di loro!

More reasonable is the plea of those who protest that they can get free education in non-Catholic schools and that they are not able to afford to send their children to our own colleges. In such cases, what is wanting is a spirit of loyalty such as will inspire sacrifices for a good cause. And conscious of the weakness of human nature, it is our duty to help these weak ones to do their duty. The practical step then is the foundation of scholarships, many of them, in towns, in country districts, all over New Zealand. To do this an appeal to Catholic generosity is necessary. But that appeal has never yet been made in vain in New Zealand.

Dean Mayne's Plea for Common Sense

The Very Rev. Dean Mayne of Napier Cathedral (formerly of Dunedin), broke new ground in the course of an Anzac Day sermon (writes the Hastings correspondent of the *Christchurch Press*), when he uttered a vigorous denunciation of the desecration of the tombs of the Pharaohs, and merrymaking on holy days. "We British are perhaps the most inconsequent, inconsistent, and illogical people on the face of the earth," said the Dean. "We would go to war rather than see the graves of our dead heroes on Gallipoli desecrated, yet we look on with tacit approval, or, at any rate, without raising a strong protest, while those of our race desecrate the tombs of dead Pharaohs and others to whom such an interference with the dead was an unspeakable abomination. Then, we have rightly made Anzac Day a holy day, and the Government has passed legislation to compel its due observance. Yet Good Friday, the day on which Our Saviour died, and from whose life, death, and resurrection our boys derive their inspiration and power of self-sacrifice, is devoted by the people at large to amusements, competitions, picnics, tournaments, and picture shows. Is it any wonder that a great foreign statesman once cynically observed, 'Bah! Those British humbugs!'"

It is about time that somebody who is not decried by our dailies as a seditious Sinn Feiner appealed to the common sense of the people of the Dominion concerning the nonsense and idiocy staged by flag-flappers and God-Save-the-Kingers. His criticism about the

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