

possibility of encouraging the formation of new branches in the Diocese, and we hope that the clergy in the different parishes will give full sympathy to any suggestions made. Altogether the Conference was a most helpful one, and should not fail to bring forth good and lasting fruit.

Unintelligent Scepticism.

We have always felt that modern scepticism and irreligion are, generally speaking, simply unintelligent. This view is strongly expressed by Sir Henry Jones in his latest book, "A Faith that Enquires." He writes:—

"The looker-on at Religion, the secular minded sceptic, must recognise his limits. . . . A great deal of the scepticism of the present day is not worthy of respect. Men reject what they have never tried and condemn what they have never seriously reflected upon. They have been engaged with other things than those which are spiritual and which concern the making of their manhood. The affairs of Religion are as foreign to them as the computations of higher mathematics, and their judgment of the former has as little value as their knowledge of the latter. They have not tried it in practice; they do not know its history; they are not within reach of advanced arguments either for or against Religion. Their morality is traditional, and the whole movement of their thoughts is in another region and on another plane than that of Religion. And many of them being prosperous in a worldly sense, they are not in the least aware how contemptible they are in a higher and deeper sense."—"Bombay Diocesan Magazine."

For Holiday Reading.

A few howlers from "The American Child":—

"There were no Christians among the early Gauls, they were mostly lawyers."

"In 1620 the Pilgrims crossed the ocean and this is known as Pilgrim's Progress."

"Henry VIII. was very fat, besides being a Nonconformist."

"The Puritans drove Roger Williams out of Massachusetts because he would talk about God."

"The Pyramids are a range of mountains between France and Spain."

"Algebra was the wife of Euclid."

"Algebraical symbols are used when you don't know what you are talking about."

"Geometry teaches us how to bisect angels."

"A vacuum is a large, empty place where the Pope lives."

"The climate is caused by hot and cold weather."

"A brute is an imperfect beast; man is a perfect beast."

Here are some more, from examination papers in Baltimore:—

A blizzard is the inside of a hen.

A circle is a round, straight line with a hole in the middle.

George Washington married Mary Custis and in due time became the father of his country.

Sixty gallons make one hedgehog.

Georgia was founded by people who had been executed.

A mountain range is a large cock stove.

Achilles was dipped in the river Styx to make him normal.

Pompeii was destroyed by an eruption of saliva from the Vatican.

Typhoid fever is prevented by fascination.

—"Church Times."

News and Notes.

We have been asked to call attention to the retreat for women to be held at Hukarere School from January 22nd to January 26th, 1923. Deaconess Esther Brand (Hastings) is secretary and will give any information required. There is nothing formidable about a retreat, the most simple-minded and the highly intellectual meet together in the presence of God, and, shutting out the world, listen to God's voice. A retreat is as its name implies, a withdrawal from earthly worries and mental distractions, into the peaceful atmosphere of silence and meditation. It gives detachment, clearness of mental vision, confidence in spiritual strength and the power of God's grace, and generally, a refreshment that sends one back into the world with new energy and high ideals. In these times of anxiety and the rush of busy lives retreats are absolutely necessary if we would retain our spiritual force and our mental clarity. A retreat is the most direct way of accepting our Lord's invitation, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

A Quiet Afternoon for Sunday School teachers was held at St. Luke's, Havelock North, on Saturday, October 28th, conductor, the Rev. Canon Maclean. Twenty-eight teachers were present and the best comment on the helpfulness of the three hours thus spent was their desire to have many such opportunities given to them. The intention is to hold a devotional afternoon two or three

times a year in Napier, Hastings, or Havelock.

A few years ago one of our parishes had a surpliced ladies' choir, and there is always a tendency in a certain number of people to advocate putting ladies in some sort of gown, surplice and mortar-board. "It looks so nice." But if it pleases some it disgusts others, for the one word which cannot be applied to it is "nice." It is never "nice" for a woman to dress in male garments, least of all in a church. Ladies' choirs are an essential in most churches; but why should they not dress as women? There is nothing so becoming to a girl as the various ecclesiastical vestments for women. The bridal veil is a female ecclesiastical costume, so is the veil for confirmation and for the churching of women. In some London churches the war time custom of women communicating in a kind of mantilla is still retained, and very preferable it is to the large hat in convenience. There should be no reason therefore why the ladies in the choir should not be "decently attired" in becoming female costume. They should not imitate either men or nuns. The Bishop of Goulburn (Bathurst—Ed. C.S.), it is said, has authorised a white linen head-covering (like a confirmation veil), together with a white linen garment that covers the figure and is girded at the waist. Something like that would be quite satisfactory. But after all, if the choir with the organ were in its right place, behind the congregation, there would be no need for special costume. For a choir is intended to be heard, not seen.—The "Northern Churchman," Queensland.

Canon Batty thus concludes a series of articles on "Church Music" in the "Church Chronicle," Brisbane:—

There is a strong vis inertia on the part of both priest and people with regard to any change in the music of the Church. But my short experience of experiments in change has taught me (1) that the tunes which our reformers want us to use, and of which a splendid selection is to be found in the English Hymnal, once they are known, are the most popular tunes of all; (2) that if the co-operation of the congregation is explicitly sought, and they are brought to regard themselves as having a definite function to fulfil in public worship, and are bound to do their part just as much as priest or choir, they will respond almost with enthusiasm; (3) that congregational practices before Sunday evensong are not only an invaluable and absolutely necessary means of familiarising the congregation with tunes which it is desired to introduce, but are eag-