

A SOLEMN THOUGHT.

To-day, the world over, men are organizing against the dread enemy intemperance. No establishment on earth is doing more to destroy that evil than is the Catholic Church. Some of the leading lights in the hierarchy are working with wonderful energy, and wonderful effect, in the great cause of temperance; members of the clergy in every diocese are following the example of their superiors; and the lay people are banding into associations for the same grand object. It is, as we conceive it, the duty of the Catholic press to aid in the crusade against the most destructive of vices. Each individual worker has his own way of attacking the enemy, and the combined strength of the different methods used eventually produce good results.

Sometimes it is well to give examples of the ruin worked by drink. It is not necessary to draw harrowing pictures of miserable homes, starving children, deserted wives; nor is it necessary to cite the murders, suicides and the countless other crimes that are nearly all to be traced to the same cause. These are pictures that have been drawn times out of mind and that every person can readily imagine. We will take, however, a few examples, of the awful ruin brought about by intemperance, from the columns of an American exchange. They will suffice to show the wonderful power possessed by the demon of drink and the almost helpless weakness of the one who allows the influence of that monster to overcome his manhood.

The writer from whom we quote had visited the Washington almshouse, and there one of the first men he met "had been formerly the Attorney-General of Virginia. In his office a number of distinguished lawyers were students, and they owe much to his advice. His father had been Attorney-General of the United States, and left his son wealth. But he drank, and sacrificed everything to his love of intoxicating liquor." He then continues: "Another pauper was an ex-Judge of the Supreme Court of California, and had been esteemed as one of the most eloquent men of his time. He came to Washington to get an office, was disappointed; took to drink, and drank himself out of pocket, mind and friends, and into the poorhouse. In his company was a once wealthy newspaper editor and proprietor, a man of great political influence. This man had been for three years in the poorhouse. Sometimes his friends take him out, but he drinks so much that he lies about the street and is returned by the police."

In the same account we are told that "a man who was Stephen A. Douglass' intimate friend, and who used to speak from the same platform with him, is a Washington pauper." Coming into the almshouse, as the correspondent left it, was an old, white-haired man, who was at one time one of the leading men of the Michigan bar. "He is the man who backed Zachariah Chandler and made him, politically speaking, what he was. And this man, of great legal ability and political influence, sufficient to make and unmake men, and of much wealth, is now a pauper. Why? Because he drank alcoholic liquor."

We need quote no more. Our object in citing the above paragraphs is to show that there is no station, however exalted, from which the iron grasp of drink cannot wrench even the strongest man. It is, therefore, unnecessary to say that any person, no matter how physically strong or mentally gifted, who plays with such an enemy is sure to end in defeat. We will now give the example of a person who was saved from the curse of drink by the conception of one "awful thought," and we will leave the subject to the meditation of our readers, and particularly our younger readers.

The person to whom we refer was endowed with very special talents and had all the requirements necessary to constitute a good and a very useful citizen—perhaps, to one day become a great man. He contracted—no matter how—the habit of drink. It grew upon him; he imagined he could overcome it; but it overcame him. He could not undertake any important move without fortifying himself with liquor. His friends warned, he received many lessons, but the grip of the monster was too powerful and he was unable to resist. On one occasion he had the opportunity of securing a very good position; it was necessary that he should call upon a distinguished statesman in order to receive the appointment. The hour was named, but as usual he had to take a few glasses to brace up his courage. The result was that he staggered into the presence of the important personage. Needless to say he was informed that he could not be appointed. Broken spirited he retired; he drank some more to drown his disappointment, and he lost all consciousness. Next morning he awoke in a strange room and it was long before he could understand where he was.

While reflecting upon the past twenty-four hours he recalled the fact that he had gone intoxicated into the presence of the man from whom he had expected an appointment; then all the rest was blank. He might have been killed that night, or he might have been blind, or he might have been a pauper, or he might have been a criminal, or he might have been a leper. All these things came

coursing through his brain. At last a terrible reflection arose: he might have reeled drunk into the presence of God! That one thought was enough; the idea of appearing intoxicated before God so frightened him, so thoroughly awakened him to the reality of his danger, that he arose and ever after lived the life of a total abstainer. To-day he is prosperous. Let the world meditate on that one thought.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is true that we have not always admired Mark Twain's writings, nor could we share his ideas and sympathies, but we must certainly admire the noble stand he has taken regarding his recent financial losses. The publishing firm with which he was connected, and in which most of the fruits of his many years of labor were placed, failed. The failure was due to no fault on his part, yet he manfully assumes the moral responsibility for debts that he has not legally contracted nor for which does the law hold him answerable. And now, at the age of sixty years, he practically commences life over again and goes forth on a lecturing tour to secure means to pay off all the indebtedness, even to the last cent. He felt that writing was too slow a process and that he is too old to expect being able to realize the sufficient amount by the publication of new works. Consequently, and with the aid of his generous and noble wife, he has set out upon a mission that he calculates will last four years. Under such circumstances the humorous writer deserves the greatest encouragement. Perhaps the lesson he is now teaching to the world, of sterling honesty, will be the greater benefit he shall have conferred on humanity.

THERE is talk of an Anti-Masonic Congress to combat the machinations of the secret societies in Europe. It is certainly time that some general and effective movement should be set on foot to counteract all the harm those evil associations are doing. The history of Italy and that of France are alive with facts sufficient to prove that at the bottom of every revolutionary upheaval are to be found the adherents of the secret societies. They seem, however, to have one grand object in view—the destruction of Catholicity; and they leave no stone unturned to attain their end. We know perfectly well that they strive after the impossible; yet in their course they may drag many a poble soul to the brink of moral ruin. They antagonize the best interests of the citizen and consequently of the State. It is to be hoped that the day is at hand when their work will be nullified and that thousands will be emancipated from their bondage.

BLONDIN, the aged rope-walker, who is now over seventy years old, has been obliged to give up his perilous feat owing to his having strained his back. Time was when Blondin considered himself safer and more at home on his rope than when walking the street. He made a great deal of money; but he had the misfortune of entering into partnership with a wine merchant, and thus undertaking a business with which he was totally unacquainted. The firm failed; the merchant grew rich in consequence and Blondin was reduced to poverty. Thus in his second childhood he was obliged to go back to his rope-walking as a means of livelihood. He is a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. Many years ago we remember seeing Blondin cross the Chaudiere Falls, at Ottawa, on his rope. It seems now like ancient history, and the revival of his name has a Rip Van Winkleism about it.

SOME one recently remarked, in one of the American periodicals, that authors usually die young. It is true that many authors do die early; but just as many live to old age. Amongst the French dramatic authors, the very hardest-worked of writers, we find Adolph D'Ennery and Eugene Caron, joint authors of "The Two Orphans," living still at the age of eighty-seven years; Ernest Lagoune, senior member of the French Academy, is eighty-eight; and Ferdinand Dugue, author of "The Pirates of the Savanah," "The Ragpicker's Daughter," and many other melodramas, is eighty years old. The historian, Michelet, was once told, by a friend, "How young you keep in spite of your gray hairs!" For a reply the old author turned to his writing table and, pointing to the ink-stand, exclaimed: "There is my fountain of youth!"

THE physicians of the Mississippi Valley Medical Association, at Detroit, have declared "bloomers to be an abomination." It would be very interesting were those medical and scientific gentlemen to give their reasons for such a conclusion. They certainly must know what they are talking about and must have very good cause for such a sweeping condemnation. Recently scientists have shown that the riding of bicycles is most injurious to men and women and that the future generation will suffer gravely in consequence. It is too bad

that ladies should take to this sure method of ruining their systems and at the same time dressing in a manner that is "abominable."

"DOCTOR ALBERT BACH informed the Medico-Legal Congress that physicians have the moral right to end life when the patient is suffering from an incurable, painful and agonizing disease." The commandment is: "Thou shalt not kill." It does not make any exception; it does not say that for this or that reason human life may be taken. It may be only the shortening of existence by an hour, or a minute, or a second; it is all the same, we Catholics are taught by our Church that the commandment must be obeyed to its fullest extent. A physician may use means to deaden pain, to remove suffering, to put the patient to sleep—but not to directly kill. That one last minute of suffering may be more important for the dying person than all the years of life. No man has the right, according to God's law, to curtail life by even a fraction of a second—were it to deliver the sufferer from the most cruel torture.

THE recent death of Father Fulton, whom the whole press of America so laments, recalls the fact that one of Father Fulton's most devoted friends was John Boyle O'Reilly, and that when the lamented Jesuit was removed from Boston to the Church of St. Laurenceville, New York, one of Mr. O'Reilly's most exquisite little poems, called "The Vacant Niche," was written and presented to the retiring priest at a meeting of his friends, the poet reading it with a pathos that moved all his hearers, for all felt its beauty and just delineation of a noble character. It is said that Oliver Wendell Holmes once humorously said to the accomplished priest: "Father Fulton, you or I must leave here; I used to be quoted somewhat for an occasional *bon mot*; everybody now says you are the only wit in vogue."

A CONVERT and ex-minister, writing in the editorial columns of the New Zealand Tablet, strongly urges the formation of a society of converts. He complains that the cordiality of born Catholics towards their new brethren is often a doubtful quantity. There is a good deal of truth in the ex-minister's contention. We regret to say that converts scarcely ever meet with the same encouragement from Catholics as that which our non-Catholic friends extend to all who leave our Church to join their ranks. The sacrifice, therefore, made by converts to Catholicity is always much greater than the world imagines and the difficulties they encounter are far from insignificant.

MR. A. E. ROBERTS, the eldest son of the Rev. George Bayfield Roberts, Vicar of Elmstowe, Hardwicke, has been received into the Catholic Church by the Rev. Father Wilkinson, O.S.B., at St. Gregory's, Cheltenham. It is thus that hourly the progress of Catholicity in England may be marked. Conversions are becoming more and more numerous and particularly amongst the Anglican clergymen and their families. This steady advance along the Roman highway cannot fail to produce a marked effect in the very near future. It is not in one day that a nation is reconverted; but the constant drop of grace wears away the hardest rock of opposition.

THE OBLATES are always most energetic and the work they do is evidence of their zeal and courage. The building in Tewksbury, Mass., was destroyed by fire last winter, and they are now replacing it with a new novitiate. It is to be of brick and consist of a central structure with annexes. The main building is to be 75 feet long and 48 feet deep. There will be four stories above the basement. In connection with this novitiate there are seventy acres of land, the property of the Fathers. In all directions, in city and hamlet, in country and wilderness, all over this continent, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate are pushing the twofold work of education and evangelization.

WE have received quite a number of explanations of the post office address mentioned in our last week's editorial notes. The address read:

Hill
John
Mass.

The replies were all correct—"John Underhill and son, Mass." It is true the puzzle is very simple; what was considered smart in the clerk was the guessing of the address at once in all the hurry of assorting the thousands of letters that pass through the great central office of New York.

LOUISIANA has a grant number of lepers. The Board of Control of the Leper Home of the State has had to appeal to the Sisters of Charity to take charge of and nurse the lepers. No other nurses could be secured, on account of the great danger of infection. Another evidence in favor of our Catholic orders of nuns. The world may sneer at it, but whenever there is a necessity of any

proof of real heroism and devotedness that same world is forced to turn to the humble members of our Catholic communities. It has ever been so, yet men still decline to recognize their worth.

DURING a recent thunderstorm, a careful English weather observer, discovered that if you are near enough to a flash of lightning you can distinguish a distinct smell. Perhaps so; we prefer to believe than to make the experiment. We are perfectly satisfied with seeing the flash without smelling it.

IN LISBON, during a recent riot, several priests were attacked. The Portugal Freemasons and a certain number of politicians are striving to start an agitation for the expulsion of religious Orders. The Government has addressed a letter to the Bishops explaining its views and promising to punish severely all attacks upon ecclesiastics. There is certainly a great and widespread conspiracy in the various countries, against the Catholic Church and her institutions. It is time for the Anti-Masonic League to commence active operations.

ANOTHER attempt has been made on the life of Banker Rothschild. This time the would-be murderer tried to set off his bomb by means of a lighted



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IN August last, Mgr. Louis Gouzet, Archbishop of Auch, died in Paris. He was a very distinguished member of the Catholic hierarchy. He was born at Poleyzac, Feb. 27, 1827, was Curé of the Perigueux cathedral in 1870; Bishop of Auch in 1884, and became Archbishop of Gach in 1887. He was a Knight of the Legion of Honor. His loss will be long felt in France and his memory will remain green for many years to come.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

A CENTRAL AUTHORITY FOR IRELAND

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS.

SIR.—The fact that the London Times should have proposed the establishment of a "Central Authority" in Ireland, for the purpose of dealing with "Private Bills," is, in my opinion, an unmistakable evidence that the Unionist Government, whatever its shortcomings from a Nationalist point of view, does really intend to grant to Ireland a large measure of local government. In support of this opinion, I adduce the evidence of their method of dealing with agricultural distress and with the question of education. What their motive may be, I do not pretend to say; by what I know of this line of action in Imperial matters, I should say that they were animated with a sincere desire to benefit those for whom such legislation is intended. They may be mistaken, but they are certainly in good faith. It may prove that "Bloody Balfour" is a true friend to Ireland than "Philosopher Morley." It is for you, sir, to say in what spirit the Irish should accept what may be offered.

FRANCIS W. GREY.

The following editorial, from the London Times, came to us in connection with the foregoing letter. Both are too late for comment in this issue:

THE "TIMES" ON IRISH LEGISLATION.
(September 3, 1895.)

We published yesterday a letter from Mr. Andrew Carnegie on the Irish question, which is interesting both for what it says and for what it overlooks. As Mr. Conway observes to-day, its humane and moderate tone disarms criticism, yet it encourages us to supply the considerations which Mr. Carnegie omits. For our own part we are more than willing to respond to his appeal to promote whatever may tend to further the true interests of Ireland and of Irishmen. The Unionist party will not shrink from legislation of the kind we have already indicated, while to our previous suggestions may be added a serious effort to improve the conditions of Irish education. The Home Rule Bill introduced by Mr. Gladstone was opposed even more in the interests of Ireland than in those of Great Britain, and we note with satisfaction that in Mr. Carnegie's opinion that opposition was sound and wise. Without claiming all the influence which he so generously ascribes to our advocacy, we may, perhaps, be permitted to believe that we have done and are doing something to convince the American people that there is no real analogy between local control of local affairs, as they understand it, and the disruptive Home Rule which Mr. Gladstone sought to force upon this country. In the same way there is no real analogy between arrangements suited to a federation of many sovereign States and those which might wisely govern the relations between different portions of one kingdom. Further, there is no real analogy between the conditions of political safety and immunity from conquest in a vast and isolated continent and in a kingdom having near and powerful neighbors. Our correspondent "D." points out with undeniable force that such a scheme of Home Rule as Mr. Carnegie seems to approve would not be accepted by Irish politicians. We may go further and say that no scheme of Home Rule can ever settle the Irish question in the sense of relieving this country of care and responsibility for Irish affairs. The true solution is to be sought in another direction, and is, we believe, instinctively sought in that direction by the Irish people as distinct from agitators. It is material prosperity of which the Irish people are in search, and it is by promoting that prosperity that the Imperial Parliament can best bring about the contentment of the Irish population. Every political measure is good that helps to further this aim.

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