



THE SECRET SOCIETIES OF CHINA.

Under the above heading the "Echo" says: They are among the most curious manifestations of the Celestial character. From one end of the country to the other, the people are trying to get together in guilds or brotherhoods founded alike on the common ties of interests, trades, and prejudice. In their organization these societies are allied to our own Freemasonry, but while their avowed program is as a rule devoted to the attainment of perfect ideals, their efforts are more generally distinctly mundane, and as often as not baronous in their aims. Among the most famous of these guilds is that known as the Sect of the Pee Leen Keaou, or White Lily, a fraternity which at one time spread throughout China, and under an outer guise of philosophy doctrine pushed a propaganda of extortion and robbery. It was this society which decreed the assassination of the Emperor Kiating in 1861. Of late years the Pee Leen Keaou appears to have languished, and while it still exists, its power and influence are less than of yore. Of more recent years the hidden activity of Chinese social life has been concentrated on two secret societies, which have played a considerable part in the history of the country. These are the Black Flags and the Triads. Each of these guilds is said to have numbered several million members, and it is a well established fact that the Triads were mainly responsible for the bringing about of the disastrous Taiping Rebellion, which after breaking out in 1850, laid the whole of South China waste for close on thirteen years, and was only quelled by the "ever victorious" army of General Gordon in 1863. The Black Flags, who have of late years shown renewed activity in the Canton district, are known to be a community of pirates and thieves, and owning a propaganda which aims at the extinction of the existing Manchu dynasty, are regarded by the Mandarin class as a standing menace to the Empire. The Black Flag headquarters are supposed to be in British Kowloon, and, notwithstanding their constant acts of piracy, and the attempts which have been repeatedly made to restrain their activity, the society continues to carry out its nefarious programme with comparative impunity.

Another secret society, whose doings have of late been all too prominent, is that known as the Boxers. This cult is, it is to be feared, largely due to the sympathies of the Literati and Mandarin classes, which tend to encourage the growth of the anti-foreign and anti-Christian ideas. It is no secret that the strength of the Boxers has materially increased of late years, having received a considerable impetus from the murders of the missionaries near Foochow in 1895. The avowed object of this guild is to encourage the hatred of the foreigner, and many instances have occurred when the fanaticism of the mob has been stirred to such an extent as to cause a rising involving the sacrifice of several lives. Residents in China are agreed that the activity of the Boxers is entirely due to the approval displayed for their principles by the official class,

and it is realized that with extremely rare exceptions the atrocities which have so frequently been practised by these scoundrels have been encouraged, if not suggested, by men in high place. In their operations the Boxers, like the members of the other secret guilds, practice the utmost secrecy, and their deeds are such as will not bear description. Meetings are, as a rule, held in the small hours of the night, and the greatest precautions are taken to prevent the presence of the uninitiated. In the indulgence of their passions they, as a general rule, confine themselves to attacks on native Christians or those who have fallen under displeasure on account of their intercourse with foreigners, and on such they vent their hatred with the most unbridled fury.

One of the penalties inflicted on such victims is known as that of the wire shirt, a species of torture ultra refined in its horror. The victim is stripped and bound with a piece of wire netting having a mesh of about an inch across. The netting is braced around the body as tightly as possible, so as to ensure the wire cutting into the flesh which bulges through the mesh. Thus adjusted the victim is harangued respecting his offence, and he is then shaved; a sharp knife being drawn over the wire in all directions, with the result that the sufferer is released a mass of flesh wounds, which are speedily attacked by flies. The victim rarely recovers, and cases are on record in which salt has been subsequently rubbed into the cut flesh. The latest record of the Boxers is the massacre of seventy native converts of the French Catholic Mission near Pao-tung-fu, on the 14th ult. The incident would have been impossible had the local Mandarin taken the most ordinary precautions, but the murderers were evidently carrying out an enterprise after his own heart, and the officials appear to have looked on sympathetically.

The freedom with which the Boxers have recently been suffered to publish their propaganda affords unquestionable evidence of the attitude of the better class Chinese in the district, and the conspirators have made the most of their opportunities even to drilling so as to be able to successfully oppose any force of troops which may be sent against them. The scandal of the situation is all the greater owing to the fact that Pao-tung-fu is a town of some importance, some eighty miles south of Peking, and in the centre of the densely populated province of Pechili. On receiving news of the rising the Peking authorities appear to have despatched a number of Manchu troops under General Yang-fu-tung to the scene of the disturbance with the object of quelling the riots and punishing the ringleaders. If a Tient-sin telegram, dated the 23rd ult., is to be relied on, the General, after according an interview to the leaders of the Boxers was murdered by them in cold blood; and the situation has become so grave that, as the authorities are evidently unable to deal with the trouble, it is expected that the Powers interested in China will shortly despatch troops to protect foreign interests at Peking and elsewhere.

A GREAT TEMPERANCE WORK.

Many of our readers, who are and have always been total abstainers, will recall the pledge taken at First Communion, or else some sermon heard in the days of their early youth, the influence of which has followed them through life and preserved them from the dangers and temptations to which they would have been otherwise exposed. There is no exaggerating the effects of the inculcation of temperance principles in the young; they are rarely ever found to deviate, in after years, from the path traced for them. It is not our purpose to enter into any details on this point, nor to show the reasons why the boy, who has had what we might call a temperance education, is more likely to preserve in the early formed habit of abstinence, than the one who has never been taught the charms and strength of temperance; we simply desire to call attention to a new method employed by the Catholic Truth Society of England—one that could well be imitated with benefit in Canada.

Under the auspices of the Catholic Truth Society, Rev. Father Colgan and Sir F. R. Cruise, prepared a school book entitled the "Catholic Temperance Reader." The work bears the imprimatur of His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan, which was granted with an expression of the hope that the managers of Catholic schools would see their way to include this "Reader" in the list of books used by their pupils. The book is entirely un denominational. It would be difficult to estimate the benefits that must flow from such a book. The "Liverpool Catholic Times," in referring to it, makes this pertinent remark:—

"Even if looked at merely from the financial point of view, the importance of the matter is readily understood. It is estimated that there are in Great Britain and Ireland about six million Catholics, of whom the

tween three and four millions live in Ireland; that is, about one-sixth of the whole population of these countries. Assuming that the expenditure of Catholics in drink is proportionately the same as the expenditure of non-Catholics, their share of the annual drink bill is over twenty-five millions of money. With that amount we could provide lavishly for our orphanages and other charitable institutions, could build new churches, subsidise poor missions and meet the wants of foreign missions. The amount contributed by all the religious bodies in Great Britain and Ireland for foreign missions is two millions. It is a large sum, but it appears small when compared with what is spent in drink by the Catholics alone."

Without losing sight of the main object of this article—namely the impressing upon our teachers of youth the necessity of inculcating as early as possible solid temperance principles—we cannot refrain from taking another and a more lengthy extract from the article above quoted, in order to show the great change that a century or more can be said to have brought about, all over the world, in matters of drinking and like excesses. The article says:—

"The temperance cause is advancing, and we feel considerable pride in thinking that the publication of this 'Catholic Temperance Reader' will effectually contribute to the onward movement. It would be foolish to expect that excess in drink will become a thing of the past in ten or twenty years. Unsatisfactory as is the present state of affairs, the temperance reformers, the habits of the people of England are far more sober to-day than they were in former times. In the reign of James II. it was not rare to see the ladies of the Court, as well as the monarch, quite intoxicated. About the time of

James II. the ladies adopted the custom of withdrawing after dinner and leaving the gentlemen to continue drinking till they fell under the table. When in 1689 the manufacture of gin was permitted to all who were willing to pay the duty, the humbler classes began to rival the well-to-do in drunken orgies. Public houses were multiplied, and gin-drinking became so common that rioting and bloodshed were almost continual. In a debate on the subject in Parliament Lord Lonsdale said: 'In every part of this great metropolis whoever shall pass along the streets shall find wretched creatures stretched upon the pavement insensible and motionless, and only removed by the charity of passengers from the danger of being crushed by carriages or trampled by horses, or strangled with filth in the common sewers, and others less helpless perhaps, but more dangerous, who have drunk too much to fear punishment, but not enough to hinder them from provoking it. No man could pass a single hour in a public house without meeting such objects or hearing such expressions as disgrace human nature, such as cannot be looked upon without horror or

heard without indignation, and which there is no possibility of preventing whilst this hateful liquor is publicly sold.' Whilst these remarkable words show the utter degradation to which the population may be brought by intemperance, they also afford encouragement inasmuch as they enable us to judge how great has been the change in public opinion with regard to indulgence in drink. Thanks to the influence of religion, the labors of men such as Father Mathew, Joseph Livesey, Cardinal Manning, Mgr. Nugent, and Sir Wilfrid Lawson, and the organizations through which they have promoted the cause of total abstinence, drunkenness excites contempt and disgust among the majority of the population."

Temperance literature is a necessity in the world to-day; but to our mind no method could be more simple and permanently effective than the one above mentioned. It is to be hoped that if the particular "Reader" now referred to is not to be had conveniently for our schools, at least, that some such work should be executed by a competent writer for the benefit of our Catholic schools in Canada.

A WORKINGMAN'S COLLEGE.

As the twentieth century approaches we may expect to behold, in almost every sense, ameliorations, radical changes, giant strides forward, and in the realm of education new ideas, suggestive of fresh methods of those that are becoming obsolete, those that are becoming obsolete. Amongst other changes we will indicate one of the highest importance, and, in so doing, quote the following:—

"The new workingman's college at Oxford, Ruskin Hall, is exhibiting symptoms of sturdy vitality and growth. One of the special objects of the institution is instruction in the broad lines of English history, especially of the origin and development of political and social institutions, and it is noteworthy that the project is receiving the support of some of the chief trades-union leaders. The central hall at Oxford contains accommodation for twenty-five residents, and since the opening there has been no vacancy without many applications for admission. The men are all genuine artisans; they come from all parts of the country; they stay a week, a month, six months, or a year, according to circumstances. They devote their whole time to study, to the management of their hostel, and to amusement. There are no expenses for domestic service; each resident has certain household duties assigned to him. Thus it has been found possible to provide excellent sleeping accommodation, sufficiency of food, and the use of a room as study and library, at a cost of £25 a year; tuition costing an additional £6 per annum. In some respects the system is a revival of the mediaeval life of the university. Related to the cen-

tral hall at Oxford there are coming into existence local halls in some of the large cities—for instance, Manchester, Birmingham, and Birmingham, and classes are conducted all over the country by correspondence. The aim of the founders is not to encourage students to enter commercial or professional life, but rather to fit themselves for a wider and better influence over their fellows. The object of the teaching is not so much the provision of an intellectual training as instruction in the elements of national life. An effort is being made to raise funds for the establishment of a similar workingman's college in the United States."

Possibly our "night schools" in this province might be considered as a step in the same direction; yet, we fall very short of the institutions above described. We have educational facilities mounted upon this continent, to excite the envy of many labor organizations in Europe, we have labor organizations of considerable influence, we have workingman's guilds, (as they call such like associations in the old country), but all these—admirable as each one is in its own sphere—do not co-operate, blend, meet, act in harmony. It is time that our trades and labor organizations interested themselves in a practical manner in this phase of the workingman's life. It is not at all necessary that the "man with the hoe" should become a classical scholar; but it is of the utmost importance to society that each individual should make it a special duty to acquire all the instruction possible in order to keep pace with the advancement of the times, to be abreast of all other competitors along life's highway.

CATHOLIC GRADUATES.

This is the season when nearly all our exchanges treat the question of education in their various ways and according to their different manners of looking upon the question. There seems to be absolutely nothing concerning the subject that has not been touched upon in some way or other by some of our exchanges. It is not now a question of what we think, but rather of what others think. Here is an extract from the "Ave Maria," dealing with the important question of athletics in colleges:—

"Those who are of opinion that athletics have been made a little too prominent in the curriculum of our colleges will be interested to learn that the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Chicago has decided to refuse recognition of athletics, and no longer to give official sanction to the college football team. The dean of the college, in explanation of this action, said: 'Experience has taught us that college athletics have a demoralizing and disturbing influence on the students, and interfere with the educational work of the college. We do not deny that athletics have a beneficial influence on the physical development of the young man, but the interests of education demand first recognition.'"

It seems to us that this expression of opinion is rather extreme. We know how Horace condemns extreme measures, and how Ovid tells us that the "midway is the best." The abuse and not the use of anything is to be condemned, so is it with physical exercises in the schools; it is the carrying of athletics too far, the overdoing of a good, and even necessary work (or recreation) that should be censured; while we are of opinion that athletics should never be allowed to interfere with studies, still we know, from long experience, that a reasonable amount of physical exercise is absolutely necessary in all schools.

Turning from athletics in colleges, to the after-careers of students when their days of study are over; the "Western Watchman" has a very strong expression (as, moreover, all its expressions are strong) concerning the "forgetfulness" of the next, the "parental ingratitude" of the people:—

"Let the Bishop of the diocese call

a meeting of laymen, or let the rector of a parish announce a meeting for purposes of great and wide interest, how many of our college graduates will attend? If on some occasion of local or general importance an address is to be delivered, how difficult it is to get a Catholic man of college education to do it. With our young women it is more satisfactory; they are better educated than our boys, and they give better results at home and in the church. They are more refined, and they are more loyal to truth, beauty and goodness. Very seldom indeed does a Catholic girl disgrace her religion, but when she does she is damned and is a stranger to peace for evermore. Yet, for all that, our Catholic young women, including graduates of our convents, are rather backward in performing duties which are right at their door and under their eyes; duties which the state of the Church and of society in America imposes on them; duties of the home; duties of religion and charity; duties to the poor; duties to the sanctuary and the altar; and duties towards the propagation of the faith among those who have not the truth, or who are in danger of losing it. Opportunities of doing good are numerous and present with us, and it is God's will that we should seize them now and carry forward the great work which He has assigned us to do."

In this case, at least, we are in accord with our contemporary. But we must say that very often the fault is, to a great extent, with the institutions. Many of our educational establishments too soon lose sight of their pupils once the latter have gone forth into the world. Not so with others. Take as a sample St. Ann's boys' school—under the able direction of the Christian Brothers. There the St. Ann's Y.M.C.A. is an organization so intimately connected with the school, that graduates from the latter at once pass into the former, and continue on under the spiritual direction of the parish priest, or some other clergyman of his selection. There is a system that deserves both study and imitation, and we hope, sincerely, that it will soon become universal with all our schools and in all our parishes.

SCHOOL QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

The town of Holden, Mass., has of late gained unpleasant notoriety, thanks to the efforts of certain of its denizens to oust the local superintendent of schools for the atrocious crime of being a Catholic. The Catholic element led by Father Lee is supported by a large number of prominent Protestants who have no wish for the owl and dark-lantern style of politics and the town meetings convened to settle the difficulty, have been warmed beyond all precedent. The first attempt against the obnoxious official resulted in a tie vote. The next, which was made at a meeting whose legality is questionable, was more satisfactory, but not altogether successful. Acting under a ruling of the attorney-general, Mr. Keenan proposes to serve his full term and to draw his full pay. In the meantime it turns out that the tactics employed by the "no-Popery" party are fraught with awkward results for the entire school system of the town. But bigotry was ever short-sighted.

We hear a deal of fine talk occasionally about the recoil from the narrowness of former days which is to be noted among the descendants of the Puritans. The Holden affair shows how much reliance can be placed on such pleasing generalizations. Scratch the average middle-class Yankee and you will find that his liberality is that of his forebears, who, on the eve of the Revolution, dared toleration to "Papists" on the ground that "Papists" beliefs were "subversive of society." Some few or other an unpleasantly large number of our fellow-citizens is possessed by the idea that the "little red school-house" is a Protestant concern, to which we may send our children, and for the support of

which we must pay taxes, but in the management of which we cannot safely be allowed to take a hand. Such an assumption is at variance with the spirit of American institutions and an outrage against our plain rights. Nevertheless if we venture to protest against it we are taunted with trying to "raise sectarian issues." The recent affair at Northfield, Vermont, shows clearly enough that the narrowness of former days survives. It was good form for the orator of the occasion to talk about "the fetters of superstition" which for three hundred years bound the souls of the people of "orto Rico. But when Father O'Neill asked permission at the close of the oration to express on behalf of himself and two young Catholics in the graduating class his disapproval of sentiments which were an insult to their faith, he was hissed and howled at and accused of arousing sectarian feeling. The responsibility for such scenes surely rests with the aggressor. Our people are getting very tired of this miserable "Protestant but not sectarian" theory of public school management. They are waking up to a sense of their right and wrongs, as the Holyoke, Northfield and Holden cases go to show, and votes are cast this way.

The situation, as we see it, is rapidly becoming acute. The real enemies of the public school system are the narrow-gauge zealots who endeavor, overtly and covertly, to utilize it as an instrument of Protestant missionary effort. If Protestants want to do this at the public expense, let them do it honestly and above board. Let us have the separate school system which present social conditions—conditions not anticipated fifty years ago—clearly demand.—Providence Visitor

CONDITIONS IN ROME.

EXTRACTS from correspondence of Rev. D. S. Phelan, published in "Western Watchman":

Rome, June 2, 1900.

As this will be my last letter from Rome for some time I must give you my views of conditions in the Eternal City. To begin with I have no criticism to make of anything ecclesiastical in Rome. It is easy to find fault with American priests are much given to fault-finding. They see no parish work done here. There is no preaching to speak of. There is no visiting of the people by their parish clergy. The people seem to have no spiritual guides and they see their parish clergy only when they call them in at their death or have a child to christen. They meet them also when they apply to be married. All this seems strange and lamentable in our eyes and we wonder that this condition of things is not remedied. Well, to begin with, it cannot be very well remedied. Then the remedy might be worse than the disease. Lastly, the condition is not as bad as it looks. We must remember that in Rome there are in every parish a parish church and ten or more churches in which Masses by the dozen are said every day in the year. In those independent churches there are popular devotions and altars richly endowed by popes; shrines of saints and favorite paintings and statues, before which people love to kneel and offer up their prayers. The parish church is seldom the best attended church in the parish. The people of the parish are never assembled. They are divided up on Sunday into a hundred or two hundred little groups and they fit in and out of the churches in bands of two or three dozen, after hearing a Mass at one of the twelve or fifteen altars to be found in every church. Will you close those independent churches on Sunday and compel all people to attend divine service in their parish church? You might as well close two hundred of the grandest places of worship in Christendom and compel hundreds of the best priests in Rome to starve. Many of the parishes are managed by religious orders and they could not under their rule do much more for the people than they are doing.

In the United States we have only

our organ of preaching. We speak in season and out of season. Some people think we preach too much. At any rate, the people of the United States are reached by the living word as little as the people of Rome. We preach, but they do not hear. In Rome the Word of God has a hundred tongues. They preach by splendid churches; grand altars; chief documents of painting and sculpture; superb public functions, devotions, processions and miracles. The moral atmosphere of Rome is surcharged with currents of divine communication. Then, the priests take great pains with their penitents in the confessional. They preach a sermon to every one that comes to confession. This is the case all through Italy and France. I can't say of it something new; but Catholics tell me that it is the case wherever they have traveled in those countries. One thing is undeniable: there is great and widespread devotion among the people of Rome, and to me it is the most Catholic city in the world. I am convinced that the present condition of the Church in Rome is satisfactory. For saints have lived there and saints still live there; and if a remedy were needed it would have been applied long ago. When the great saints who have lived and died in Rome found nothing to condemn, we American priests would do well to hold our peace.

What I have said of the condition of the Church in Italy is applicable to the subject of the temporal power. I want what the Pope wants. If he would be satisfied with Rome and a strip of land reaching to the sea, I would be satisfied. If he wants all Italy I shall try to secure it for him. It is time for me to have my private opinions on the question when I am raised to the Chair of Peter. If the Pope wants temporal sway over a part of Italy millions of Catholics in Italy will help him to obtain it, and if Italy continues a representative monarchy the time will come when the support of the Church will be considered very cheap at such a price. There is nothing under the blue sky of Italy more certain than that the Popes will yet have temporal power in Rome; if only they continue to demand it. How will it be brought about? I don't know, I am sure; but when Stamen will, they very soon find a way.

NOTES FROM AMERICAN CENTRES.

Bishop Potter, of New York, has been delivering a "baccalaureate sermon" before the graduates of Harvard. It was a defence of money and trusts. We can readily imagine the sensation that such a discourse from a pulpit must have created. Like the most dangerous of all falsehoods it was partly true and partly false, the grain of truth giving an erroneous value to the questionable as well as the illegal and false assertions. But a sensation was obtained, and that is what Bishop Potter is anxious to produce. He said in one part: "My young brothers, I have not come here to denounce money. Money is a power. In itself considered, of course, it has no more moral quality

than a pound of steam or your biceps muscle. It may be used for the best purposes and just as easily for the worst."

This is perfectly exact; it is the truth. Then he says:—

"It is like many other powers with which, in greater or less degree, we are endowed, that it may bring within our reach much that would otherwise be beyond it. It is unlike those other powers in that, while they must often earn their desires, it may as often buy them. In other words; whether we have earned it, inherited it, found it by chance or stolen it, it places within our reach everything in life that is purchasable. Very well, I hear some answer, 'that is all' (Continued on page 4.)