

## SELECTING BOOKS.

Last week we promised a few words on the important subject of selecting books—a subject the more important now that reading circles are being established on all sides. Carlyle says that a library is the true university of our days, where every sort of knowledge is brought together to be studied; but the student needs guides in the library as much as in the university. He does not need rules nor rulers, but light and classification. (Once more will we quote Thomas Davis on this subject. And in parenthesis we may remark that while Davis became famed as a powerful poet, still poetry was only one side of his genius; he was a master of the loftiest prose and of the most solid logic. He thus writes: "Let a boy loose in a library, and if he have years of leisure and a creative spirit, he will come out a master mind. If he have the leisure without the original spring he will become a book-worm—a useful help, perhaps, to his neighbors, but himself a very feeble and poor creature. For one man who gains weapons from idle reading, we know twenty who lose their simplicity without getting strength, and purchase cold recollections of other men's thoughts by the sacrifice of nature. These general remarks are followed up by this reference, written fifty years ago, and as applicable to day as when Davis edited the Nation.

"Just as men are bewildered and lost for want of guides in a large library, so are others from an equal want of direction in the purchase of a small one. We know from bitter experience how much money it costs a young man to get a sufficient library. Still more hard we should think it for a club of young men to do so. But worse than the loss of money are the weariness from reading dull and shallow books, the corruption from reading vicious, extravagant and confused books, and the waste of time and patience from reading idle and impertinent books. The remedy is not by saying 'this book you shall read, and this other you shall not;' but by inducing students to regard their self-education solemnly, by giving them information on the classification of books, and by setting them to judge authors vigorously and for themselves."

With this sound advice before us, and with the desire to make all the use possible of the opportunities that the reading circle movement affords, we must remember that it is a grave mistake for a young and ardent student to think that he can master all knowledge. The great danger into which such a person is exposed is that of rushing over a heap of books and becoming confused in a mass of subjects. It is better to select one appropriate work—the work of one author—and having become master thereof, to proceed competently to the next in order. Too often a young person has the name of being a great reader, and for the purpose of keeping alive that impression he, or she, seek to learn the names of as many books and authors, of title pages and characters as possible, in order to be able to talk about them and to make a false show of erudition. Our essayist says of this plan: "It is an acted lie, a device to conceal laziness and ignorance, or to compensate for want of wit; a stupid device, too, for it is soon found out, the employer of it gets the character of being a literary cheat, he is thought a pretender, even when well-informed, and a plagiarist when most original."

We will not load our column with too lengthy a string of advice; but we will touch often, and only in a short way, upon this subject. We prefer to keep it constantly before our readers by passing references, than to render it tiresome by

a long essay upon what they should do and how they should do it. Goethe once said: "One ought every day at least to bear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable words." We might add to this that the one seeking improvement and self-education ought to allow no day to pass without carefully and studiously reading a few pages of some good and instructive book. "Where parents read and write, the children learn to do so too, early in life, and with little trouble." It is a fact that the home influence is very potent; yet it also depends upon the manner in which the parents were trained. If they read good books, healthy books, profitable books, their conversations will be on good, healthy and profitable subjects; and from these conversations the more youthful members of the family will have their literary inclinations formed. We know of no more glorious subject for study and comment than that of books, and we will come back to it very often.

THE "Rock"—that hard-headed and often hard-hearted English publication, with its mission to smash the Church of Rome into atoms, is equal to the famous M. Lapallice. It informs its readers that more copies of its issues would be sold if there were more people to buy them. This is absolutely true; and it is a good sign, since it is the only absolute truth that the Rock has emphatically stated for many a day. In its next issue we hope it will state a few more such truths; even if they are axiomatic, what odds—they are not lies any way.

We learn that our Newfoundland friends—and we have a host of them there—are to commence on the first of November a grand bazaar for the purpose of paying off the debt on St. Bonaventure College. There are many Newfoundlanders in Montreal and we are sure that they would only be too glad to assist in this splendid work. The good done by St. Bonaventure's College is incalculable and if any institution deserves encouragement surely it does. If any of the good Catholic friends of education felt the impulse to assist that Bazaar, they might do so through "Rev. Br. J. L. Slattery—The College—St. Johns, Newfoundland." We sincerely hope that the efforts made to clear the College of its debt will meet with great success.

DR. FREEMANTLE (Dean of Ripon) argues thus: "The Holy Ghost is the divinely-appointed guide to all truth." "God promised that He should teach the Church all truth, and remain with her forever; therefore, God has never granted the power of infallibility to any church." This is logic with a vengeance! We feel for the Reverend Doctor. Of late his course would indicate a Free-lance rather than a Freemantle. He admits that God promised to teach the Church—not any Church—the truth, and that He (God, as Christ, and as the Holy Ghost) would remain with the Church that He established. From this he concludes that God did not grant infallibility to the Church. Does he mean to say that a Church that has the Holy Ghost in it, that has all the truth from God, and that has the constant presence of Christ can possibly be fallible? As well argue because God told the first of the Apostles "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my Church," and because He gave Peter the "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," that he did not select Peter, nor did He confer anything upon him. The learned Doctor sets down the very best premises in favor of infallibility and proceeds to draw a con-

clusion in every sense the opposite of that which must logically flow from them. We don't blame the reverend gentleman, as his recent utterance go to show that he has lost whatever little logic he ever possessed in the ever swelling tide of his wonderful prejudice.

THE London Times wants to know "where is the patriot prelate?" The Thunderer would like to be told, in view of the present dissensions in the Irish party, "why has not the voice of Archbishop Croke been heard above the din of battle? Why has Archbishop Walsh withheld his exhortations from the columns of the patriot press?" It is none of the Times' business. When the Archbishops feel that the proper time to speak has come they will do so; and they will neither speak nor be silent at the bidding of the Times. They know also how generously the Times wanted to "lash the Irish people into some excitement" not many weeks ago. The day has gone when the voice of the Thunderer could produce any effect as far as the actions of either the Irish people or the Irish clergy are concerned. It is exactly the fact that the latter have become too wise for the Times that the mighty enemy of everything Irish feels vexed. As well might the Times ask, "why does not the Pope raise his voice on questions that we think he should make a noise about?"

## CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

DEAR SIR,—The Irish Catholic and Nation, published in Dublin, in its issue of the 29th September last makes the following extract from an address delivered by me at Kirkfield, Ontario, during the course of last summer at Father Sweeney's picnic:

"It had been established at Vauluse, in Australia, by Sir Thomas Hayes, whose beautiful grounds were infested with snakes and reptiles, that they could not exist on Irish soil, for he had brought out a few barrels of the old sod and spread it around his residence and the snakes had quitted the place forever." And it adds:

"It would be something more than interesting to know if Mr. Curran was quite accurately informed."

It may be equally as interesting to your readers as to the writer in the Dublin newspaper to know upon what authority I based my statement, a rather singular one I admit. You will confer a favor on me by inserting the following extract from page 191 of Mr. Hogan's book, entitled, the "Irish in Australia." I hope it may induce many to read the whole volume, which is only one of many interesting and instructive books from the facile pen of Mr. Hogan, M. P. for Mid-Tipperary, whose acquaintance I had the privilege of making during his recent visit to Canada:

"Vauluse, one of the prettiest spots on Sydney Harbor, has a curious and romantic history. At the beginning of the century it was chosen as his place of residence by Sir Henry Hayes, an Irish baronet, who had the misfortune to be transported for abducting the lady on whom he had set his affections, but who did not see her way to reciprocate his tender passion. Though technically a prisoner, Sir Henry's rank and social position caused him to be treated by the authorities as a privileged person, and he was allowed a full measure of freedom on his giving his word of honor that he would make no attempt to leave the colony and return to Ireland. Sir Henry accepted his fate with philosophical resignation, and commenced to build a new home for himself on the beautiful estate which he had purchased and called Vauluse. But though the place was, and still is, one of the loveliest spots on earth, it had at that time one serious and annoying drawback. It was infested with snakes. One day, however, a bright idea struck Sir Henry as he was cogitating on the subject, and wondering if there was any practicable means of ridding himself of these unwelcome intruders. He resolved to try a bold and remarkable experiment. He would see whether the virtue of St. Patrick's prohibition of

snakes on Irish soil would extend to the same soil if transferred to the other side of the world. He accordingly sent home for a number of barrels of Irish soil, and they arrived in Sydney in due course. Sir Henry then spread this imported earth as far as it would go around his residence, with the result, very gratifying to himself, that his domestic precincts were never afterwards troubled by snakes, although the other portions of the estate continued to be infested by the reptiles. Succeeding occupants of Vauluse, amongst them the distinguished statesman, W. C. Wentworth, all agree in testifying to the singular fact that a snake was never known to cross the charmed circle of Irish earth."

Yours truly,

J. J. CURRAN.

Ottawa, October 12, 1894.

## RELIGIOUS NEWS ITEMS.

Rev. John McMahon, in recognition of his services to the Catholic University, has been made a Monsignor.

The month of October is consecrated to the Blessed Virgin through the special devotion of the Holy Rosary.

Rev. J. A. Mulcahy has been made Vicar General of the diocese of Hartford, Conn., by Right Rev. Bishop Tiernan.

The Shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre has become the American Lourdes. The number of pilgrims has increased from 17,000 in 1874 to 200,000 in 1894.

The lecture of Rev. Dr. Thomas Shahan of the Catholic University, on "Gregory the Great," attracted the largest audience of the entire session of the Schools of Applied Ethics at Plymouth.

The closing week in August was the occasion of the opening of a fine organ in the Church of Oberammergau, Bavaria, the gift of the visitors who enjoyed the Passion Play of 1890.

It is stated on the authority of the Vicar General of Lyons that President Carnot wore at the time of his murder the brown scapular and the miraculous medal of the Immaculate Conception.

A council of all the Roman Catholic bishops and suffragans in India will be held in Goa about the beginning of December. The last occasion of the holding of such an assembly was in 1606.

A number of prominent Catholic ladies of Chicago have organized the Illinois Charitable Relief Corps. The object of the society is general charitable work and the visitation of sick in public institutions.

The Very Rev. Dr. O'Gorman, dean of Washington University, who has been passing the summer in the Hotel Minerva while preparing his "History of the Catholic Church in the United States," will leave Rome shortly. His researches have been most successful.

The statue of Cardinal Newman, which was refused a place in Oxford, will be placed in front of the buildings of the London Oratory. It will be of white Campanella marble, under a canopy of Portland stone. It will cost when complete about \$10,000.

He: Her heart is as hard as glass. I can't make any impression on it. She: Have you tried a diamond?

George seriously: Do you think your father would object to my marrying you? Ada: I don't know; if he's anything like me he would.

## IT'S A MILLSTONE



About a young man's neck to be a sufferer from nervous exhaustion, nervous debility, impaired memory, low spirits, irritable temper, and the thousand and one derangements of mind and body that result from unnatural, pernicious habits, contracted through ignorance. Such habits result in loss of manly power,

wreck the constitution and sometimes produce softening of the brain, epilepsy, paralysis, and even dread insanity.

To reach, re-claim and restore such unfortunates to health and happiness, is the aim of the publishers of a book written in plain but chaste language, on the nature, symptoms and curability, by home treatment, of such diseases. This book will be sent sealed, in plain envelope, on receipt of ten cents in stamps, for postage. Address, World's Dispensary Medical Association, 663 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.