

The Catholic Register

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THURSDAY, OCT. 2, 1902

DEATH OF ZOLA.

The death of Emile Zola, the French novelist, who was asphyxiated on Sunday night by the fumes of gas escaping from a defective bed-room stove, falls short in sensational features of the common end of many of the leading characters in his fiction. But, probably, if one of the few remaining "realists"—if it be that any now survive—should penetrate that chamber and turn over and over the smallest details of the fatality in a mind surcharged with morbid imagination, a story might be produced equal to Zola's best—or worst. What irony does fate not conceal from us!

Zola was a Frenchman who wrote not for the French. The Gallic peasant, or the Parisian street-walker may be no better or worse than the average of their lot in other lands, but it is impossible to believe them so fantastically sorted out as Zola has revealed them. It was but natural that such "realism" as Zola's should most readily appeal to the credulity of people who can see nothing admirable in the French. It has been stated somewhere that for one copy of Zola, sold in France, one hundred English translations were demanded. The United States took more than England, but both in America and Britain it was still the fashion for those who fed upon Zola to decry him as a perverted creature. They who would read all he was able to turn out affected the least sympathy with his mission in literature. That affectation was in time exposed as the rankest hypocrisy, for just as soon as the Dreyfus matter permitted the English to publicly take the monster to their hearts, never was there witnessed such a national embracing.

Zola was wildly "honored" in England on the occasion of his visit following the Dreyfus trial. The leading newspapers and reviews rang with the praise of his genius. But the French Academy maintained its former attitude of contemptuous indifference. Zola was not a moulder in mud alone. He attempted to handle hard material in the "Debauche," which turned out a libel, less perhaps through malice than because of the author's ignorance of the history of the Franco-Prussian war. His "Lourdes" and "Rome" failed to please the fancy of any numerous circle. That was not exactly the description of work the readers of translations were looking for in a "French novelist."

The unhappy end of the man is deplorable. It must move even those who abhorred his work to pity. Deeply though he stirred the dirty waters of impurity, and made the multitude acclaim the achievement as art, his misused powers must be regretted as those of a man who might have accomplished really great things by his courage and literary skill. But courage alone could not gain worthy recognition for talents that seemingly could not be turned from the study and exploitation of depravity.

ENGLAND'S SCHOOL QUESTION.

The British "Nonconformist conscience" is in the throes of another struggle for "right and justice." To come to a more exact definition, the Nonconformists take the view that a "free school system supported by local taxation must be essentially secular, and that the catechism and tenets of no religious body can be taught at the public expense. This is the exact wording of the Press despatches of yesterday. The Education Bill around which the fight rages simply permits religious education in the schools. The territorialism is common to all, including the Nonconformists, who do not want it. They want the American system, which will compel all taxpayers who believe in religious education for the young to maintain an equal share in those schools which the State is bound to support.

would attend, and at the same time oblige English Churchmen and Catholics to support voluntary schools of their own. The State schools must be essentially secular or without religion—except of course the religion of the Nonconformists who consider that Bible reading for the young is all that is necessary.

The Government is threatened by the agitation of this question. The Nonconformists say they will offer "passive resistance" to the collection of school taxes under the new law, as proposed by Sir Michael Hicks Beach, unbending Tory that he is, answers that this "passive resistance" would be anarchy. But Mr Chamberlain and the Unionists are quite afraid to answer the challenge in any form. They expect the Irish members for conscience sake to help them vote the Bill through. They expect this whilst they punish Ireland with coercion and martial law, because in that country "passive resistance" to the payment of unjust rents is preached by the leaders of the people.

The Irish members have voted for the Education Bill so far and probably will support it to the end. It must be an exasperating experience for them, as the Bill is only intended for the benefit of the Church of England schools, although the Catholic schools of England will share its provisions in a much smaller degree.

SCANDALOUS STORIES.

There have been many reports spread about the wickedness of St. Pierre, the capital of Martinique, destroyed by volcanic eruption. It has also been stated that Martinique in general is a depraved place, and the burned cities mentioned in the Bible were quoted in connection with the French West Indian Island. There was one story to the effect that the bad characters of St. Pierre had put a pig on a Cross last Good Friday. All the scandalous stories about Martinique have now been flatly controverted by Father Sebire, Superior of the Belgian Apostolic School of Antwerp, Province. He says that the people of Martinique are essentially religious, that no such things as those reported in the French and Belgian press ever happened. Whites, creoles, and negroes are most attentive to religious duties, so much so that it has frequently been said by the enemies of the Church that Martinique was more clerical than Brittany. The only persons who may be regarded as irreligious are the Mulattoes, numbering seventy thousand. These people, the men, affect to despise religion because they think that by so doing they will please the Government.

It is no doubt among the seventy thousand Mulattoes to whom the Belgian ecclesiastic refers that the miscreants were, who, on Good Friday, carried a Cross from St. Pierre to the volcano and flung it into the crater. The fact is related by Col de la Panouse in The Paris Gaulois. The Freethinkers who did this, had previously a gluttonous orgy in the principal hotel of St. Pierre, while the Catholics were eating boiled codfish and rice. On the way to the mountain the miscreants travestied the Stations of the Cross. As Col de la Panouse says a few weeks afterwards, on the day of the Ascension, the burning mountain belched its boiling mud and flaming ashes on the doomed town of St. Pierre. The Colonel says that he has had the whole narrative of what happened on Good Friday at St. Pierre from an inhabitant of Martinique, who was among those lucky enough to escape from the destruction which overtook so many other residents in the island.

INCREASING STRAIN ON IRELAND.

Mr I. N. Ford, London correspondent of The Tribune, New York, and The Globe, Toronto, who is a more submissive apologist for all the acts of the Tory Government in England than any English party editor, has the following to say of the present situation in Ireland: "Ireland is distracted by the land war. The Duke of Abercorn, Lord Barrington and Colonel Sanderson, three wealthy Irish landowners, have refused to discuss the situation with the tenants' representatives, but moderate Unionist opinion is in favor of some kind of a conference. The present position is perhaps the most curious that has been known in Ireland for many years. The Chief Secretary for Ireland sympathizes in a great measure with the tenants, but his hand is bound by the landlords, and

he is applying the Crimes Act with astonishing vigor. Lord Dudley, the new Viceroy, can afford to look on with indifference. Premier Balfour excluded him from the Cabinet and he is consequently not responsible for the orders which are carried out in his name, and the value of Irish land does not appeal to a man who derives his wealth mainly from collieries on English soil."

In another despatch it is said that half the Irish members are in jail under the coercion law, for sympathy with the cause of the tenants. The conference which Mr Ford alludes to was proposed by Captain Shaw-Taylor, of Limerick, and was rejected by his own friends of the landlord combination.

The remainder of Mr Ford's despatch is a servile apology for Mr Wyndham, the Irish Chief Secretary, who has chosen to commit himself to a policy of "pacifying" Ireland where crime is almost unknown by "coercion" and for whose sake the Lord Lieutenant has been excluded from the Cabinet, so that the Secretary should have a free hand over the head of his nominal superior in the Irish office.

Mr Wyndham is too weak and self-conscious a young man to succeed in his hasty policy. The Irish people are united, their leaders and representatives are solid and America and the Colonies are in active sympathy with them. In another column we publish an outline of the proposed organization of the United Irish League in the United States and Canada in which Hon. Edward Blake will participate. Active preparations are already being made in Canada to co-operate in the movement.

CONFERENCE OF THE HIERARCHY.

A conference of the hierarchy of Canada is taking place to-day in Ottawa. Mgr Falconio, Apostolic Delegate, will preside. All signs point to the conclusion that the Delegate will shortly be translated to Washington. Archbishop O'Connor, of Toronto, Archbishop O'Brien, of Halifax, Archbishop Hegin, of Quebec, Archbishop Duhamel of Ottawa, Archbishop Gauthier, of Kingston, Bishop McEvay, London, and others, including Mgr Racicot, Administrator of the Archdiocese of Montreal in the absence of Archbishop Bruchesi, are in Ottawa. Matters of importance affecting the welfare of the faithful and the promotion of religion, in the various dioceses will be discussed with the Apostolic Delegate.

IS DISTRESS AHEAD?

The confusion of the past few weeks in the stock market may cripple the resources of hundreds of people who have been indulging in rash speculation. The coal strike is apparently as far from settlement as before, and with the approach of winter may have a disturbing influence on various industries employing labor. Prices for all necessities are now extremely high, and fuel is not to be had. A French economist a few months ago predicted that a wave of depression is coming upon the United States, and if the prophecy be good Canada will not escape. No one can look forward to the approaching winter with an easy mind.

THESE MEDIEVAL MONKS!

The London Daily Chronicle's Rome correspondent announces that Father Vincent, rector of the Passionist Monastery, leaped into the water one day last week and saved a woman who was in danger of drowning at Nettuno, a small port near Rome.

It is reported that the Holy Father will soon grant an Episcopal See to Norway, owing to the growth of Catholicity in that country.

The Pall Mall Gazette is "authoritative" for the statement that the Irish members are preparing to throw Mr Balfour to the ground on the Education Bill. If we read the signs of the times aught it is Mr Chamberlain who is training for this feat.

The niece of the late Cardinal Ledochowski is devoting herself to the work of evangelizing the natives of Africa. The Holy Father takes a deep interest in the Society of St. Peter Claver, of which the Cardinal's niece is Superior-General, and which has its headquarters at Via Giove Lanza, 129, Rome.

London Truth thinks the best thing the Home Secretary can do is to release Mr. Kinnaird, a man who is as good as dead.

using himself and raising funds on the strength of his imprisonment. Mr Labouchere thinks: "It is always a mistake to give a man, whatever his motives, an opportunity of posing as a martyr for the sake of religion. And it is doubly foolish to do so where the martyr for the sake of 'God's truth' and 'freedom of speech' is avowedly engaged in a commercial undertaking which only requires advertising to keep it flourishing."

Cardinal Vaughan is reported to be seriously ill. The London Chronicle says His Eminence intends to remain in Yorkshire for some time. This means that he is unfit for work in London, and also that Derwent Hall and the solicitous attention of his host and hostess, Lord and Lady Edmund Talbot, are doing him good. How serious his illness has been may be judged by the fact that the Cardinal has been unable for some weeks to say Mass, a deprivation to which doctors find that a priest very unwillingly submits. Encouraging as the reports received from Derwent Hall now are, the Cardinal is not likely to be able to stand or walk without the aid of a stick for several weeks to come, and for that period, therefore, he will be unable "to celebrate," as he has done daily, almost without intermission, over a priestly career of now over forty years.

A handsome silver casket contains the beautifully illuminated address which the members of the Irish Parliamentary Party purpose presenting to His Holiness Leo XIII on the occasion of his jubilee. The casket takes the form of a reproduction of the Shrine of Lough Erne, with all the beautiful and varied interlacings only to be found in pure Celtic ornamentation. The casket is surmounted by the Pontifical Arms—namely, Azure, on a mount, verb, a poplar tree, P.P.R. between two fleur-de-lis on base, in the dexter chief point a blazing star, streaming in bend argent, over all a fesse, resting on the cross-arms, and surmounted by a tiara. Underneath is the motto, "Lumen in Coelo"—Light from Heaven. The casket is supported by four fibulae, which harmonize beautifully with the whole design and decoration.

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Cable despatches of the past few days have mentioned a matter of horrible blasphemy which is being enacted in a London place of worship in connection with this shocking exhibition. The Catholic Times says: "Religious fanatics are common in every age of the world, but the height of shamefulness has surely been reached when a preacher publicly proclaims himself to be the reincarnation of God! Yet this horrible and blasphemous claim has been, and is even now being, made by the leader of a small sect called the Agapemones, who meet in what they term 'The Ark of the Covenant.' On Sunday thousands of eager sightseers crowded round the edifice in which the leader of the sect, seated on a raised chair, declared that in him the Most High was bodily present. Such language, as might be expected, aroused exclamations of hatred and horror from the audience, most of whom had come to scoff, and did not remain to pray. Outside the building a force of police was in attendance to preserve order, and under its controlling hand, the preacher was kept from any personal harm. It is a pity that sensible people do not let him and his deluded followers alone; if they were ignored they would soon be forgotten. Unfortunately, curiosity tempts folk to assemble, if only that they may gain a glimpse of the notorious leader of a crazy, but much-talked-of, sect. But what a light it all sheds on the vagaries of Protestantism, and on the worth of the principle of private interpretation of the Holy Scriptures!"

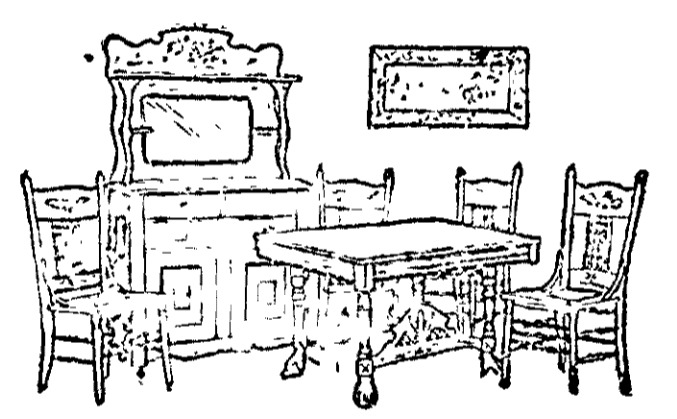
work, "The Dream of Gerontius." The universal opinion among English musical critics was that Dr. Elgar's setting of Newman's great poem was masterly. One incident of the event does not redound to the credit of the Protestant authorities of Worcester Cathedral. These absolutely refused to allow the work to be performed within their walls, unless certain changes were introduced into the text. The special correspondent of The London Daily Telegraph says: "Gerontius was censored before its acceptance by the clergy of Worcester could be secured, and it would appear that Cardinal Newman's poem underwent a sort of purgatorial process before it could be admitted within the Cathedral's gates. There seems to have been no particular objection to the belief in 'cleansing fires,' but not to speak with irreverence, the clergy sent the Virgin Mary to Coventry, taking out en bloc the chorus 'Hail Mary, pray for Him,' and deleting in every doctrinal connection the name of her whom Canon Knox-Little, preaching in the Cathedral on Sunday last, described as 'Our Lady' and 'The Mother of God.' At the bottom of all this may be some profound reason to which the eyes of the lay mind are blind, but surely it is time for the Cathedral clergy to recognize that if a work of art cannot be performed in its entirety it should not be produced at all. That is a mere truism obvious even to a fourth-form boy, but neglect of it becomes absolutely offensive when a censor does violence to a poet's text. That the Roman Catholics who came to-day to hear the work of two co-religionists were hurt I have reason to believe, but also was every person of taste, who knew that the Cathedral clergy, having the right to reject 'Gerontius' altogether, preferred to tamper with the text. Great is the mystery of some godliness.

The Paris correspondent of a secular paper declares the fact that the greatest efforts are being made by the present French Government to take the education of the young out of the hands of the religious. This is now vowed for by no less a person than M. Meline, a Republican who was formerly a Communist, and who has been several times in the Cabinet. M. Meline, who has taken over the once famous newspaper, La République Française, founded by his old master, Gambetta, distinctly says in an article: "How, then, is to be attacked the religious idea so deeply hidden in the folds of the human conscience? There is only one way. The State must take hold of the child's conscience and mould it according to its own formula, by directing its instruction and education, to the exclusion of the fathers of the families. That is the last word of anti-clerical doctrine as it is being passed into the legislation of the country at present. No more liberty of teaching, because liberty is contrary to the rights of the State, no more free teaching, for the State has the right to impose its doctrine on all citizens; no more liberty for professors, who must think as the State does."

An interesting event of the week in England has been the great musical festival at Worcester, at which was witnessed the production in the Cathedral there of Dr. Elgar's great

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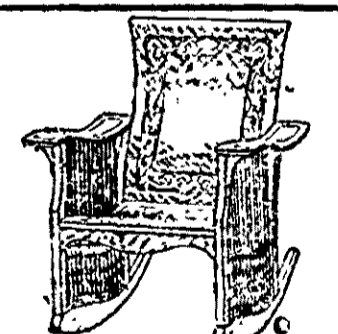
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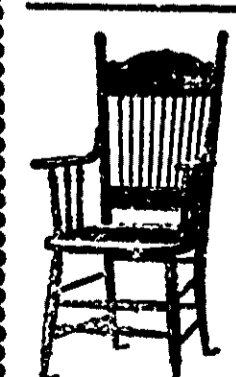
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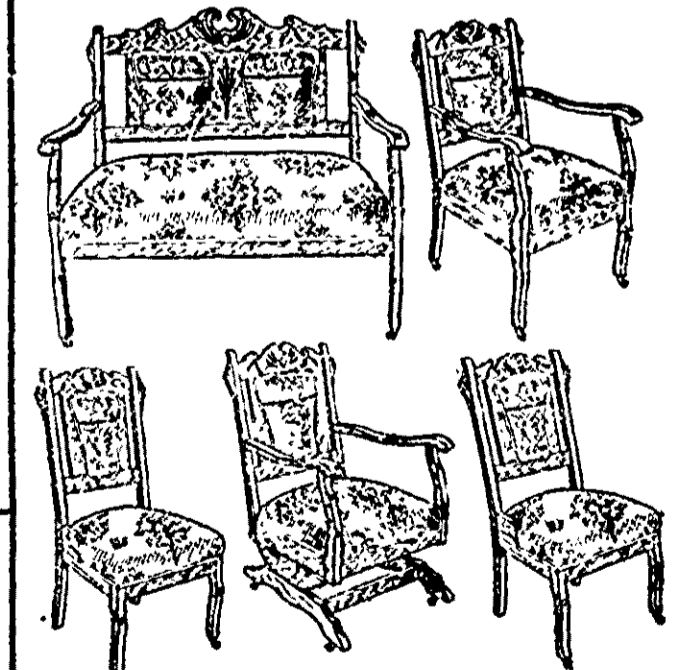
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