

HOMELESS BOYS.

The Work of Salesian Oratories in Their Behalf.

An Interesting Story of the Foundation of These Noble Institutions—Don Bosco's Christian Sympathy for the Friendless Youth.

Montreal is known the world over for the great number of its charitable institutions, but notwithstanding this there are many wants that must perforce go unprovided for. One of these is a home for outcast orphan boys, who are practically thrown on the streets to be contaminated with the education that is to be got on the pavements, and who can hardly be blamed if they fail to turn out model citizens.

As soon as Don Bosco was ordained in 1841 he entered on the duties of his sacred ministry with all the ardor of an apostle. One of the duties that fell to his lot was to visit the prisons of Turin. At the sight of a large number of young boys among the prisoners, paying the penalty of their crimes in all the sickening details of jail life, the young priest was greatly shocked and distressed.

This terrible vision haunted Don Bosco night and day, and it became his chief desire to find some remedy for this awful state of things. He felt he must do something for them, but how was he to proceed? "If those poor boys," Don Bosco used to say in his sad musings, "had had a loving friend to take care of them and attend to their religious education, no doubt they would have grown up in ignorance of the existence of the jail. Would it not, therefore, be of great importance to religion and society to see what might be done in this way in behalf of hundreds and thousands of friendless lads swarming in the streets?"

On the 8th of December 1841, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, he was vesting for Mass when a ragged urchin, after having wandered about the church gazing at the pictures and statues, strayed into the Sacristy.

"Come here and see," said the sacristan—a rustic fellow devoid of ceremony—on catching sight of him. "I do not know how," replied the newcomer, somewhat mortified. "Come here," the other rejoined; "you must serve it."

"I cannot, I tell you," repeated the lad; "I have never served Mass in my life." "Then what are you doing here, you good-for-nothing young rascal? Begone!" And the handle of a duster applied to the back and shoulders of the poor lad added force to the sacristan's intimation. Awakened to a sense of what was going on behind his back, Don Bosco turned round and interposed.

"What are you about, sir?" he demanded. "Why do you beat that child? Call him back immediately; I want to speak to him." At this turn of events the sacristan went after the lad, and assuring him of better treatment, led him back to Don Bosco. The poor boy was crying, and although reassured by Don Bosco's kindly face he trembled as he approached.

"Have you already heard Mass this morning?" asked the good priest, in soothing tones. "No," was the brief reply. "Come, then, and hear it; afterwards I wish to speak to you about something that will please you."

Creator of all things, and the end for which He created us. In this way half an hour passed, and seeing the lad fatigued by an attention to which vago-bond life is unaccustomed, Don Bosco dismissed him, after obtaining a promise from him to return later. Garelli, unknown, did not fail to keep the appointment. Though dissipation and entire want of culture had made the poor boy almost a numskull devoid of memory, nevertheless, by attention and assiduity, he learned in a few weeks the principal truths of our holy religion, and was thus enabled to make a good confession and shortly afterwards a holy first communion.

Garelli (whom we may look upon as the foundation stone of the Salesian Oratory) soon drew many comrades to the catechism class in the Sacristy of St. Francis of Assisi's. These, for the most part, were Milanese and Biellese, who had flocked to Turin in great numbers to earn a livelihood as hod bearers to bricklayers. Far from their parents (if they had any living) and abandoned to themselves in the turmoil of a large city, what wonder if their life was a reckless and an erring one?

As the number of his pupils increased, Don Bosco varied his programme, and instead of half an hour's lecture on Christian doctrine he soon found the means of passing Sundays and holidays almost entirely in their company. Part of the day was given to pious exercises and religious teaching and part was spent in a variety of amusements—in gymnastics, singing, instrumental music and elementary instruction.

SPECKS ON OUR CIVILIZATION.

Another of those brutal prize fights took place last week in Syracuse, between McCoy and Rubin. A local paper says: "The Alhambra was filled. It was estimated that there were four thousand spectators, and prices of admission were \$1, \$1.50, and \$7. Hence the management made money."

What a commentary is this on our boasted civilization. Men paid seven dollars to see one human brute batter another out of all semblance to himself and convert the platform into a shambles. Here in Montreal we are not much better. Crowds pack to overflowing a local theatre, with the only object in view of seeing a pugilist pose before another boxer. Thousands for a degrading exhibition and not a penny for charity. Did it ever strike the Irish Catholics who, among others, patronize these exhibitions, that a modicum of the money spent in this way would be a great relief to the poor starving people in the West and South of Ireland.

The Eagerness of Lawyers.

The Louisville Courier-Journal is responsible for the following statement regarding the peculiar methods of latter day lawyers:— "A story is being told among some of Louisville's lawyers to illustrate the point that Kentucky's rural attorneys never overlook a chance to turn railroad accidents into coin of the realm. Not long ago Thomas H. Johnson of New Albany, an employe of the Illinois Central Railroad, running on a freight train between Louisville and Central City, was killed while leaning out from the top of a car."

Before the widow even knew all the particulars of his death letters were showered in upon her by lawyers along the line of the road. In due time the claim bearing the remains of the unfortunate man reached the mourning widow. It was opened, and to the coat sleeve of the dead man's grave clothes was pinned a note written by a lawyer near the scene of the accident offering to prosecute the road for a percentage of the damages.

Another story is told illustrating the avidity with which the Illinois Central is sued. Emory A. Storrs, the famous Chicago lawyer, was approached by an old man with a note one day. The note had been found among the effects of a deceased relative. "What's the nature of the note?" asked Mr. Storrs.

"I don't know, sir," answered the old fellow. "Have you any idea who wrote it?" asked Mr. Storrs. "No, sir," answered the note-bearer. "Well, do you know anything about the note at all?" asked Mr. Storrs. "Nothing at all, sir," answered the old man. "Well," remarked Mr. Storrs thoughtfully, "the only thing I can see to do in the premises is to sue the Illinois Central Railroad."

Dancers Supplied to Order.

The New York Sun is the authority for the following:— Among the articles purveyed to its customers by a mammoth London dry goods store are young dancing men. In London, as elsewhere, hostesses have the greatest difficulty in obtaining the requisite number of male dancers for their balls. Outside of the military, dancing men form a very small minority of the regular residents in the metropolis. On the other hand, there are almost at all times plenty of visitors in London, young men who come up for a few days from the country or the universities, who would be only too glad of the opportunity to attend a private ball, but are debared therefrom owing to the limited extent of their acquaintance in the city. To obviate this difficulty and bring the would-be hostesses and guests together a plan has been devised by the management of the big shop which is

said to work satisfactorily. When a customer intends to give a ball and finds that she will not be able to find partners for all her women guests, she notifies the shop to supply her with a specified number of young men. The order is filled through the medium of a list wherein male visitors to the city are requested to enter their names. Of course the management of the shop has to be very careful concerning the social status of hosts and guests. It would never do to send small tradesmen to the house of a woman of rank. This difficulty is obviated by a system of tabulation. The managers take care to find out all about the hostesses and the men, and, having satisfied themselves concerning their position in society, arrange them in groups accordingly.

Thus everybody can be suited without danger of unpleasant contretemps. The scheme is said to be profitable to the store, for of course the young men who are thus accommodated buy their gloves, ties and other necessaries there.

Two Hundred Dance in a Wine Tank.

A San Francisco journal says:— One hundred couples will dance at one time in the great half-million gallon wine reservoir of the Italian Swiss colony at Aeti, Sonoma county, on Saturday afternoon next. The entertainment will be a novel one in the annals of viticulture and pleasure. Such a scene has never before been witnessed, for the reason that the opportunity is now for the first time presented. The Aeti wine reservoir is the largest, if not the only example of its kind in the world. It was constructed last year as a matter of necessity and somewhat as an experiment from inability to obtain sufficient coöperation for the wine crop which the San Francisco merchants refused to purchase. It was quickly excavated and lined with concrete, and upon its completion was immediately put to the use for which it was intended with perfect success. There was then no time for a celebration, but since then it has been emptied, and while awaiting its refilling the Italian-Swiss colony concluded to give a ball in the monster tank. The afternoon will be devoted to the dance in the wine reservoir. There will be room in the reservoir for the 200 dancers, as its dimensions are 80 feet in length, 34 in breadth, and 21 in height.

Dogs to Wear Shoes.

Dogs belonging to some fashionable women, says a New York society journal, are now made to wear shoes. These shoes are made of chamois and have light leather soles. The idea of the inventor was to protect polished floors, but the women who have adopted the shoes for their pets say they have done so to protect, not their floors, but the tender feet of the dogs from cold, heat and rough weather generally. The next thing pet dogs may be turning out in trousers and gowns.

ITALY'S POVERTY.

The Terrible Taxes Imposed on the People.

A Striking Comparison With the Financial Condition of the United States—The Millions Spent in Maintaining the War and Navy Departments.

The population of the United States is about two and one-half times that of Italy. The population of Italy was 31,000,000 in 1896; the present population of the United States is 77,500,000. The annual expenses of Italy for governmental purposes are in excess of the equivalent of \$500,000,000 in American money, or more than \$100,000,000 above the expenses of the United States Government in an ordinary year. These expenses, however, include some items which belong more properly to what may be called the obligations of the State's improvident financial system than to ordinary running expenses, but even with this acknowledgment the amount of such ordinary expenses to be raised from taxation is in excess of \$350,000,000 a year.

For its War Department Italy spends in a year, \$45,000,000; for its Navy Department, \$20,000,000; public instruction by the central Government, \$10,000,000; public works, \$10,000,000; the expenses of collection (public officials, agents, tax-gatherers and clerks), \$25,000,000; maintenance of the showy but useless Department of Foreign Affairs, \$19,000,000; the King's civil list, \$3,000,000. There is then, the annual interest on what is known as the consolidated (or bonded) Italian national debt. The interest amounts each year to nearly \$100,000,000 (the United States expended for interest last year \$37,000,000); \$15,000,000 interest on the floating Italian debt; \$16,000,000 for what are known as "fixed annuities," which remain "fixed"; \$4,000,000 for the Department of Finance; \$10,000,000 for the maintenance of Post Offices (for the less from their operation) and the Government telegraph system; \$400,000 for the "promotion of agriculture"; \$200,000 for the maintenance of the Senate and chamber of Deputies, and the balance for sundry and miscellaneous expenses, an exact subdivision of which, under the Italian system of keeping accounts, is impracticable.

The present debt of Italy is equivalent to \$2,500,000,000, and as there is a deficit every year, and small provision for a sinking fund, it is constantly on the increase. The taxes in Italy, which is a poor country, include many items which in other countries would be exempt. There are taxes on land, taxes on buildings, taxes on incomes, taxes on successions, excise taxes, taxes on customs, which yield in a year \$50,000,000 only; and octroi duties, imposed on marketable property brought into cities, and which amount in a year to more than \$15,000,000.

There is the tobacco monopoly, which is virtually a tax on smokers, of \$40,000,000 a year; the salt monopoly, a culinary tax, of \$15,000,000, and local taxes

for the maintenance of schools. The State gets revenue from telegraph offices and prisons; from the use of State property, leases to individuals, stamps (an item of nearly \$20,000,000, and from lotteries, an item of \$15,000,000 more). But all these taxes, monopolies and speculative methods of raising the wind fall short of supplying the full needs of the Italian Government, which falls behind each year and becomes involved in deeper obligation. In addition to the general taxation by the Government, there is local or commune taxation amounting to \$125,000,000 a year, while the debt of the Italian communes amounts, collectively, to \$300,000,000. The marvel to any observer is that Italians have been able to meet so much of this vast and oppressive burden as they have, in view of the fact that the per capita national debt of Italy is now \$75, and the absence of \$75 (or its equivalent in lire) has been noticed among Italians generally by all travellers.—N. Y. Sun.

WHAT IS NATIONALITY?

Father Hickey's Interesting Article on the Subject.

Present Day Erroneous Notions Strikingly Pointed Out.

We have read, says the Munster News with the most profound interest an article which appears in the current issue of New Ireland Review, from the pen of Rev. M. P. Hickey, M.R.I.A., and we wish that his able and convincing words could be read and digested by every Irishman in this country.

No doubt it is a somewhat peculiar question to ask: What is Nationality? Many of our fellow-countrymen would think it little short of an insult to be asked to define what Nationality is; yet how few could do it, and how much fewer still are Nationalists in the true sense of the word—Nationalist, as Father Hickey points out, according to the example of Thomas Davis? Latter day party politics in Ireland, unfortunately, have clouded the minds of our countrymen, and unquestionably popular ideas of Nationality have become confused. Nationality, so-called, is now of many different shades, each claiming to be the only true and unadulterated one, and however regrettable this chaotic condition of things may be, it can hardly be considered surprising. For the great majority of present day Irishmen their ideas of Nationality are embodied in the personality of one of the various "leaders" who aspire to direct public thought and action in the country. Whatever their own pet leader says is law; whatever he does is right, for he is infallible, and whoever insinuates to the contrary is guilty of treason, and a traitor of the blackest dye. And yet all these several parties, following the said several leaders, are in their own estimation, of course, the only true Nationalists and all others are enemies of their country. Let Father Hickey answer

What Irish Nationality Is.

"Nationality is not anything created. It is the soul, the very breath, the vivifying principle, the whole atmosphere and environment of a distinctive people. It is the outcome, the resultant, the culmination of many things of which political autonomy is one—very important, doubtless, but by no means the only thing to be considered." Father Hickey proceeds to point out that Ireland is a Nation, that it has never ceased to have a distinctive National life. This she has had so far, but will it continue? It is for Irishmen to answer. The feeling which exists at present by which party politics are confounded with Nationality is a fatal fault. There is no room for toleration. Those who cannot see eye for eye with any of the numerous parties are excluded from public life, ostracised. There is no room for those who refuse to throw themselves into the turmoil of politics, yet who will deny that there are many ardent lovers of their country, many who in their heart of hearts are Nationalists to the core. Father Hickey says—"The tendency of our present restricted and wholly erroneous notion of Nationality is to utterly exclude from our National life—I speak not of our political life—all those who from any cause, whether from taste or conviction, are not prepared to descend into the political arena. No matter how great the services they could render in other departments of National effort, and no matter how gladly such services would be rendered, there is no recognized place for them in the

Domain of Irish Nationality.

Surely there ought to be a sphere of work and of practical usefulness for all who love the old land; and any ideal of nationality which would hinder or discourage even one lover of Ireland from rendering her such service as it is in his power to give her, is faulty, vicious, and self-condemned—to say nothing of its other drawbacks. I cannot possibly bring myself to believe that any view of nationality which would place such men as Sir Samuel Ferguson, Whitley Stokes, Aubrey de Vere, George Petrie, Standish O'Grady, and many others, outside the ranks of Irish Nationalists, is a correct and healthy view." And he proceeds—"The truth is we want hundreds and thousands of workers in the various departments of national activity—in national literature, national art, and national enterprise. We want to have our national industries fostered and developed; we want to have our national language cultivated and preserved, and the area of its use extended; we want our national traditions, characteristics and ideals safeguarded and perpetuated; we want our national music, and our national art generally, fostered and encouraged; we want the education of our people made truly national." Here,

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