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HOME RULE AND THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

The dilly dallying of Mr. Arthur Balfour in regard to the establishment of a Catholic University for Ireland is tiring out the patience of the Catholic Unionists of England, and even the London Tablet is threatening to take up the cause of Home Rule unless the question be settled in accordance with the wishes of the clergy and people of Ireland.

Many years ago both Mr. Balfour and Lord Salisbury admitted that Ireland is badly treated inasmuch as it has only a Protestant University with its chairs of theology, and in fact all its professorial chairs filled with Protestants, and they promised that this state of affairs would occupy the careful attention of the Government, that a remedy might be applied.

It has been one of the objections alleged by Irish Protestants against Home Rule that the Catholic majority in Ireland would or at least might be disposed to treat them unfairly. There is no foundation for such a statement, and before advancing it as an argument the parties who pretend to entertain such a fear should be able to show clean hands themselves.

It is a matter of course that the Orangemen throw all possible obstacles in the way of putting an end to this injustice, and Mr. Balfour has admitted this, acknowledging that his Irish supporters have been the chief cause why he has not yet remedied the evil.

It is a problem well worth considering, why it is that there are so many in that and other large cities who totally neglect all thought of religion, and how the evil is to be remedied. To our mind it appears to be a certain conclusion that it arises chiefly out of the diversities of creed created by private judgment in religious matters, and the absence of religious teaching from the Public Schools.

An incident strongly corroborative of this is to be found in the fact that only a few days ago a school boy of

The conduct of the Government in regard to the Education question is on a par with its treatment of Ireland in every respect. A recent appointment of the President of the Ulster Union Association to be one of the Commissioners to administer the Irish Land Act is another sample of the desire of the Government to render justice to Ireland. Mr. Thomas Andrews, the appointee, is a landlord noted for his opposition to the rights of the tenantry, and the son of a man who was agent for the Marquis of Londonderry, whose ill-treatment of his tenantry has been notorious. Mr. Andrews will therefore bring into the office of the commissioners his personal and family traditions, all of which are such that only hostility to the tenantry may be expected from him.

STATISTICS OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE.

The Federation of Churches and Christian Workers, a Protestant association, has been recently engaged in gathering statistics of church-goers in New York city, and the result is that some very startling revelations have been made public.

In the tenement districts of the city it appears that only 65 per cent. of the fathers go to church at all. But there would be a counterbalancing to this state of affairs if it were true that the women attend church more regularly, as is the general rule, or as it is supposed to be so, that in most communities the women are more faithfully religious than the men.

Among the rising generation the state of affairs is still more alarming, as only 23 per cent. of boys and 24 per cent. of girls attend church. It is not stated whether this percentage of the boys and girls is taken on the whole number, or only of those above eight or nine years of age, but in any case the percentage should be much greater, and the figures show that 37 per cent. of the adult population and probably 60 per cent. of the youth in these localities are living merely as animals without any heed to spiritual concerns.

It becomes a matter of great interest to know what proportion of these non-church-goers are Catholics or non-Catholics. On this point the statistics gathered do not give satisfactory information, but as it is known that a very large proportion of the people of these districts are Catholics, it must be the case that there are many Catholics to be counted among the non-church-goers to make up so large a percentage. By looking at their nationalities, however, it becomes evident that the non church-goers among the Catholics are comparatively few.

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An incident strongly corroborative of this is to be found in the fact that only a few days ago a school boy of

fourteen committed suicide deliberately. It is incomprehensible that this could have occurred if he had been educated with religious principles. He left a letter addressed to his parents in which he said that the causes of his rash act were that his parents were unable to furnish him with the advanced school opportunities he desired; and, further, because there is no advance made toward the emancipation of the working classes from the grinding oppression of capitalists. There was evidently no thought of a future or of God in this lad's training, and there are thousands of children who are being still brought up in exactly the same way. The consequences of this will be seen both in the increase in the number of non church-goers, and of those who will never think of duty towards God as the first of the motives which should lead them to do good, to obey the laws, and to avoid all evil.

RECENT PROTESTANT PILGRIMAGES.

Even in heaven St. Columba must have been much surprised on June the 9th, his annual festival, at the novel spectacle of a Presbyterian pilgrimage to the ruins of his monastery on the Island of Iona.

There was an immense Catholic pilgrimage on the same day in which Catholics from all parts of Scotland participated to do honor to the zealous Irish missionary who devoted his life toward the conversion of the Picts, but the fact of a Catholic pilgrimage was not so remarkable, as it is a common practice with Catholics to visit the shrines of the saints to invoke their intercession for us with Almighty God. But Protestants have been wont to denounce such practices as grossly idolatrous, and all acts of reverence to the saints are absolutely forbidden by the Westminster Confession of Faith.

To this we must add that in the sixteenth century, at the preaching of John Knox and his co-laborers, the populace were incited to tear down all monasteries, and to destroy in all the churches the images and other memorials of the saints, and the ancient church and monastery of Iona did not entirely escape the destructive hands of these iconoclasts, though the sturdy McDonald and McGregor clansmen bravely defended their heritage against the aggressors, whose war-cry was that maxim of John Knox: "Pull down the rookeries and the rooks will go."

Time and oppressive penal laws succeeded in rooting out Catholicism from the sacred island, which was of old the centre of St. Columba's operations, and there are now two or three denominations of Presbyterians occupying the soil of their Catholic ancestors, but the relics of the ancient faith have not been entirely destroyed on Iona, and the pious Catholics of Scotland visit the spot every year in memory of the great Apostle of the Picts. But we believe that June 1897 was the first time when a Presbyterian pilgrimage was organized to visit the place for a similar purpose, and we are told the gathering was also very great, representing fully the whole Established Kirk of Scotland. There were services in Gaelic and English, by some of the foremost ministers of the Established Kirk, as Dr. Norman McLeod of Inverness, Drs. Blair, Story and McGregor of Edinburgh and Rev. Mr. Macmillan of Iona, and we are told that impressive and eloquent sermons were delivered.

We have not seen any full reports of these sermons, but as it is now the custom with the sects to claim that the saints of antiquity belonged to their special creeds, we may reasonably suppose that there were not wanting strong affirmations that St. Columba was a staunch member of the "Auld Kirk" of the Covenanters, though he and the saint and his co-laborers were accustomed to say Mass for the living and the dead, just as Catholic priests do at the present day, and they were in full communion with the whole Church, which in the sixth century was undeniably united in submission to the authority of the Pope.

English Church divines are also very resolute in maintaining that St. Columba was a good Anglican, but it is only of late that such claims were put forth by any of these sects, the object being to confuse the minds of the people into the belief that sectarianism is not so modern as history proves it to be. But these efforts must fail, as people become more discerning through the spread of education, and when it is seen that Presbyterianism as well as Anglicanism is beginning to adopt such Catholic practices as visiting the

shrines of the ancient saints, the inference will naturally be that these practices are not so condemnable as they have hitherto been taught to believe. The result must be that many will return to the ancient faith which their ancestors abandoned during the last three centuries.

This pilgrimage of the Presbyterians is not the only remarkable pilgrimage which has taken place within the last few weeks, another being that of the Anglican Bishops now assembled at Lambeth to hold the Pan-Anglican Council, officially designated "the Lambeth Conference."

These Bishops, too, have had their pilgrimage to the spot where St. Augustine landed at Ebsfleet on the Isle of Thanet in the year 597, just thirteen centuries ago, and just while St. Columba was evangelizing the Picts.

St. Augustine was of the same faith as St. Columba. There was at the time but one Christian faith, and St. Augustine was commissioned by a Pope—Gregory the Great—to preach the faith to the Angles and Saxons. St. Gregory was disposed at first, long before he became Pope, to undertake this mission himself, but being a monk his superiors would not allow him to leave Rome. When he became Pope he could not undertake the task in person, but he selected Augustine to carry out the project he had set his heart on, of converting the Saxons and Angles to Christianity, and accordingly Augustine, who was also a monk, undertook the duty, taking with him forty companions, all monks. This is the event which the Anglican Bishops now in Lambeth desired to commemorate by a pilgrimage to Ebsfleet, and to the ancient Church at Canterbury which had been the mother Church of England from a still more ancient period, early in the fourth century, and which had been at first dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and later to St. Martin of Tours.

The occasion was a remarkable one, but it is surely a perplexing problem to know what connection the conversion of England by missionaries from the Pope has with the modern Church of England and the Pan-Anglican Council.

"FATHER" IGNATIUS OF LLANTHONY.

"Father" Ignatius, the Anglican "monk" who has an Abbey at Llanthony in Wales, on the Black Mountains, has recently had a religious service which has attracted new attention to his Catholic proclivities.

It may be remembered that the monk had some years ago under his jurisdiction a convent of nuns, who, while "Father" Ignatius was in America, took occasion in a body to abandon Anglicanism and to become Catholics.

If the monk had been at home, it is probable his influence would have prevailed to prevent some, if not all of his religious proteges to remain in their convent, and within the Church of England; but the fact itself is an indication that the course pursued by Father Ignatius and many of the High Church clergy has a tendency to remove the prejudices which have heretofore been inculcated on Protestants, from their infancy, in regard to Catholic doctrines and practices.

The occasion of the recent services held by "Father" Ignatius was a pilgrimage made to the Abbey by some sixty or seventy Public School teachers. This was itself a remarkable fact, for when so large and intelligent a body have come to regard a monastery as a suitable object of a pilgrimage with a religious purpose, it is clear that those participating must be free from the prejudice against religious orders which has heretofore prevailed among all Protestants, and the fact that it is notorious that "Father" Ignatius conducts his monastery as far as possible, while being outside the Catholic fold, on Catholic principles, it becomes still more evident that the visitors must be very free from anti Catholic prejudices.

The Anglican Church Review of London, in giving an account of the ceremonies of the occasion, states that the bells of the monastery rang out a joyous peal of welcome to the visitors, after which all went into the chapel to hear a sermon, which was delivered from the "altar of the Virgin" where there is a "handsome statue of the benignant Madonna, crowned and sceptred, under a high-curtained canopy, and which looked smilingly upon the kneeling throng and the tonsured monk. Tall wax candles, vases of sweet flowers, and a gilded votive lamp hanging before the mystic Virgin Mother carried one's thoughts far away to other days, when Wales, and England, and all Christendom were covered with homes and shrines like

this of praise and rest, and peace and charity."

The ceremony ended with a fervent prayer and a benediction given by the "monk." It is said to have been highly impressive, and after the pilgrims dispersed, they joined in writing a letter of thanks to "Father" Ignatius for his cordial reception and kindly treatment of them, and for "the solemn and refreshing address which will live as a bright memory in the lives of many who heard it."

Notwithstanding that the zealous "monk" of Llanthony is a resolute upholder of Anglicanism Catholics cannot but be gratified that he is assisting in the removal of the prejudices which have so far blinded the majority of the people of England and Wales against Catholic truth, and the best thing we can wish him is that the clouds may be dispersed which prevent him and his disciples from recognizing the beauties and glories of the Catholic religion, and that he may soon become himself, with his flock, members of the one fold of Christ.

ANOTHER "HERESY HUNT."

Heresy-hunting is the designation now given to the practice of prosecuting ministers for entertaining and maintaining opinions contrary to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and the frequency with which it has been found necessary to institute these heresy-hunts shows to what a deplorable extent faith in all Christian truth is disappearing from the Protestantism of to day.

The latest of these notable heresy-hunts has been made by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which has found it necessary to depose from the ministry the Rev. Alexander Robinson, of Kilmun, Scotland, who gave offence by the publication of a work entitled "The Saviour in the Newer Light." It is scarcely necessary to explain that the "newer light" here meant is that modern theory now prevalent among Protestants, which strips Christ of his divinity and makes Him merely a man, a man of great piety and zeal indeed, yet nothing more than a man, with all the foibles and defects of humanity.

The Belfast Witness, commenting on the transaction, says:

"It is a sad case, but not of any general significance. Mr. Robinson is to all intents a Unitarian, and it is better he should go where he belongs. They who hold a Divine Saviour cannot have ecclesiastical fellowship with men who dethrone Him from His unique dignity."

Surely the Church ought to be the upholder of Christian truth, and it might be supposed that in the effort to do so it would have the approval of all earnest Christians; but we find that this is far from being the case, and the Christian World, one of the most influential of the organs of so called Evangelical Protestantism, is outspoken in condemning the action of the Assembly, which it does in the following terms:

"The Church of Scotland has, to our thinking, in every view of the case, been deplorably advised. The alleged ground for its procedure is that the views promulgated by Mr. Robinson are subversive of the faith. But, to begin with, is that so? On the contrary, the testimony of all who know him, including his opponents, is that he is a most earnest and devoted follower of Christ."

Heresy depositions are in nearly every instance afterwards repeated of. There is no member of the Kirk who does not feel ashamed of his conduct towards the sainted Campbell of Row, or of the later heresy-hunt of Norman Macleod. And the expulsion from the Free Church of Dr. Robertson Smith is now regarded by its best men as having been an act of stultification."

There can be no stronger proof of the great extent to which Unitarian or Latitudinarian views have spread among Protestants than this language of the Christian World. All the clergymen here mentioned (met with condemnation because they had unmissably wandered from the teachings of Christianity in regard to the reality of Christ's mission as the God man to redeem the world, yet the religious press are thus divided almost equally on the question whether they and others who propagate such views should be tolerated as teachers and leaders of Presbyterians and generally of Protestant thought.

It is but a very short time since most Protestants denied emphatically that Unitarians deserve to be called Christians, but now it is a most common thing, not merely to find Unitarian views tolerated, but even to see those who hold to Unitarianism, set up as the best models of the fervent Christian.

We do not exaggerate the situation if we say that the last stage has not even yet been reached. Practically

Protestantism has already almost become Unitarianism, and to use the late Mr. Spurgeon's words it is still on the down grade toward rank infidelity, so that in less time than most people think it possible, there will be but little difference between the most orthodox forms of Protestantism and Deism or Bob Ingersoll's creed of "I do not know," or "I do not believe." So true is this that the Unitarians have already said concerning the book recently issued by Dr. Workman, of the Canadian Methodist Church, and approved by Chancellor Burwash, of Victoria University: "This is where we were thirty years ago."

PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Notwithstanding that both in England and America several Methodist newspaper organs have been congratulating themselves and gratifying their readers for one or two years past, by publishing statements to the effect that the Catholic Church in England is losing ground, statistics of the Queen's Jubilee period show that Catholicity has made almost incredible progress during that period, while Methodism has actually gone backward. So evident has this been made that within the last few days a despatch was received from London to the effect that Mgr. Sambucetti, the envoy who represented the Pope at the Queen's Jubilee, has reported to the Holy Father that the increase in the number of Catholics is due to accessions from Methodism, and that the decrease of the number of Methodists is due to this fact.

We cannot credit that this despatch is correct, or that Mgr. Sambucetti has made any such report, and we fully believe that the fallacy of the despatch will be made evident when in a few days the mails will bring intelligence on the subject. But the main facts of the progress of Catholicity and the decline of Methodism in recent years have been shown by indisputable statistics.

From among facts which prove the great advance made by Catholicity during the last sixty years, we find the following in Cardinal Vaughan's Jubilee pastoral to his diocesan: "In 1837 England had four Vicars Apostolic, and the whole British Empire had only forty eight Catholic Bishops. In 1897 England has a hierarchy with sixteen Bishops, and the Empire has 166. In 1837 the priests of England were 486, in 1897 they are 2,686. The increase during these sixty years in number of our churches and our religious communities has been in a yet far greater proportion."

From other sources other facts may be learned proving that ever since Catholic Emancipation in 1829 the progress of the Church has been both steady and great. The London Illustrated Church News had a recent article on this subject in which this was regrettably admitted. It stated that there are nearly fifty different orders of monks, and one hundred of nuns in Great Britain now, many of them having numerous establishments throughout the country, among which are 300 orphanages, houses for the sick poor, homes for penitents, and like institutions. In 1857 there were less than ten members of religious orders in Scotland. In 1877 there were fifty-three and these have risen to eighty-one in 1897. The Jesuits in England and Wales have increased over five-fold within forty years, and the Benedictines to the same extent. Each of these orders has doubled its numbers in twenty years, and the total number of monks is now about one thousand.

The Catholic population has increased almost in proportion to the same figures, and the increase is due in a very great measure to the Oxford Tractarian movement, but also very largely to the zeal of the self-sacrificing and hard-working priesthood, who are not excelled in energy and piety by the clergy of any other nation. To this cause the progress is mainly to be attributed, since the Tractarian movement has ceased to be the principal one in its effects.

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

Having heard so much of the great progress made by several of the Protestant denominations in evangelizing, that is to say in destroying the faith of the French-Canadians, it will be a surprise to many that the Rev. Edward de Gruchy, a veteran Methodist minister who has been engaged for twenty seven years in the evangelization work, declared positively to a Mail reporter a few days ago that the Methodist missions of the Province of

Quebec are in

reply to have been issued some of the misgiving that many of the misgiving have been out that the Catholic tells quite a different tale, and it is that the "East" were formerly and even so when Confederation, in most majority, only ing now an e the case.

Elsewhere, the Catholic pre-ates as absolute in some of that they cau-fingers.

This would if the boastful French evan-correct; but admission of comes from the who are enga-plete does Mr failure to a French work little we have us, and I ven-change than occasionally in Methodist Ch-work at all gives the fol-gree to which

"The French talked the me-know the rea-of things. I French distri-menters, ter-bationers, a bible-women, in many of tered the F have lost from the act-annuation, have now on active work, day school to ten more mis-teurs in ad-ers. I know expenditure we would n French work Presbyterian

It is scarce that by na-number of increase if the misio-missionaries the case th-cribed by being of th-as well to k-to death." I religion sh-as predic-ave done than to cre-settle the religion a-and those Catholic fact-that in the have fewe-ords to be-tion.

THE A-BLESS

The feast Blessed Vi-Sunday, th-has been in sanction to not, howev-Catholic fe-Mary, after ly assume-of angels.

St. Grego-on the Gl-"Blessed on earth world, al-her house world; an-she was in earth, the Lord Jes-and tak-Michael away. T-her body in a mo-ing for behold! second ty-body sh-Paradise, her soul, blessings her elec-Juvenal,