

The Buffalo *Catholic Union* is a cleverly edited and carefully managed paper. It is edited by Father Cronin, and published by the Buffalo Catholic Publication Company, Denis T. O'Reilly, Manager. At a meeting of the Company held August 3rd, a dividend of 5 per cent was declared, which shows that the *Union* is appreciated by the public. The following Directors were elected for the ensuing year: Right Rev. S. V. Ryan, Bishop of Buffalo, Very Rev. Wm. Gleason, Rev. E. Kelly, Rev. J. Rogors, and Messrs. Jno. McManus, Jno. Corcoran, and Peter B. Ryan.

That the Catholic Church has ever been on the side of the people, upholding their rights, alleviating their wrongs, supplying their wants, teaching their ignorance, and ministering to their necessities, is well known to history. The fact, however, is sometimes denied, and is often forgotten in these days. It may be well if some persons are confirmed, and some are reminded of the fact, by a Protestant author. The Rev. E. Cutts, D. D., in a work published by the London Christian Knowledge Society, a Protestant organization, gives his testimony on this point in the following terms: "In the Middle Ages the Church was a great popular institution. One reason, no doubt, of the popularity of the Medieval Church was, that it had always been the champion of the people and the friend of the poor. In politics, the Church was always on the side of the liberties of the people, against the tyranny of the feudal lords. In the eye of the noble, the laboring population were beings of an inferior caste. In the eye of the law, they were chattels. In the eye of the Church, they were brethren in Christ, souls to be won and trained, and fitted for heaven. In social life, the Church was an easy landlord and a kind master. On the whole, with many drawbacks, the Medieval Church did its duty—according to its own light—to the people. It was the great cultivator of learning and art, and it did its best to educate the people. It had vast political influence, and used it on the side of the liberties of the people. By means of its painting and sculpture in the churches, its mystery plays, its religious festivals, its catechizing, and its preaching, it is probable that the chief points of the Gospel history and the doctrines of the creeds were more universally known and more vividly realized than among the masses of our present population.—"Turning Points of English Church History," pp. 161-166.

#### EDUCATIONAL NOTES.

The following details in regard to Catholic education in Syria are interesting: Under the direction of the Catholic missionaries 40 men and 27 women are employed as teachers, and in the 67 schools 2,500 poor children enjoy the benefits of a Christian education. In an Oriental seminary connected with the University of Beirut, 40 pupils receive gratuitous education, to prepare them for the priesthood, and especially for the missions. Pope Leo XIII., who established the Catholic university, had expressed his desire that it be provided with a printing-office, from which scientific works in Greek, Chaldaic, Syriac, Maronite, Armenian, and Coptic languages may be issued, this being essential for the diffusion of Catholicity. The printing-offices have been procured, and are now in full operation; there are five steam presses, a hydraulic press, and various other machinery for stereotyping; a type-foundry and a book-binding complete the establishment. More than sixty workmen earn a livelihood in this institution. The Fathers also publish a weekly journal in Arabic, which has already rendered important services to the cause of the missions.

In places where Catholic schools have existed in the Diocese of Buffalo since 1876, it has not been allowed to admit children to First Communion who have not attended a Catholic school previously for at least one scholastic year.

Monsignor Seton, of Jersey City, is reported by the *New York Sun* to have said in a sermon recently: "I will tell you what is forbidden by the Bishop of the Diocese, by the Archbishop of the United States, assembled in Plenary Council at Baltimore; forbidden by the Sovereign Pontiff, the Pope: It is forbidden to build a \$100,000 church and a magnificent residence for the pastor, and to have no Catholic schools in the parish. . . . When I came to this parish I found a good school, with 400 children. I thank God I have been able to raise it up so that you have 700 children. If I lived in a magnificent priest's house, opposite a \$100,000 unpaid-for church, and had no Catholic school in that parish, I would go with my two curates and hire three little rooms, and I would turn my palatial priest's residence into a Catholic school. You see the little brick house where your three priests live. Every high wind that blows shakes that tottering brick house. We have been urged to build a better one. Why have we a good school? Because the Bishop of the Diocese has said there should be a Catholic school in every parish; because the Bishops and Archbishops of the United States, in Plenary Council assembled, have said: 'Let there be a Catholic school in every parish;' because the head of the Catholic Church, Our Holy Sovereign Pontiff the Pope, has told us that there should be a Catholic school in every parish."

Mr B J Rickoff, of Cleveland, Ohio, said of geography at the Atlanta meeting: "What would be the result of an inquiry among the more intelligent tradesmen and members of the professions as to the knowledge of geography which they have retained or accumulated, we will say, at from thirty-five to fifty years. I do not speak of that alone which they have learned in childhood but of the sum total of all the knowledge they may claim at the time of the inquiry. I think it would be found that they know very little as compared with the fourteen or fifteen year old miss who has just passed her examination for the high school in any one of our towns and cities, except as to those points which they have in later years looked up for the purposes of business or pleasure. Not having any relation to the course of reading or business pursuits of matured years, the names and locations of rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, capes, nations, etc. drop from the memory of most men, as the features of people who pass us in rapid moving procession. The study having served its purpose in the recitation room and on examination day is promptly dismissed from the mind. Test the value of a study thus pursued by any standard you please, and it is valueless, except as to its general outlines, which can be learned in one-third of the time now allotted to it. As studied it contributes little to our stores of useful information and still less to the discipline of mind, inasmuch as it begets a habit of careless indifference to what we have learned."

In a recent discourse, the Bishop of Manchester, Eng., said that when he was in this country, the greatest defect he noticed in the schools was an attempt to teach too much, and teaching it imperfectly.

Says the *Catholic Times*: The Archbishop of Cologne has had a curious experience in a recent examination of children. "Is the Sacrament of Confirmation necessary to salvation?" he inquired of a boy. "No, Monsignor," responded the lad; "but when there is an opportunity of receiving it, we should not lose it." "Well said," replied the prelate. Then turning to a girl he asked if the Sacrament of Matrimony was necessary to salvation. "It is not," was the quaint reply; "but when the occasion arises it should not be lost."

The City Companies of London recently offered a number of scholarships for competition by children of both sexes, and among the papers submitted by the 207 that entered the lists (81 were girls) there were some remarkable contributions to the great heap of the world's misinformation. One pupil, in reply to the question "Where is Buenos Ayres?" instead of "combining her information" separated it in the following startling fashion: "Buenos is in Germany, Ayres in France." Another remarked of the climate of England that it "determines to be rather unhealthy on account of its having so many smells and stinks, such as Tanners and many others," while a third declared: "The Old World naturally was Europe, and now the New World is Europe, Asia, etc.," which, indeed, is not the case. But, as is almost always the case in such examinations, the history papers proved the sorest puzzles, as witness these specimen answers:—