

ism, or for any other new tenets, so they be to exercise their wits.' Bishop Bramhall says also that the students 'were taught several handicrafts, trades and callings.'

#### THE SISTERHOOD OF THE HOLY NATIVITY.

Under the heading of 'Woman's Place and work,' the Churchman has a very full account of the Sisterhood of the Holy Nativity, explaining its spirit, work, life, etc. After speaking of its several foundations in R. I. and Cleveland, it speaks of the Diocese of Fond du Lac.

"In the House of the Visitation in Fond du Lac are several sisters, who work in the Cathedral parish, and in other city and outlying parishes, and who go on mission tours through northern Wisconsin, among the Oneida Indians and the lumbermen, and into many a wild, remote country place, visiting the people teaching them, supplying books, holding informal meetings, opening Sunday schools and giving Bible talks to congregations gathered in some good woman's parlor, in a farm house kitchen, or in the school house, the people listening always with respect, and earnest desire to hear the message brought by the sisters. These journeys combine with the more public ministrations much personal work, much cheer and instruction and gentle guidance, to shut in invalids, and souls in the shadow of ignorance; long-relapsed Christians are often led back to the "first works." Nor is this work done by the mission sisters alone, for they are constantly and consciously supported by the continual intercessions sent up for them by the community at home. The instruction given on the mission tours is made plain and simple, as befits the people's needs and is based upon the Bible and Prayer Book teachings. The subjects of a recent tour include the Bible, The Church, The Elements of the Faith, Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion, Repentance, The Church Year and The Devotional Use of the Bible. The mission sisters live in the homes of the people, and everywhere win their esteem and confidence as they point the spiritually hungry to the Bread of Life, and the thirsty to the Living Waters, and show the stranger the way to his Father's house, and to them in prison the Truth which is able to make them free.

The mission tours and the homes under the sister's care have brought them into familiar contact with many and different persons, and the joyful unaffectedness of their living and ministrations, and the God given grace of nature not repressed, but transformed by religion, have not failed to win in peculiar degree the close confidence of those who have learned to know them; and false ideas concerning sister's life and work have been corrected in the minds of many by acquaintance with some sister of the Holy Nativity; for the living results of a system, the character formed by it, the sacrifices simply and gladly made, the entire consecration to God and the manifestation of this in charity to His children, answer as nothing else can, the questions often asked: Do religious orders meet with permanent success? Is their rule of life an inspiration and strength? Are such orders a faded relic of mediævalism, useless in our day, or are they a living growth, firmly rooted, indeed, in the past, but still spreading sheltering branches and blossoming into the "white flower of a blameless life" and yielding food of refreshment and healing? And the sisters of the Holy Nativity are helping to demonstrate that the religious life is a life logical, serene and free, a life of benevolence animated by piety, instinct with the love of one's neighbor, consecrated and inspired by the love of God, reconciling greatness of soul with humility, freedom of action with submission of will, and social life with solitude, a life in which

strong natures are nourished not quenched, and in which feebler natures find the regimen fitted to give greater vigor, a life of sweet uniformity and peaceful activity, a life of service to the world, and yet itself hidden in God.

The literary labors of this community should be included in its useful works. "Vocation," written by the founder of the sisterhood, has for some years been winning earnest souls to consider the call to the religious life. "Self-consecration," a graceful English version of a French book of devotion, was prepared at the suggestion of the sisterhood, and dedicated to it. "The New Creation," the work of a sister of the community, is giving help to many by its simple, direct exposition of the Church's teaching.

As in its works, so in its numbers, the community has had a steady and healthful growth and now has twenty-five members."—*Diocese of Fond du Lac.*

#### THE WELSH SUSPENSORY BILL.

Those who wish to read a really exhaustive statement on the subject of the Welsh Church Suspensory Bill should obtain Canon Bardsley's "Two Sermons," preached in Huddersfield Parish Church (Huddersfield: Coates). We glean a few extracts:

"This Bill marks an epoch in the history of this country, inasmuch as it is the first attack on the part of any Government against the National Church since the time of Cromwell."

"In St. Asaph the number of children attending Church elementary schools has doubled in twenty years. During the same period the average attendance in Church Sunday Schools has increased 37 per cent. The number of persons confirmed in the one diocese of St. Asaph between 1881 and 1891 was 20,000, as against 15,000 in the ten years before, and 12,000 in the ten years before that. In the whole of the English dioceses during the last ten years we have increased the number of our confirmation candidates by 8 per cent.: but in the Welsh dioceses, during the same period, the average increase has been 22 per cent. The number of Church communicants had doubled in the diocese of St. Asaph in twenty years. In 1831 there were 611 incumbents in Wales for 843 benefices; at the present time there are 956 for 996 benefices. In 1831 there were 72 curates; now there are 518. The total number of clergy in Wales has doubled in sixty years. The number of communicants in the diocese of St. David is, in proportion to the population, larger than in any diocese in England. In the face of such facts Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., and Mr. J. Carvell Williams, M.P., in their book on 'Disestablishment,' page 84, have the audacity to say that the 'disappearance' of the Established Church from Wales 'would effect no appreciable change.' I again ask, why should Wales be singled out for disendowment? Because the promise of disendowment was to be the price paid to twenty-eight Welsh members for votes pledged on this condition to the Home Rule Bill."

"The Cambrian News, a Radical and Liberationist paper, writes January 7th, 1887: 'The Church parson with his daily services, his oversight of elementary schools, his mission work, his house-to-house visiting, and his numerous societies, is a hard-worked individual. It is the Nonconformist minister, with his one week-night service, and his two services on Sunday, who is becoming an object of reproach. It is very difficult to point out any defect in Nonconformity without being accused of irreligion and enmity towards ministers, but the time has fully come when Nonconformity should bestir itself in more ways than one if it is to hold its own. The Church of England is very much alive, and the work the clergy are doing was

certainly left undone.' Even Mr. Gladstone, in his speech on the Welsh Suspensory Bill, relieved his conscience by declaring that the 'Established Church in Wales is an advancing Church, a living Church rising from elevation to elevation.'

Should the present endowments of the Church be confiscated, it will require an annual subscription of £4,000,000 to give our 20,000 existing clergy the pittance of £200 a year. This crippling of her resources would be a terrible blow to the philanthropic institutions of this country, to the support of which the Church of England gives two-thirds of the funds."—*The News, Eng.*

#### THE HOME RULE BILL.

The Congregationalists of Dublin have issued an address to the Congregationalists of Great Britain. It puts the question at issue in a nutshell: They say we put before you our solemn protest against the Government of Ireland Bill now before Parliament.

"We would be in favour of a system of local government like that enjoyed by England; but we know no reason why such a rash experiment as the establishment of a separate Parliament should be tried in our country, and we view the possibility with dismay.

"Under the just and equitable laws made by the Imperial Parliament we, in common with the rest of the law-abiding people of Ireland, Roman Catholic and Protestant, have felt our liberties secure. We have lived in peace and good-fellowship with our countrymen, and have steadfastly opposed all religious ascendancy.

But in the event of the establishment of an Irish Parliament, we are fully convinced that the forces of Government will be in the hands of the men who have all along shown dangerous indifference to crime and outrage, and to the elementary obligations of righteousness between man and man.

"Much as we personally esteem many of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and priesthood of Ireland, nevertheless we cannot but believe (in all charity) that their ascendancy would be inimical to progress and good government, and that under a Parliament such as is proposed such ascendancy would be inevitable.

"As to the details of the present Bill, we believe that, if it were passed—

"1st.—The landed interest would be ruined.

"2nd.—Insecurity of capital would act disastrously on our industries.

"3rd.—The proposals concerning Judiciary and police could not fail to adversely affect social order.

"4th.—Many religious, charitable and educational institutions would find their resources seriously crippled, if not extinguished.

"In short, civilisation, which, in spite of all drawbacks, has been steadily progressing, would under the Bill receive possibly a fatal check.

"These are our sincere convictions, and we appeal to you, our brethren, who prize so highly your own liberties, civil and religious, not to dismiss with an easy optimism this remonstrance, founded on personal knowledge of our own country. You have it in your power to prevent the passage of this Bill; but you have not the power to undo the mischief it will cause if passed into law."

The above has been signed by 85 per cent. of the congregation; of the remainder, some object to churches dealing with political matters, and others have already signed anti-Home Rule petitions.—*The News, London.*

God be praised, that to believing souls prayer gives light in darkness, comfort in despair.—*Shakespeare, Henry VI.*