

been permitted to visit the cell of his dying friend, the brother of the Charter House.

John Forest, a man of great learning and piety, had been for two years imprisoned among felons in Newgate.

He had refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the king, or to countenance his illegal marriage with Anne Boleyn.

A deadlier crime even than this was that he was among the number of Franciscan Friars, who were witnesses of the King's marriage with Katherine of Arragon at Greenwich, which ceremonial the King would fain have denied to have taken place.

The king and his myrmidons were most eager to procure a recantation from Forest, and some trifling indulgences had, in the hope of his yielding, been accorded to him in prison.

Pitiful and questionable consolations these were, when chief among them was the liberty to visit his friend in the miserable dungeon where he died.

Forest looked sadly after little Francis as he was led away by the jailer.

"Alas, poor child!" he exclaimed. "Not long wilt thou be among the sufferers of this woeful time. Death visits thy sweet face with an aspect of beauty, and soon will thy Father who is in heaven call thee to a bright home!"

THE BISHOP OF GRAHAMSTOWN, CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

In connection with the opening of St. Aidan's Seminary, an account of which appeared in our columns a few weeks since, the Grahamstown 'Eastern Star' gives the following short sketch of the most Rev. Dr. Ricards. In speaking of the institution, that journal while according to the present Bishop the successful carrying out of the undertaking, through his untiring energy and perseverance, says the idea had its birth in the fertile brain of his predecessor, the Most Rev Dr Moran, whose translation to the See of Dunedin, made it impossible to carry out the movement he had initiated:—

The Right Rev James David Ricards, D.D., Bishop of Retimo, *i. p. i.*, and Roman Catholic Vicar Apostolic of the Eastern Districts of the Colony—was born in Wexford, Ireland, in the month of Jan., 1828. His father belonged to the medical profession, as did also two of the Bishop's brothers. One of the latter, the late Dr John Ricards, R.N., distinguished himself in one of the North-West expeditions in search of Sir John Franklin, but subsequently lost his life at Demerara, where, as surgeon of H.M.S. Galatea, he fell a victim to yellow fever, while heroically assisting the exhausted medical staff of that plague-stricken port. Unlike his father and brothers, however, the Bishop showed an early vocation for the ecclesiastical state; and

Like the spirit of a youth,
That means to be of note, began betimes.

Hence we find him entered as a pupil at St Peter's College, Wexford, as early as his sixth year! It is a remarkable fact that while at St Peter's he should have had, as one of his professors there, the late Father Murphy, of Port Elizabeth—the professor living to become subject and vicar-general under the prelate of his *quondam* pupil. At St Peter's the youth remained until of an age to enter the Royal College of Maynooth, passing there the severe matriculation examination for and into the School of Logic. His career in Maynooth was such that, had Providence destined him to remain in Ireland, his piety and learning would have brought him into early and distinguished prominence among the able men of his day. The writer has it on the authority of one of the Bishop's contemporaries at Maynooth that, even in those early days, his memory was so retentive and accurate, his learning so sound, and his mind so logical, that subjects which to ordinary students would be abstruse or difficult were by him mastered with astonishing ease and facility. During the year 1849 the late Dr Devereux—the first Roman Catholic Bishop of the Eastern Districts (also a Wexford man)—visited Ireland, and there met our young cleric, then in his sub-diaconate. The latter at once sought and obtained an *exeat* from his own diocese and joined his friend Dr. Devereux; and thus leaving family, friends, country, and rapid preferment there, which his talents fore-shadowed—all, for the unambitious, arduous, undistinguished career of a poor missionary priest,

Among new men, strange faces, other minds.

He arrived in the Belgian ship *Oceanic*, at Port Elizabeth, in December, 1849, and after a few days stay in Port Elizabeth, went on to Grahamstown. In those days education on the frontier was at a low ebb, and Father Ricards set to work at once and opened a first-class seminary. Some of his earlier pupils passed direct into the military and civil services, others adopted different professions, and are now scattered throughout the Colony, but all remember him with something akin to filial respect and reverence. Notwithstanding his clerical and scholastic duties, despite even the serious public calamity of a Kaffir war raging at the time, he still managed to give an additional impetus and importance to his work by editing the 'Colonist' newspaper. There are still many amongst us—though the paper has been long defunct—who remember the learning and ability displayed in the leading articles of the 'Colonist.' Thus quietly and unostentatiously the young priest laboured, educating the young, edifying the old, and benefitting all. After the death of his dear friend and Bishop, Dr Devereux, Father Ricards remained in charge at Grahamstown until the arrival of Dr. Moran. But the work he had gone through began to tell upon him, and he was allowed leave of absence from the Colony. His stay in Europe, however, was brief, and he returned to the "Settler City" full of zeal and with the old fidelity to his great work of education. About this time the Holy See conferred upon him the degree of D.D. Soon after his return he, in conjunction with Bishop Moran, started a "Catholic Young Men's Society" in Grahamstown, which seems to have been the precursor to the much larger but kindred fraternity of St. Patrick in Port Elizabeth. On the translation of Dr Moran to New Zealand, Dr Ricards was promoted to the vacant See at Grahamstown, and consecrated Bishop on the 18th June, 1871

—greatly to the joy and advantage of the Roman Catholics of the Province, and certainly to the honor of South Africa. Space does not admit of giving even a fair synopsis of Dr Ricards's labours in the cause of education. With his Lordship to conceive anything promotive of good education is to attempt it, and to attempt is to succeed. Of such a man it never can be said,

Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win
By fearing to attempt.

The schools he has already firmly established in Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown would alone win a lasting fame for any man in a Colony like this. But the Bishop's work in this respect is only in progress as yet. A few days will witness the opening of St. Aidan's College in Grahamstown, and which will hereafter become his best and grandest argument. This edifice, when furnished—and it is to be opened with great ceremony, next Wednesday, the 17th instant—will have cost something over £5,000, a sum raised, in scarcely more than a couple of years, by the Bishop from his people—with very little extraneous help, and certainly without aid or grant from State or Corporation. Of such a man the Colony may well be proud. Dr Ricards is not only remarkable for exceptional gifts of intellect, but he has the *savoir-faire* of readily and successfully imparting something at least of those gifts to less favored capacities. In the Western Districts (which he has never yet visited by the way) he is known, by repute only, as a popular lecturer and reader. As a public reader he is, said by some, to be *facile princeps* in the Colony, whether the subject be pathetic or humorous. For he

Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
That aged ears play truant at his tales;
And younger hearings are quite ravished;
So sweet and voluble in his discourse.

Full of classic lore and scientific knowledge, the Bishop has, nevertheless, in his conversation with others, all the deferential submission and simplicity of a student. Of singularly happy temperament himself, he cheers and encourages all who come in contact with him. As the Christian Bishop, too, his dignity is without *hauteur*; he is ever gentle to the weak, and paternal towards the erring, but stern and severe with the proud and impious; while to all

He is gracious if he be observed;
Having a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as the day for melting charity.

CATHOLIC UNION OF IRELAND.

The Catholic Union of Ireland has issued the following circular:—

The deep and systematic plans adopted by the enemies of the Catholic Church to uproot religion in almost every country in the world render it as imperatively the duty of Catholics in the present age as it was in the darkest ages of open persecution to unite for the defence of religion. For this reason the Catholic Union of Ireland has been founded. Its objects are:—

1. To organize the Catholics of the country for the defence of Catholic interests.
2. To maintain a spirit of devotion to the successor of St. Peter, and to use every legitimate means to obtain the restoration of the States of the Church.
3. To secure to the Catholics of Ireland the means of obtaining a sound Christian education.
4. To propagate true Catholic intelligence, and to contradict the false reports which are daily spread with regard to Catholicity.
5. To place, by means of lectures and libraries good instruction and wholesome reading within easy reach of all classes of the community.
6. To endeavour to eradicate the vice of intemperance.

The Catholic Union of Ireland has received the special blessing of the Sovereign Pontiff: and, though but a short time in existence, thousands of Catholics have been enrolled in its ranks. In the course of little more than a year, the Union has sent addresses of sympathy to the Holy Father, to the Bishop of Emerland, to Monsignor Mermillod, to the Catholic Union of Cologne, and to the persecuted Catholics of the German Empire: and has published an address to the Catholic people of Ireland. It adopted and forwarded to Mr Gladstone a declaration and resolutions on the all-important question of education. It memorialised Government relative to the spoliation of the religious foundations in Rome, and its president has been mainly instrumental in saving the Irish College property from confiscation. It has appointed divers committees for Catholic purposes, one of which published valuable articles relating to religion at home and abroad, and another is at present occupied with the question of libraries. It has opened communication with the Catholic Unions of Europe and America, and has thereby secured the means of always obtaining reliable information on Catholic subjects: and it places regularly before the country, by means of a column in the 'Freeman's Journal,' important Catholic intelligence.

It collected subscriptions for the relief of persecuted religious on the Continent, and is a safe channel through which to forward relief at any time to suffering Catholics abroad. It petitioned Government on the "Rock of Cashel Bill," and on Mr Newdegate's motion for the inspection of convents, and prepared a petition similar to the latter to be presented from every parish in Ireland. On the deputation to the Vatican in March, 1873, the Catholic Union of Ireland was represented; and it celebrated the 81st Anniversary of the birth of the Sovereign Pontiff by a solemn High Mass, at which His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop presided, and Very Rev Thomas Burke, O. P., preached a most eloquent sermon. It held two public meetings, at which speeches were delivered by the most eloquent speakers in Ireland. It has made arrangements to have lectures delivered on instructive and interesting topics. It has prepared a memorial to the Secretary of State for War, that Catholic soldiers be afforded further facilities for attending to their religious duties.

Other important matters at present engross the attention of the Union, which carefully watches Catholic interests, and by holding regular monthly and weekly meetings, is always prepared to take the most timely action.