

but we are not, and never have been, intolerant of truth, or freedom of speech, or fair discussion; and we call upon our contemporary to publish what he conceives to be proofs of our intolerance; but let him give our own words. By these we are content to be judged. Hitherto it has not been the custom of the 'Guardian' to let its readers hear ourselves speak; but, following the bad example of the 'Bruce Herald,' instead of allowing us to speak for ourselves, our contemporary has preferred to favor the public with his own gloss, which so far from truly representing us, has grossly misrepresented us.

The 'Guardian' continues, "The statement made by us in a former article, respecting the action taken by Pope SIXTUS IV. regarding the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, is strictly accurate, as every student knows." Our contemporary is in error. And, instead of being strictly accurate, the statement alluded to is not only inaccurate, but absolutely false. Here is the statement:—"Pope SIXTUS IV. . . . declared in 1470 that this"—the Immaculate Conception—"was a matter which might be decided either one way or the other with equal advantage." There is really no truth whatever in this statement of the 'Guardian.' Pope SIXTUS IV. did not make any such statement in 1470, or any other year. Let the Editor of the 'Guardian' give his authority for his statement; let him, if he can, refer the public to the document in which Pope SIXTUS IV. made the declaration. We deny, absolutely, that the POPE ever used the words attributed to him, or any similar words. The statement of the 'Guardian' is entirely untrue.

Our contemporary concludes thus:—"If our contemporary is wise in his generation (and we think he is) he will pursue a different course henceforth; and adopt the policy of conciliation rather than that of aggression." This is good, indeed, coming as it does from the 'Guardian,' which hardly ever loses an opportunity of publishing calumnies, as even in the present instance, against Catholics, the Church, and the Holy Father. It appears to us that his idea of conciliation amounts to this, that to conciliate the Editor of the 'Guardian' we should allow him to publish all sorts of calumnies against Catholics without daring to contradict him; and that his idea of aggression, so far as we are concerned, is an effort on our part to correct falsehood, clear up misunderstandings, explain our dogmas, which we ought to understand better than those who give so many proofs of knowing little or nothing about them, and prevent such journals as the 'Guardian' from attributing to Popes what they never said.

The 'Guardian' says that we are noticeable for our "bitter denunciations of all and sundry whose opinions do not harmonise in all respects with our own." But the Editor has not given any references, has not quoted any passages from us in proof or illustration of his general and sweeping charges; and, until he does so, we take the liberty of saying that his charges are without foundation. There are a great many whose opinions differ from ours, whom we have never attacked, to whom we have never even alluded. For example, there are several religious journals, and some secular ones too, in this colony which contain very much with which we do not agree, and yet so far from denouncing them, the NEW ZEALAND TABLET has never even alluded to them. Our principle is to respect every man's honest opinion, even though we may deplore its unsoundness and danger. But calumnies we must neither respect nor tolerate, and we cannot but repel the assaults made upon Catholicity openly and covertly by its enemies, particularly by the members of the secret societies, which are at present so bitterly hostile and indefatigable in their efforts to inflict injury on it. Our attitude from the beginning has been that of self-defence, and this it is which the 'Guardian' calls aggression and bitter denunciation. The fact is, the Editor of the 'Guardian' claims the right to publish every species of falsehood against us and all we hold most dear, and regards himself as the victim of intolerance when we deny his statements, and call attention to his unfairness and incorrect theological knowledge. In his estimation, liberality authorises him to say whatever he fancies, and forbids us to endeavor to set him right, and put the public on their guard against him. Fairplay, in his judgment, means that he should be absolutely free, and that we should be absolutely slaves. And so excited is he at the idea of being called to account for his untruths and injustice, that he has actually the hardihood to threaten us. What is it that he has in store, what is he about to do? We are somewhat curious on this point. But we suppose, to use a hackneyed phrase, *videbimus infra*.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

A MEETING of the Catholics of Dunedin was held in St. Joseph's Church on Tuesday for the purpose of presenting Father Coleman, the respected Vicar-General of the diocese with an address and purse of sovereigns on his return from his trip to England. The address was elegantly illuminated by Mr George, artist, Stafford street, and was much admired for the chasteness of its design. The address was read by Mr Dungan, the Hon. Sec. to the Testimonial Fund, and the purse handed to the rev. gentleman by Miss McKay on behalf of the Catholics of the diocese. His Lordship occupied the chair, the Rev. Father Higgins being also present at the ceremony. A full account of the proceedings will be found in another column.

The frightful calamity on board the Cospatrick, resulting in the horrible fate of close upon five hundred souls, has caused a thrill of horror wherever it has been known, and cast a gloom over the entire community. The bare thought of the awful sufferings and doom of the unhappy people on board of the ill-fated vessel, is calculated to make the heart turn sick, and the hideous picture of that huddled mass of humanity in the extremity of their hopeless despair rises up in imagination before our eyes, and the shrieks of agonising despair are borne to our ears, and fill our souls with horror. Of course in the present meagre amount of details to hand it is impossible to say how the disaster may have originated. It may have been that a portion of the cargo embraced items of a combustible nature—and from the rapidity with which the flames did their work of destruction, there are grounds for such a supposition—or it may be that the catastrophe has been the result of the carelessness of a passenger. However, to whatever cause it may be traced, the fact is apparent on this, as unfortunately it is upon similar occasions, that the means which are supposed to be a protection to life in cases of emergency were found sadly deficient. The report states that one hour only elapsed from the outburst of the flames, until the ill-fated vessel burnt to the waters edge, and disappeared for ever, and it would appear that during that period no efforts had been made for the victualling of the boats, the one hope from destruction. Thirty out of the hundreds of unhappy passengers succeeded in escaping from the burning vessel, twenty-seven of whom afterwards fell victims to the horrors of thirst and starvation, whilst the three survivors, who alone were left to tell the tale of woe, were saved by a means, the recital of which causes one to shudder and sicken with disgust. It were useless to dilate upon this sad calamity, which has hurried so many souls into eternity, and brought grief and lamentation to so many hearts. No doubt, the usual official inquiry will be held, and the stereotyped vote of censure passed as an offering to the manes of the devoted victims; and further precautions will be enforced until such time as a seeming immunity from accident will again lead to their relaxation, when the world will again be horrified with a repetition of some such calamity as that of the Cospatrick.

The first half-yearly meeting of the Onehunga Branch, No. 89, of the H.A.C.B.S. was held in St. Mary's Hall, Onehunga, on the 17th ult. for the purpose of electing officers for the next half-year, when the following were elected:—President, Bro. Charles Heenan; Vice-president, Bro. John McMahar; Secretary, Bro. Charles Lucas; Treasurer, Bro. Anthony O'Loughlin; Warden, Bro. John Farrell; Guardian, Bro. Patrick Purcell. The Secretary, Bro. Lucas, in returning thanks, for the continued confidence reposed in him, stated that although he was unable to congratulate the lodge on any great increase in their numbers, he was happy to say that its members proved by their position on the books, that they were financially and practically good Hibernians. He also referred to the difficulties met with in the formation of the lodge, particularly to the securing of the services of a medical man. The Onehunga lodge numbers thirteen members, exclusive of two honorary members, and when is borne in mind the very limited amount of population, and that the meeting above referred to is but the termination of the first half-year, the efforts of the residents for the establishment of the Hibernian Society are entitled to commendation.

We have to acknowledge from Messrs Clifford and Morris Fleet street, the receipt of a number of photographs of that universal favorite, Val Vose, and his valuable aids "Granny Brown" and "Johnny Trotter." The pictures are excellent specimens of art, and are most suitable for insertion in an album, for which purpose, no doubt, they have been printed. The make-up of "Granny" and her friend is so complete, and the execution of the photographs so perfect, as to lead one to the supposition they had been "taken from life."

THE misconception which is prevalent with regard to the Hibernian Society is somewhat singular. Time after time it has been stated in these columns and elsewhere that there is nothing of a secret nature in connection with that body, and that not only are its meetings open to representatives of the Press, but that their attendance on such occasions is invited. The Hibernian Association is purely a benefit society, having neither counter-signs passwords, nor secrets, the distinguishing difference between it and others of a kindred nature being the absence of all secrecy, and the obligation that its members should be practical Catholics, acting up to the teachings of the Church. The avidity with which persons have seized upon the supposition that it is a political organisation, and having done so, the persistency with which they cling to such an opinion, is worthy of a better cause; but we trust that this unequivocal and emphatic denial of such a statement, will have the effect of disabusing the minds of those who are not wilfully ignorant.

THE fortnightly meeting of the H.A.B.C.S. Catholic Benefit Society, was held in St. Joseph's Schoolroom, on Monday evening. The Balance Sheet, held over from last week, was submitted, which was of a most satisfactory character. On the motion of Bro. J. J. Connor, seconded by Bro. J. Moylan, it was resolved that £100 of the