

## WELLINGTON.

## FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI.

LAST Sunday, being the Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi, was celebrated with unusual pomp and splendour, and will be long remembered with much gratification by all those who had the privilege of being present at the Cathedral of St. Mary's. High Mass was sung by the Rev. Father Kearney, and an impressive discourse delivered by the Rev. Father Petit Jean on the Blessed Sacrament. The High Altar was much beautified for the occasion by the addition of six concentric semi-circular benches, gradually decreasing in circumference, on the apex of which was placed after the celebration of Mass the adorable God of the Altar on a splendid monstrance for the adoration of the faithful until after Vespers. The candelabra and candlesticks were of metal silvered and enamelled, exceedingly rich and beautiful. Between these were placed vases containing every variety of flowers, and when the tapers were lighted there was formed a *coup d'œil* of the most brilliant character. Notwithstanding the drizzling rain which continued all day, crowds of worshippers continued unremittently until Vespers commenced. At seven o'clock the church was filled to excess, all the available seats being occupied before service began. The Catholic Young Men's Society in their regalia occupied St. Joseph's Sanctuary, the Hibernians the front seats outside the rails and the girls dressed in white the benches in front of the High Altar and the Blessed Virgin's. After the Magnificat was sung the Rev. Father Kearney ascended the pulpit and preached an eloquent sermon on the Feast of Corpus Christi, which was listened to by a mixed but highly respectable audience. Then came the procession—first, about one hundred girls dressed in white with white veils and crowned with wreaths of white roses, whose innocent voices warbling out the touching words of the hymn "Sweet Sacrament, we Adore Thee," coupled with their order and decorum, showed what pains-taking zeal must have been bestowed by the good nuns on their cultivation. Next came the torch-bearers—members of the Wellington Catholic Young Men's and the Hibernian Australian Catholic Benefit Societies, in full regalia. The Blessed Sacrament, carried under a dais by the Rev. Father Petit Jean, preceded by thurifers, came next. After which the Rev. Father Kearney gave solemn benediction. I am happy to say that many Protestants, who were witnesses of this joyful festivity, evinced by their respectful and silent behaviour that they were deeply awed by his public profession of Catholic faith. May God Almighty grant abundant grace and long life to our dearly beloved pastors, whose untiring zeal and devotion to God's glory are ever ready to exhibit in all their religious beauty for the edification and instruction of their attached flock the splendours of our ceremonious worship.

## FORMATION OF A BRANCH OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL'S SOCIETY.

A preliminary meeting was held at the School-room, Hill street, last Monday evening for the above purpose. Father Petit Jean being called to the chair, explained the object of the meeting, which was to form a Society under the patronage of St. Vincent to render spiritual and temporal assistance to the deserving poor, which, according to the word of our Lord, we shall always have amongst us. Twenty-five members were enrolled, and the following gentlemen appointed as officers, to whom the duty of forming a draft or the rules is committed:—Mr. Gardner, president; Mr. McDonald, vice-president; Mr. Sheridan, treasurer; and Mr. Crofts, secretary. Two cases of distress were brought under the notice of the meeting, which were left to Father Petit Jean to be dealt with according to his discretion. After a vote of thanks being passed to the reverend chairman, the meeting adjourned for a fortnight.

Wellington, 3rd June, 1875.

## DEATH OF SIR JOHN GRAY.

DUBLIN, April 9 1875.—Sir John Gray, member of Parliament for Kilkenny, and proprietor of the 'Freeman's Journal,' of Dublin, died yesterday.

## SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

Sir John Gray, Knight, and member of Parliament, was an eminent journalist, a leading politician, and a very successful British legislator. He was the son of the late Mr. John Gray, of Claremorris, in the county Mayo, Ireland, by his wife Elizabeth, the only child of Mr. George Melson. He was born in the year 1815, and was educated in Trinity College, Dublin. He studied medicine as a profession, and was in due season admitted a licentiate of the College of Physicians. He entered the field of politics early in life, attaching himself to the party of O'Connell, and has since continued to rank as an advanced reformer. He was elected an Alderman of the city of Dublin, and was subsequently chosen Lord Mayor of the Irish metropolis for the years 1868-69, but he declined to serve. He became part proprietor of the 'Dublin Freeman's Journal,' and was afterwards owner of the paper, a very valuable property. He was untiring as industrious and had much to do with the undertaking of Varty Water Works, by the completion of which Dublin obtained a supply of water. The Earl of Carlisle, as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, conferred the honour of Knighthood on Dr. Gray in the year 1863, in recognition of his services as chairman of the Water Works Commission. The late Lord Palmerston entertained a very high opinion of Dr. Gray as a reformer, a patriot and gentleman, and was accustomed to ask his extra parliamentary opinion on many subjects connected with the welfare of Ireland. Dr. Gray moved resolutions in the House of Commons for the disestablishment of the Irish Church. He also introduced, with Mr. Cogan and Sir Colman O'Loghlen, the Official Oaths and the Transubstantiation Declaration Abolition bills. He advocated the ballot and tenant right. Sir John Gray leaves four sons and two daughters.

## EXPULSION OF SISTERS OF CHARITY.

In the early part of March, at about 4 o'clock in the morning, 140 Sisters of Charity left the Montparnasse railway station at Paris, and proceeded two and two towards their mother-house in the Rue du Bac. They were the first detachment of the 410 Sisters of St. Vincent of Paul, driven out of Mexico by the liberal and masonic government of that country. As those good Sisters directed the education of the greater portion of the young girls of Mexico, the Government, fearing the indignation of its subjects, used a certain degree of prudence in its impious projects. First they proposed to the Sisters to lay aside the habit of their Order. The Sisters replied with a positive refusal. "Very well! if you will not lay aside your habit, you will have to leave Mexico."—"And we will leave it, seeing that while you preach universal liberty, you refuse it to us." Taken aback by such firmness, the wicked magistrates sent for all the religious and began to question them separately. They wanted to know: 1. The motive of their resistance. 2. Whether they were acting freely. 3. Whether they were not the victims of the despotism of their superiors. The unanimous reply was this:—"We are bound, but only by our vows, and never will we break them in order to obey man. The only pressure put upon us is that of duty and conscience. We are prepared to leave."

Ashamed of being done by women, the tyrants decreed that the Sisters of Mexican origin (they number 355) could not leave the country without the permission of their parents. But, the parents being consulted by Government, all answered that they gave their dear exiles leave to execute the arduous duties of their vocation. These impious proceedings of those in authority was the subject of a most energetic protest on the part of the Mexican ladies. Here are some remarkable passages:—"We are convinced we shall not be attended to. Party spirit is blind to everything, and to execute his orders, the freemason is ready to set the world in a blaze. Notwithstanding we are resolved to protest, so that the true sentiments may be known of the people of whom we form a half, in order that the world shall not attribute to our nation the infamies of its representatives, and in order to make a solemn affirmation of our faith and to give relief to our just indignation. You seize most holy institutions; but you are not authorised to act so even by that mass of stupidities called by you a Constitution. You proclaim liberty and you persecute the priests; you talk of individual guarantees and you proscribe the ecclesiastical dress; you preach independence and you enslave the Church; you denounce liberty of association, and you exile 400 Mexican ladies who are guilty, heinous crime as it is, of forming a society together for the purpose of doing all the good they can to their fellows. You deserve right well of the masters to whom you have sworn servitude: freemasonry has reason to be proud of you. But, in revenge, the anathemas of the Church blast you and the peoples' curse is on you. By your foolish crime, you have reduced numerous families to be without bread, you have deprived of their foster mothers thousands of little orphans, you leave without education entire populations, without help hundreds of sick, without comfort an immense multitude of wretched. And now, we declare before the whole world, that he who abuses his office as you do, is a traitor; he who assails the Sisters of Charity is a cowardly varlet; he who signs decrees against the religion of his fathers and turns himself into a persecutor of it, may be a very good deputy of the masonic lodges, but not of the Mexican people. We declare that we will disobey, whenever it may be possible, the decrees of the modern Julians, and we will obey even to death our Pastors when they shall address us whether from the depths of a dungeon, or from the top of the scaffold. We declare in fine, that we no longer regard as husband, brothers, or children those who have had a hand in exiling the Sisters of Charity and we are prepared to suffer any persecution that our protest may draw upon us."

## SECESSION FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND OF THE REV. G. THOMPSON.

THE Rev. Gordon Thompson, M.A., curate of Christchurch, Albany Street, has given the following explanation to the Bishop of London of his reasons for resigning the curacy, and, joining the Catholic Church:—

MY LORD,—It is my duty, though owing to your great kindness a duty I shrink from, to inform you that I have resigned the curacy of Christchurch, Albany Street. The reasons that compel me to take this step are chiefly the three following:—1. Upon more mature reflection I can in no way satisfy either my conscience or my reason that the Anglican Church is one and the same with that which our Lord built upon St. Peter, with the promise that nothing should prevail against it. 2. In the Nicene Creed the following words are to be found:—"I believe in One, Catholic and Apostolic Church." I cannot therefore any longer act as though there were two or six. There may be many sects; but the Church, i.e., our Lord's Body, can be but one. 3. That, under the existing relations between the Anglican Church and the State, I believe it to be impossible for her to be faithful to primitive doctrine, even if she were not guilty of schism. Under these circumstances, I have sought reception into the Catholic Church. My residence abroad for two years as a consular chaplain enabled me to view the English Church at a distance and in comparison with the Catholic Church. I became gradually convinced that the spirit of comprehension which animated the Reformers, resulted in a compromise of the great truths of Christianity. The way, moreover, in which the Anglican Church has accepted the recent judgments and legislative acts convinces me the more strongly that her watchwords are "Establishment and Expediency." I have only to thank your lordship for the great kindness I have ever received from you from my first introduction until now; but I know that it is impossible to soften the judgment of others in a step of this character, and that no course is open to your lordship but to condemn it.—I have the honour to be your lordship's humble servant,

GORDON THOMPSON.