

ST. JOSEPH'S BRANCH H.A.C.B.S., DUNEDIN.

The annual meeting of the above Branch was held on Tuesday, the 6th inst., in the Christian Brother's School, Rattray street. The following were elected office-bearers for the ensuing term:—President, Mr. J. O'Connor; Vice-President, Mr. W. Carr; Secretary, Mr. R. A. Dunne; Treasurer, Mr. D. Mahony; Warden, Mr. S. Simmonds; Guardian, Mr. D. McDonnell; Trustees, Messrs. Fenton, Kennelly, and J. Casey; Auditors, Messrs. Carr and Harris. Of the many useful institutions attached to the Catholic Church in Australasia, the Hibernian Society is perhaps the best, because it endeavours to keep warm the faith of its members in the good old Church, while it gives hope to them that if they should be afflicted in any way, the Society, with the exercise of that Christian charity which is its brightest gem, alleviates their distress and makes their life upon this earth not altogether devoid of comfort and sympathy. The aims and objects of the Society should meet with a ready response from the Catholic body as a whole, and they can show the love for this noble institution in no better way than by joining its ranks either as benefit or honorary members. The membership of the Dunedin Branch is steadily increasing, and it is increasing in a very healthy way from the fact that numbers of the younger men of the community are coming into its fold. The value of the assets of this Branch over its liabilities is now close upon a thousand pounds sterling.

Dublin Notes.

(From the National Papers.)

THERE is not even the semblance of a whimper, not to say a yelp, from Smith-Barry himself, now. After the terrible flagellation he received from Mr. Lane, M.P., and the exposure he brought on himself by publishing his own and Sir John Arnott's correspondence, he is as meek as a whipped hound. Not a single word has he ventured to say in reply to the storm of righteous indignation which has been beating about his ears ever since. This silence is more eloquent than words. It shows that the criminal admits his guilt, and has neither the heart to brazen it out nor the grace to do penance for it. No man, within our recollection, occupied so disgraceful a position in the public eye as this pseudo-aristocrat, on whom both contempt and hope seem to be utterly thrown away. Between his doings in the South and those of Olphert in the North, they have contrived to invest the name and aspect of landlordism with a new opprobrium—a feat which up to their advent in Irish affairs seemed as impossible as gilding refined gold or painting the unpaintable lily.

One of the most notable features of the present agitation, one of the most effective answers to the infamous Coercion Act are the honours and rewards thus heaped by the people on the coercion-created criminals. Mr. Golfour's main policy was to put on each one of his political victims the outward marks and tokens of a degraded criminal; his hope was that the people would be content to judge him by those outward tokens and desert and despise him. Never was a bigger or more brutal blunder. Imprisonment under the Coercion Act is one patent of nobility at present current in Ireland. In this country the coercion criminals—priests, members of Parliament, Lord Mayor and Mayors, down to the humblest peasant—are the most honourable and the most honoured men in the community. Any decent man who has not been to prison feels more or less ashamed of himself.

With deep regret we have to announce the death of Judge O'Hagan. He was one of the brave and brilliant band of young patriots of '48. His poems are amongst the brightest and most spirited of that stirring time. Like so many of his gifted contemporaries, in later life Judge O'Hagan rose to high distinction. But in justice it must be said he was always a '48 man in heart, and proud of the title. He was a lawyer of profound erudition, but it may be suspected that his inclinations leant more to literature, which he assiduously cultivated to the last, enriching the language with many valuable volumes. Unfortunately, perhaps, for his own reputation and peace of mind, he accepted the position (in '81) of head of the Irish Land Commission Court. We do him the justice of believing that his intention from first to last was to give full fair-play to the Irish tenants, but the very gentleness of his character unfitted him for the post. More especially in later years, when his health was breaking, he was overpowered by the pressure of landlord influence, and did not resist with sufficient firmness the many acts of flagrant injustice perpetrated by the Land Commission on the tenants. Peace be to his ashes, oblivion for his weaknesses, and love and honour to his memory. He was an Irishman whom all honest Irishmen can join to respect and lament.

In spite of the utmost efforts of the Government the secret has leaked out that the Invincible, dynamitard, assassin, and perjured informer, Delaney, has been released by an indulgent Government in return for his evidence courageous, though false, at the Forgeries' Commission. The public has not forgotten the intercepted letter from Delaney to a high prison official which was published in the *Freeman*, in which he claimed his release as his reward for his services at the Commission, and threatening exposure if it was delayed. He has been released accordingly. This is the premium put on perjury. The prisoners who like John Daly and the others refused to perjure themselves at the Commission were tortured; the willing perjurer was released. More will be heard of this, we doubt not, when Parliament reassembles.

It will be good news to all lovers of ingenious fiction that the *Daily Express* has arranged for the "Immediate republication, in pamphlet form, of our Special Commissioner's very interesting reports of the Chief Secretary's tour in Connemara and Donegal. As our readers will remember, our representative was the only member of the Press who accompanied Mr. Balfour from the commencement of his tour." Might we suggest that a few footnotes from United Ire-

land would make more manifest the ingenious imagination of the author, and increase the value of the work. For example, one of the most startling statements in the letters was the glowing description of the triumphal arch erected in honour of Mr. Golfour by the rejoicing inhabitants of Mulranny. A trustworthy correspondent wrote to inform us that the triumphal arch was a strip of calico with 'Welcome' printed on it with tar, constructed, set up, and guarded by the police before a soul in the district knew that Mr. Golfour was coming. We printed the letter prominently in our last issue over the signature of our correspondent. It was copied into the columns of our vigilant contemporary, the *Evening Telegraph*. But the *Daily Express* has failed to do justice to the brilliant imagination of its commissioner by transferring the letter to its respectable columns.

All expectation has been transcended by the results already achieved in the American mission. The envoys have had a glorious reception. The Governors of nearly every State in the Union, the foremost men in religion of every creed, in politics, in literature have come forward spontaneously to take the most public part in their welcome as the accredited representatives of the Irish people, and help on their mission with all the weight of their influence, public and personal. It is impossible for an Irishman to read the reports of the circumstances attending the first meetings which the envoys addressed without a thrill of pride in the men who have secured this recognition of Ireland's status, and gratitude to the gallant people who have proffered this great national welcome. Philadelphia was the first place where the delegates spoke, and the great old Quaker City sustained its reputation for love of freedom and munificent generosity on the occasion. Twenty thousand dollars were poured into the treasury of the mission as the cash result of bare y two meetings in that city. This is but a crude way of putting the mode in which the delegation was received in the capital of Pennsylvania, but it will serve a useful purpose. Our news columns will tell how Archbishop Ryan, how the great leading lights of other creeds, how Governor Jackson, how all the foremost men of Philadelphia thronged the Grand Opera House—one of the finest and most spacious in the world—there to testify that the cause of Ireland lies close to the heart of the men of the City of Brotherly Love, and that they do not forget that when William Penn was hunted and persecuted in England he found in Ireland help, encouragement, and manly hearts and hands to aid him in his great peaceful colonising expedition.

Mr. Balfour's broad farce of an excursion to Donegal came to an inglorious close, week ending October 10. He had travelled at express speed over the region where the blessings of a prospective light railway had made the journey; but as he approached those places where wholesale evictions, star-chamber and battering-ram have been the only visible evidences of his philanthropic intentions, the journey became troublesome. At Dungloe a strange scene was enacted. Amongst those who sought admission to his august presence was Mr. Swift MacNeill, M.P. The official squad who kept the doors at the hotel did not want to admit the hon. member, but Mr. Balfour, making a show of magnanimity, desired them to let Mr. MacNeill pass in. After a few of the sycophantic order, cleric and lay, had unfolded their views on the cuddling statesmanship required for that division of Donegal, Mr. MacNeill opened fire. He put his views before Mr. Balfour in very plain terms. He wanted to know from that gentleman why he claimed to be a benefactor to the Donegal people while he was helping a calous-hearted old plunderer like Olphert to exterminate them and by what means he could reconcile the character of a philanthropist with that of a Minister who lent the forces of the Crown to fling out even at that very moment, in bitter winter weather, several hundred families threatened with starvation. He read for Mr. Balfour's edification some sentences regarding Mr. Olphert's conduct which we ourselves penned some time ago, and demanded some answers to the points which the Chief Secretary's grossly inconsistent conduct raised. But the valorous Chief Secretary shrunk from the challenge. He thought it best to dissemble and evade. He would not discuss those burning questions with a representative of Donegal, but hinted very broadly that if they were the general sentiments of the people in that district no light railways or fish-piers or anything else meaning expenditure of public money should be had there. He was in his usual House of Commons form when delivering his reply to Mr. MacNeill—sneering, flippant, and insulting. The same evening the Chief Secretary crossed the country to Gweedore, but he did not remain long in that theatre of his beneficent policy. After an interview with two brother chips, the sanctimonious old Olphert, and his agent, Hewson, he saw no one else, but retired to bed and off at cock-crow next morning to Letterkenny en route to Dublin. It was wise that he did so; for it is well known that the people of Gweedore were preparing for him a reception more in accordance with his claims as a great humanitarian statesman than that accorded him by the small shoneen knots who had previously personated the sentiments of Donegal regarding this impudent incursion of Mr. Balfour's.

The real feeling of the people of that county found voice over the matter very quickly. They lost no time in telling the hypocritical Coercionist how they loathed his rule and scorned his bribes. At Derrybeg on Sunday a great public meeting was held for the purpose of putting the views of the people on record. Mr. Swift MacNeill again spoke, and denounced the impending evictions in Falcarragh and the sickening conduct of the Chief Secretary in permitting the atrocity while he was posing before the world as a benefactor of the people. Miss Maud Gonne, a patriotic young Irish lady, who has done much in the way of rousing up sympathy in England with the Irish cause by public and private action, addressed the assembly also in stirring style, exhorting them to stand by the Campaigners of Falcarragh and make the work of eviction as protracted and difficult an operation for the extermination as they possibly could. The Letterkenny Nationalists also held a meeting to protest against the sycophantic action of the few who had disgraced Donegal; and Father Stephens, who has a pretty good knowledge of what Balfourism really means, voiced the true sentiments of the county about the system in terms of eloquent indignation.