

Notes

Referendum and Conscience

The 'N.Z. Times,' in a vigorous leader dealing with the Bible-in-schools deputation which waited on the Premier last week, stresses a point on which the 'Tablet' has over and over again insisted, and to which special attention was directed in the Bishops' manifesto. Our contemporary says: 'The persistency of the Bible-in-schools party is exemplified in the modest request of the deputation that waited on the Premier yesterday. Foiled in the expectation of an opportunity of enforcing their views under a general Referendum Bill, the members of the party attempted to persuade Mr. Seddon to bring down a special measure referring to a vote of the people the question of introducing Bible-reading as part of the public school curriculum. We are glad to see that the Premier took firm ground in his reply. . . . Mr. Seddon was undoubtedly right when he said that many members who supported the Referendum Bill, in the innocuous form in which it was passed, would strenuously oppose any proposal to submit to the decision of electors the single issue of Bible-reading in schools. It is to be regretted, however, that the Premier has not yet abandoned the idea of referring to the popular vote a question which involves rights of conscience. He told the deputation that the people should not be "deprived of their right of expressing an opinion" on the question of Bible-teaching in schools, in other words, he recognises the right of a majority to impose upon the minority the teaching of a particular form of religion. This, as we have repeatedly shown, is an absolutely untenable proposition in a country where freedom of conscience prevails. The subject of religious teaching is the one thing that cannot be decided by any majority of legislators or people, and it is utterly futile to talk of any referendum or plebiscite on the question.'

A Painful Prospect

Ever since his display of foolishness over the Rev. Ferguson's visit to the Pope the Rev. Dill Macky has been a butt for every joker, and has been mercilessly lampooned in the Australasian Press. Amongst others, a Victorian rhymester thus depicts a painful possibility ahead of the great Orangeman. The verses may serve as a mild counterblast to the 'Guy Fawkes' lay that has been perpetrated at South Dunedin:

"All flesh is grass," the preacher said—
 "All flesh is grass.
 When all of us are gone and dead,
 'Twill come to pass
 That living flesh where blood runs red
 Shall turn to grass."

What news, alas! for Orangemen—
 All flesh is grass!
 What woes will be Dill Macky's when
 'Twill come to pass
 His living flesh shall turn again
 To bright GREEN grass!

A New Use for Home Piety

A writer in 'Macmillan's Magazine' describes a new use of piety in the home: 'I had a cook,' he says, 'who could not read, or even tell the hour by the clock, but she boiled eggs with perfect accuracy. When asked one day, "But how do you know when they are ready, Chucha?" she answered with a smile which showed all her fine teeth, "Senor, I boil them by the Credo." She had been taught, like other Mexican village girls, to recite daily the Apostles' Creed. She not only found the devotion helpful spiritually but she accidentally ascertained also that the time occupied in saying the words did nicely to boil eggs with. She put the eggs in the pot—in the coffee-pot with the coffee, but that is a mere detail—and began to say her creed. At "Amen" the eggs were ready.'

Catching Both Sides

The Boston 'Evening Recorder' recalls an entertaining instance of the ease with which Mr. William Redmond, M.P., was able to 'play out' both sides of the House of Commons when he felt disposed. On one occasion he rose to speak in the House, says the 'Recorder,' and there came a question, hurled at him from the right side of the House:

'Will you vote for this Bill if it comes up?'

Mr. Redmond looked from one side of the House to the other and slowly answered:

'I will—'

Immediately the right side of the House burst into a storm of applause. But Mr. Redmond continued, as soon as he could be heard:

'—not—'

Then the storm came from the left side, and as soon as it subsided for a moment he completed what he started:

'—answer that question.'

And perfect silence reigned on both sides.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

A successful euchre party, in aid of the home for the aged poor to be opened at Anderson's Bay next month, was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Wednesday evening of last week.

On All Souls' Day a Solemn Requiem Mass for the faithful departed was celebrated in St. Joseph's Cathedral by his Lordship the Bishop, Rev. Father Murphy, Adm., being deacon, and Rev. Father O'Malley, sub-deacon.

The Rev. Father Brown, S.J., and Rev. Father Roney, S.J., are conducting a mission during the present week in Palmerston. Rev. Father Claffey, S.J., opened a mission in Port Chalmers on Sunday, and a mission will be opened in Mosgiel next Sunday by Rev. Father Brown.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday from the 11 o'clock Mass until Vespers. In the evening there was the usual procession, in which the children of the parish schools and the members of the Sacred Heart Society took part.

In the course of an article, entitled 'The Press of Otago' which appeared in the 'Evening Star' of the 1st inst., the writer has the following to say of the 'New Zealand Tablet'—'Representing the Catholic faith, the "Tablet" was set on a rock on 3rd May, 1873, by Bishop Moran. Of commanding ability, secured on uncompromising lines, marshalled by a phalanx of literary athletes, supported by a crowd of devoted adherents, and with a singleness of aim, it is a power which must be reckoned with—respected.'

The members of St. Mary's Literary and Social Club (Milton) brought a very successful session to a pleasant close by a social gathering held in St. Mary's School-room. The Very Rev. Father O'Neill presided and there was a large attendance. After an enjoyable hour at cards and games, a short programme was rendered, consisting of songs by Misses Richmond and Leaven, and Messrs. T. Leaven, J. Hand, and P. Hynes; recitation by Miss Richmond; reading by Mr. J. A. Scott; and step dances by Messrs. P. Hynes and W. Kirby. All the performers acquitted themselves with credit, Miss Richmond's fine singing and reciting being specially appreciated. At the close of the programme ample justice was done to the refreshments, kindly and liberally supplied by the lady members of the Club.

Among the successful competitors in the recent Dunedin competitions were the following pupils of the Dominican Nuns:—Miss Hannah Sweeney (winner of first prize in the mezzo soprano solo); third prize, 'Swallows'; third prize, Morag's 'Fairly glen'; Miss Violet Frazer (winner of the first prize, 'The trout'); second prize, 'The swallows'; third prize, 'Down the vale'; Miss Amelia Major (winner of second prize, accompanied song, 'Angles guard thee'); Miss Kathleen Collins, (winner of second prize in recitation, 'Killed at the Ford'); and Misses Myra Montague and Minnie Paton (winners of first prize in pianoforte duet, 'Tarantelle').

A disastrous fire, resulting in the destruction of almost the whole of the township, occurred at Collingwood on Sunday night.

The Marlborough Exhibition Buildings have been sold at auction for £560. The price realised will give the committee a surplus of between £70 and £80.