

stern-foremost, carrying with her three hundred and forty-five of her living freight. There were scenes of wild-panic and a mad scramble for life when it became clear that the vessel was about to founder. The newspapers to hand tell stories of primitive savagery in the struggle for life. It was as on the fateful day when the 'Bourgogne' was sunk off Nova Scotia.

Happily, the story of the loss of the 'Sirio' is lighted up by scenes of splendid heroism, too. Among the drowned were the Catholic Archbishop of Para (Brazil) and the Catholic Bishop of San Pablo. Both (as stated by the cables at the time) were drowned. But the cable-messages did not tell how the two devoted prelates gave to others the life-belts that were pressed upon them, and how (as the correspondent of the London 'Daily Telegraph' wrote) 'the Bishop of San Pablo displayed stoic calmness, standing on the deck of the doomed vessel and giving absolution "in articulo mortis"'. The worthy prelate, adds the correspondent, 'continued his ministrations until he was swept into the waves. His last act before meeting death with Christian fortitude was to give up his lifebelt to another person in the water.' Reuter's Agency also tells a pathetic story of a young monk who hung on to the rigging, up to his neck in the water, blessing the people and praying for them, and refusing to make any attempt to look after his own safety.

Somewhat similar scenes were witnessed when the 'Bourgogne' went down in 1898. There were on board five priests—four French and one German. They went about among their terrified shipmates, absolving them and consoling them on the brink of their liquid grave—making no effort to save their own lives, but busying themselves to the last that others might die happily. Here is a description from a New York daily paper that will bear quoting:—

'The priests on board the 'Bourgogne' exhibited sublime courage. When all hope was gone they passed among the stricken passengers on the deck, quieting them, and warning them to prepare for their end. Large groups gathered around the priests, kneeling and praying, and, as the ship sagged down deeper and deeper, received absolution. In this posture, the priests with hands uplifted, the people kneeling in a swaying circle around them, they sank beneath the water'.

On the 'Sirio', as on the 'Bourgogne', the Catholic pastors died with sublime heroism, performing their sacred duties to the last.

'Birreligion'

Mr. Birrell's Bill for the endowment of Nonconformity in England is passing through the gates of tribulation in the House of Lords. By the time that it is through, its author will probably find some difficulty in recognising it. Of the proposed State-made 'Birreligion,' Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., said:—

'I hold to the conviction I have always held, that no Irish Catholic, or English Catholic, should be subject to any inequality, either in his schools or anything else because of his religious convictions. True religious equality involves equal treatment of the Catholic school with the Protestant school, and I could never understand how any broad-minded Protestant could fail to see that, however they might describe the religion taught in the State schools of the country, whether simple Bible, simple Christian, or undenominational teaching, or common Protestant teaching. Whatever claims they might be able to make upon that point, to a Catholic it is Protestantism. We have never objected to Protestants teaching Protestantism in their schools; but we make the demand, and we shall never depart from it by so much as a hair's breadth, that if the Protestant is to teach his faith to the child in the Protestant school the right is equal that the Catholic shall teach Catholicity in the Catholic school.'

'What the fate of the Bill may be', said Lord Halifax (Anglican); 'I shall not venture to predict, but this I do know, that if it passes in anything like its present form, resistance to it will not cease. On the contrary, it will be but the beginning of the battle. Such resistance would mean a religious war in every parish and municipality in England. The Bill attacks the deepest convictions of those who put the integrity of the Christian faith before all else; and, painful as such a strife will be, it will be inevitable.' Mr. Redmond's forecast is this: 'Either this Bill will never pass into law at all, or else it will be amended in such a way as to make it at least tolerable for the Catholic schools.' But even in the last resort, there remains an alternative to those who object to the proposed scheme of endowing Nonconformity and closing and in part confiscating the religious schools. The united 'passive resistance' that Catholics, Anglicans, and other dissidents, could put up against the Nonconformity of the Birrell Bill would be sufficient to wreck any measure. The lesson will not, we presume, be lost upon Catholics in New Zealand. 'Passive resistance' is a big gun that even Mr. Birrell can neither capture nor spike.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

On Monday evening Rev. Father Cleary gave a lecture to the South Dunedin Catholic Social and Literary Club on 'The Romance of Gold-seeking in Australia.' There was a large attendance.

All the pupils presented by the Sisters of Mercy, South Dunedin, and Mosgiel, were successful at the recent music examination held in connection with Trinity College, London. The following is the list:—Junior honors, Agnes Brown, 100; Rubena Heward, 96 (Mosgiel); Gertrude Carmody, 89; Maggie Neylon, 83; Winifred Cheyne, 80 (Mosgiel); Catherine Walsh, 80 (Mosgiel). Junior pass, Violet Leary 75 (Mosgiel); Katie Robertson, 74; Dora Hewald, 65 (Mosgiel). Preparatory, Emily McAnelly, 100; Reby Roy, 90; Mary Lawless, 87; Cassie Mulholland, 79; Annie Jennings, 79.

The fifth annual road race from Port Chalmers to Pelichet Bay, promoted by the Dunedin Harriers, took place on Saturday afternoon, when the enthusiasm displayed and the interest that was centred around the event, despite the wretched weather, plainly showed that the fixture is one of the most important of the harrier season. The race resulted in a win for Mr. J. Swanson, of St. Joseph's Club. Mr. Swanson (who will hold the Hooper Challenge Cup for the ensuing 12 months, and also receives a trophy from the Dunedin Harriers) in this race made his second appearance in athletic circles, having competed in the same race last year, not being successful on that occasion. In providing the winner for 1906 the St. Joseph's Club is to be congratulated, and the popularity of the win was seen at the gathering in the hall after the race. Mr. P. O'Gorman of the same club received a trophy for making the best time as a novice.

St. Joseph's Hall was crowded on Friday evening when the Very Rev. Dean Burke, of Invercargill, delivered a most interesting lecture under the auspices of St. Joseph's Men's Club. The Rev. Father Coffey presided. Dean Burke said he had some difficulty in selecting a subject, but after consideration he had decided to deal with the career of a man whose name was perhaps unknown to most of those present—Dr. Ives, at one time Bishop of North Carolina, and one of the most distinguished of that long line of Americans who have made their submission to the Catholic Church during the last sixty years. Dean Burke prefaced his account of the life of Dr. Ives by a graphic description of the condition of Catholics in the United Kingdom prior to the granting of Catholic Emancipation. The subject of his lecture was in early years a Presbyterian, but later on joined the Episcopalian Church, of which he was subsequently ordained minister, eventually being appointed Bishop of North Carolina. Whilst preparing a lecture to be delivered before the North Carolina Historical Society he was struck with the misrepresentations of the historical works then in vogue. The discovery was a great shock to him. He then began a study of the works of the Fathers of the Church, and the more he read of these the more unsettled became his religious convictions. In his difficulties he applied for counsel and advice to his brother bishops, but the