

The Quackery Bill

'Hansard' No. 6, of the second session, 1906, is before us. It contains a report of the debate on Mr. Hornsby's Quackery and Other Frauds Prevention Bill. There is hardly a dull line in it, and we could well wish that it were distributed in every household in New Zealand. For obvious reasons, some portions of the debate are scarcely quotable here. We may, however, be permitted to reprint a few warning tit-bits. Mr. Hornsby loquitur :—

'For several years prior to 1892 there were exposures of a horrifying nature in this Colony, and medical men, whose names I shall not mention, discovered in the rooms of innocent but very foolish girls pamphlets which were issued by these blackguards and sent into this Colony. These girls had these pamphlets in their rooms. There was a tremendous outcry at the time, and that was what decided the late Mr. Downie Stewart to bring in and pass through the Legislature the Offensive Publications Act.'

Here is a glimpse into the wiles and ways of the oily-tongued 'cancer-curing' fraud :—

'Not long ago in this province a charlatan paid a visit to two unfortunate people who were dying of cancer, and said he could cure them. He administered to them an application which is perfectly well-known to the medical fraternity, which drives the complaint inwards. The unfortunate people paid him, I believe, in one instance £20, and in the other £25. These people suffered the tortures of the damned for weeks and weeks, and then died a miserable death'.

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One of the matters insisted upon by many of the speakers was the wholesale intimidation and blackmailing that are carried on by advertising quacks. Many of these, having once got hold of their victims, 'take very good care', said Mr. Major, 'never to let them go again while there is a drop of blood in the shape of money in their pockets'. Intimidation and robbery (said Mr. Poole) are 'going on in a wholesale fashion'. Mr. Hornsby gave, as a typical instance in point, the case of a young lad who fell into 'the clutches of a scoundrel who advertises in a large number of papers in the Colony at the present moment' :—

'This villain got into touch with the lad, sent him medicine—which, of course, did him no good—and when the young fellow ceased to correspond with the vampire—when he did not reply further to his communications—he received a letter threatening to expose him to his father and friends if he did not send so much money by return of mail. He had already sent £10 to the scoundrel, who wanted £10 more. The alternative was exposure. The lad came to me and told me his pitiful story. He had not any money, and he did not know where to get any. I said: "You give me that letter, and I will deal with this gentleman so that you will not be troubled any more by him".

I took the letter to my solicitor, who wrote that person such a letter as closed the correspondence. We have never heard from that person since, and this lad has not been again troubled by him. But how about those lads who have no friends to go to? How about those who are afraid or ashamed to say anything? 'Some of them are tempted to steal and so get into trouble, and some of them go into the lunatic asylums. There is evidence, Sir, that the victims of these harpies to-day are to be found in the mental hospitals of the Colony'.

Other and still more heart-riving cases of blackmailing and terrorism were related during the debate. This sort of thing (said Mr. Hornsby) 'is going on every day in this Colony. The blackmailer knows no pity. He pursues his victim, even though he drives him to a lunatic asylum or the grave. And I say this, from a knowledge of the fact: that when one of them has done with his victim, and squeezed all out of him he can, he passes his letters on to another of the fraternity, who comes at the victim from another direction, and threatens him with all sorts of pains and penalties, and with exposure, if he does not send along some money.' We reprint these extracts from 'Hansard' as a warning to our people, and especially to our young people, to keep out of the grip of the variegated infamy that lies beneath the serene, plausible, and brazen-faced audacity of the advertising quack.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The following is a list of pupils from the Convent of Mercy, Wrey's Bush, who were successful at the music examinations held in connection with Trinity College, London :—Preparatory division, Mary Finn, 100; M. Forde, 99; Nora Halloran, 96; M. Halloran, 77. The following pupils from the Convent of Mercy, Gore, also passed :—Delia Carmody, 94; Sara Lawlor, 85; M. Lawlor, 82; Cissy Cooney, 70.

The following is the result of the Trinity College local examination in musical knowledge held at the Convent School, Queenstown, in June last :—Intermediate division :—Mary McCarthy, 73 (pass); Christina Bonner, 72 (pass); J. Aldridge, 66 (pass). Junior division :—Letitia Constable, 93 (honors); Georgina Constable, 93 (honors); Colleen Evans, 85 (honors); Neil O'Connell, 83 (honors).

The South Dunedin Catholic Literary and Social Club gave their final musical entertainment for the season on Monday evening. Songs were contributed by Mrs. Saunders, Misses F. Heffernan, Turner, Messrs. D. Knox, J. Mooney, Mee, and A. Flynn. Mr. D. Knox played a pianoforte solo, and selections were given by the Musselburgh orchestra. A very enjoyable evening was spent.

The St. Joseph's Boys' Club entertained the Ladies' Club at a very enjoyable euchre party and social gathering on Wednesday evening of last week. The Rev. Father Corcoran presided, and during the evening songs were contributed by Mr. C. Fottrell, Masters W. O'Connor and D. Fogarty. Miss Brady was successful in winning the lady's prize, the gentleman's going to Mr. S. Boreham. At the conclusion of the evening Miss Purton thanked the Boys' Club on behalf of the ladies.

On Friday evening the members of St. Joseph's Men's Club entertained their lady friends at a progressive euchre party, and, despite the inclemency of the weather, there was a large attendance. The lady's prize was won by Miss Brady, and the gentleman's by Mr. F. Heley. Songs were contributed during the evening by Misses Brady and Hannigan, and Messrs. T. J. Hussey, C. Fottrell, D. S. Columb, and Sweeney. Mr. Deehan contributed a flute solo, and Mr. R. Burke a reading. Miss McTigue and Mr. F. Heley acted as accompanists.

A musical and dramatic entertainment by the All-Star Musical and Dramatic Club was given in St. Joseph's Hall on Tuesday evening in aid of one of the stalls at the forthcoming bazaar. The following was the programme :—Overture, Miss M. King; song, Mr. A. Cooke; song, Mrs. T. King; comic item, Mr. C. Budge; recitation, Mr. J. Hill; song, Mrs. R. A. Power; song, Mr. P. Carolin; recitation, Mrs. W. Pollard; song, Mr. A. Cooke; comic song, Mr. W. B. Keany; duet, Mrs. T. King and Mr. P. Carolin. The entertainment concluded with the one-act comedy, 'John Dobbs,' in which the characters were sustained by Mrs. W. Pollard, Miss J. Drummond, and Messrs. C. Budge, J. Hill, A. Cooke, J. Mulholland, W. B. Keany. The accompaniments were played by Miss M. King. The whole was produced under the direction of Mr. T. J. Anthony, and W. B. Keany acted as secretary.

Invercargill

(From our own correspondent.)

September 25.

The usual weekly meeting of the Invercargill Catholic Club was held on Tuesday evening of last week, when, by request from the secretary of the Federated Catholic Young Men's Societies of New Zealand, an oratorical competition was held. The subject was 'Mr. Seddon as a statesman and as a man.' The Very Rev. Dean Burke, the Rev. Father O'Malley, and Mr. M. Giffedder (president) acted as judges. The competitors were Messrs. Haughey, Morton, Collins, Shepherd, T. P. Giffedder, Ryan, and G. Woods. The judges' award was as follows: Mr. L. W. J. Morton (1); Mr. T. P. Giffedder (2); and Mr. J. Collins (3). Mr. Morton is therefore the first in Invercargill to receive the diploma issued by the Federated Societies' Executive. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the judges, and a very pleasant evening brought to a close.

Mr. Charles MacCarthy (brother of Miss Maud MacCarthy) has, says the 'British Australasian,' just taken his degree at Oxford with honors. He has received an important scholastic appointment in India.