

schoolmasters. It settles the time for Masses or services, and controls the church ornamentation. To be a priest there is to belong to a profession without honor. What prestige can the clergy have under those conditions?

M. Briand's Associations of Worship would have produced the same result in the Catholic Church, for the same causes always bring about the same effects. The Pope, by forbidding French Catholics to accept them, safeguarded the French Church from schism and apostasy. After the Holy Father's refusal to recognise the Associations of Worship, M. Briand tried another way of subjecting the Church.

### II.—M. Briand's Famous Circular.

This Minister endeavored to place religious service on the same footing as public meetings, and insisted on a declaration for the holding of the services. However, the law of 1881 was drawn up with a view to meetings at which discussion might take place. But no discussion is allowed in the Catholic ceremonies. This law, then, could not be applicable to them. In 1905, M. Briand had acknowledged this truth; in 1906, he tried to make the law of 1881 applicable to religious services by requiring a single declaration and the organisation of a single board for the whole year. But this was in contradiction with the law, which demanded as many declarations as meetings and the establishment of a responsible bureau for each meeting. The circular was, then, illegal, for a French Minister has not the right of modifying a law without the approval of the Parliament.

At the same time, by this famous document, M. Briand pronounced for the confiscation of the seminaries and the destruction of the priests' independence. 'The parish priest,' said he, 'will be in the church an occupier without any legal title. He will have no rights for any act of administration. Still less will he be qualified to make arrangements as to the disposal of property.' How could the Pope accept such a tyrannical ordinance for the Catholic clergy? Besides, the ministerial circular was arbitrary. The law of 1881 on public meetings says (art. 8), that a citizen who organises a meeting has the right to maintain order and silence, and even to put out noisy people. Does not this suppose a legal right? It is clear that M. Briand wished to deprive French citizens of a right given by the law.

Persuaded that his circular was illegal, the French Minister presented a bill, which was adopted and promulgated on the 2nd of January, 1907.

### III.—Law on the Practice of Worship.

According to the new law, the practice of worship is to be secured by three different ways: (1) by Associations of Worship; (2) by Associations in conformity with the law of 1901; (3) by meetings held on private initiative in pursuance of the law of 1881.

'Convinced,' as he said to M. Jaures, 'that the common law would give a formidable power to the Church in the State,' M. Briand gave her a mutilated law. He put aside an article of the law of 1901 permitting Catholic Associations to be recognised as societies of public utility, but he insisted on the observance of the 12th article, giving the Government the right of dissolving them on the ground that the Pope, their head, is a foreigner! In short, the law of 1901 is not applicable to worship, for it does not authorise Catholics to receive anything besides subscriptions, nothing for religious services, benches, and chairs. Is it fair? If Catholics hold religious worship in conformity with the law of 1881, the parish priest will have to make a contract with the Mayor in order to use the church. At the same time, he will have to undertake all the repairs of the building. The use of the church is to be given by the Prefect or the Mayor. But it may be refused or given to an unworthy priest. In case of an appeal against the Prefect's or the Mayor's decision, the law will have to decide. Could it be admitted that the Mayor or a legal tribunal may be the judges of a priest's orthodoxy? Such is the law of January, 1907. Was not the Pope right to condemn it? Lately, M. Briand has presented a new bill abrogating the notification for public meetings and dispensing those held for purpose of public worship from forming a responsible bureau. But the precedent law is maintained with its dangerous tendencies.

It is easy to see that, with all these laws, M. Briand has offered the Catholics of France war, not peace. He has confiscated the Bishops' palaces, the seminaries, the superannuation funds for old priests. He has robbed the Church of her furniture and transferable securities. Is such a policy fair or liberal? By resisting it, the Catholic Church has given the world a splendid example of her love of freedom and justice.

## Diocesan News

### ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From our own correspondent.)

April 27.

The United Irish League will hold a social gathering at Godher's Hall on Tuesday, May 7. A lecture will be delivered by Mr. S. J. Moran, LL.B., entitled, 'Ireland a nation of rebels.' Admission to the function is free to members and their friends. Mr. J. Finlay is acting as secretary to the League at present.

Arrangements are complete for the opening of the Home of Compassion at Island Bay to-morrow by His Grace the Archbishop. Yesterday Mother Aubert received a letter from Sir George and Lady Clifford apologising for their inability to be present at the opening ceremony to-morrow. A cheque for £20 was enclosed with the letter. The Rev. Mother has also received donations from many other prominent public men.

On Tuesday the stallholders in the recent bazaar were entertained at Day's Bay by Very Rev. Father Keogh. Opportunity was taken of the occasion to present the hon. secretary, Mr. F. W. Crombie, with a handsome travelling bag, suitably inscribed, as a token of the appreciation of his services. The lady stallholders each received a neat Maltese cross of gold, as a memento of the bazaar. Father Keogh expressed himself as being highly pleased with the results of the bazaar, and tendered his sincere thanks to the stallholders for the hard work they did to ensure success.

At a meeting of the Technical Education committee last evening, one of the members spoke of the possibility of their being able to acquire St. Patrick's College for the purpose, as he believed there was some rumor of the college people desiring a change. Very Rev. Father Keogh, on being approached, denied the truth of such a rumor. There was no intention to vacate the college. The college trustees had land at the Hutt, which was secured in view of the present institution growing beyond the capacities of the city property, but there was no immediate intention of removing to the Hutt. On the other hand the erection of additional class rooms to the present building was contemplated.

If the Catholics of Brooklyn continue to work with the energy they have so far displayed in their efforts to raise funds for the erection of a church, the project will quickly become an established fact. On Wednesday they held a social in Fullford's Hall, Brooklyn, in aid of the church fund, and the gathering proved very enjoyable, and most satisfactory from the financial aspect. Special cars were engaged to run to the suburb on the hill, and a large number of sympathisers from the city took advantage of the occasion to lend a helping hand. Over four hundred people were present, and a still larger number of tickets were sold. The early part of the evening was devoted to a concert programme, to which the following ladies and gentlemen contributed:—Misses Morrison, McKay, Julia Moran, and Lamacroft, Rev. Fathers Moloney and Ainsworth, Messrs. Reade, Clarkson, Carr, and Master Foote. The concert was a fine one, and the Brooklyn people are to be complimented on their good fortune in securing such excellent talent. The several accompaniments were played by Miss Moloney and Mr. W. McLaughlin. Mr. W. Healy acted as secretary, and to his energy much of the success of the undertaking must be ascribed. The ladies of Brooklyn provided an excellent supper.

### Wanganui

(From our own correspondent.)

April 25.

Inspector Kiely, of Wanganui, has been transferred to the Thames District, and his place will be taken by Inspector Wilson, of Greymouth.

The members of St. Mary's Catholic Club congratulate Mr. Geo. Spriggins, one of its enthusiastic members, on his election to the Wanganui Borough Council.

Rev. Father O'Meara, of Feilding, paid a visit to Rangawahia District last week and celebrated Holy Mass. This will be his last visit for some time, as he contemplates visiting the Old Country.

At a meeting held in St. Mary's Church last Sunday it was decided to hold a social in the Drill Hall, and Mesdames F. Neylon, Woods, and Kiely, and Messrs. P. D. Gaffaney, J. R. Murphy, and Thos. Lloyd were appointed to make the necessary arrangements. The object is to provide funds for furnishing the Aramoho church.

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