

Notes

Benefit Societies

The Independent Order of Oddfellows, we are told, are to abandon signs, grips, passwords, and the rest of the 'flummery' of secret societies. We never could understand why, in our day, men should act the part of rats in a cellar for the performance of any good work. Hence we welcome the new departure in the Oddfellows' organisation, and hope that other societies having an object that will bear the light of day, will go and do likewise. For Catholics, the Catholic benefit society is best in life and death. And, in the Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society, we have in these countries an organisation of which Catholics may well be proud, and which, for them, approaches most nearly to the ideal.

Encouraging the Editor

One esteemed subscriber, in enclosing his subscription a few days ago, remarks: 'The *Tablet* is the best pound's worth I get.' Another writes us as follows: 'As a Catholic parent, I feel that if I did not get the *Tablet* I would be doing the greatest injustice to my little ones that can read. The young nowadays are so apt to devour any printed stuff that comes their way, that it is incumbent on the parent who recognises his responsibilities to place before the young and impressionable minds of his children wholesome reading matter. For this I find none better than the *Tablet*, which each week pours out a crystal stream of pure Christian and moral teaching.'

There spoke a parent with a cultivated conscience in the matter of reading and a true sense of his responsibilities in this matter in regard to his children.

Earthquake Heroism

'Language,' says the *Catholic Times*, 'cannot adequately describe the gratitude which the Italians and Sicilians of all classes feel towards their clergy for the heroism of which they have given so many proofs during these trying days. Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, priests, monks, and nuns have done infinite honor to their high calling by their eagerness to render help, their forgetfulness of themselves and their indifference to risks. Some of them, alas! have lost their lives; but their fate has not deterred others from facing danger. Whilst Cardinal Merry del Val and other members of the Sacred College are exerting themselves to carry out the Holy Father's wishes with regard to the sufferers in Rome, Cardinal Laudi, Cardinal Nava di Bontifé, Mgr. Arrigo, the brave Archbishop of Messina, and a whole list of other prelates, priests, monks, and nuns are going through the ruined cities and districts, ministering to the spiritual and corporal wants of the injured and the starving. Some of those who are thus engaged have seen friends killed or dying by their sides, and bear marks of suffering themselves, but they continue their ministrations without faltering, even when they are barely able to move from place to place. From Cardinal Nava di Bontifé, who is sixty-two years of age, an interviewer elicited the confession that he would never have believed he would have been able at his years to stand the fatigue he had endured. Surely the fortitude and self-abnegation which the Catholic faith inspires shine out gloriously on occasions such as this which try men's souls.'

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The annual concert in connection with St. Patrick's Day takes place this evening in the Garrison Hall. Some of the leading vocalists of the city will contribute to the programme.

Miss Barth, the local secretary (says the *Otago Daily Times*), has just received word from Trinity College of Music, London, that senior exhibitions of the value of £9 9s each have been awarded to Kathleen Quill (St. Dominic's College) and Gladys M. Stoneham (pupil of Mr. A. Vallis) of this city. These exhibitions provide for the further education of the winners for twelve months in the subjects in which they have already been successfully examined.

The Rev. Father Howard, who was recently transferred from South Dunedin to Milton, will be entertained at a farewell gathering in St. Patrick's School, South Dunedin, on Monday evening. An excellent musical programme has been arranged, and all friends of the Rev. Father Howard are cordially invited to attend. Advantage will be taken

of the occasion to make Father Howard a presentation on behalf of the parishioners, and the members of the Young Men's Club intend also to show their appreciation of the great interest which Father Howard had taken in the affairs of the club and his sterling work on its behalf.

His Lordship the Bishop visited the Mornington Sunday school on Sunday, March 7, when there was an attendance of about 70 children. His Lordship was welcomed on behalf of the teachers and children by the Rev. Father Corcoran, who referred to the increase in the attendance during the year, and the zeal and devotion of the teachers. His Lordship in reply expressed his pleasure at the progress of the school, complimented the pupils on their regular attendance, and congratulated the teachers on the results of their work. At the conclusion of his Lordship's address the children sang several hymns, including 'Faith of our Fathers.'

The members of the Dunedin branch of the H.A.C.B. Society, to the number of a hundred, attended at St. Patrick's Basilica, South Dunedin, on Sunday, 14th inst., and approached the Holy Table in a body at the 9 o'clock Mass, in order to suitably celebrate the feast of St. Patrick. The sight was a most edifying one, old and young members marching together side by side to profess their holy religion and show their unceasing veneration for the patron saint of Ireland. Still the attendance could and should be much larger, and it is a matter of regret that all the members who are able cannot understand the importance of all joining together and making a united act of faith. The Rev. Father O'Malley preached a fine discourse suitable to the occasion, dwelling on the advantage of being members of the Society from a moral, temporal, and spiritual point of view, and urged parents to persuade their sons to become members of this excellent organisation.

Interprovincial

Misses Violet Wright and Una Sullivan, pupils of the Sisters of Mercy, Hokitika, passed the Matriculation examination, and Miss Ellen Troy was successful in the Teachers' D examination.

The Government has decided that the Mount Cook Barracks shall be converted into Dominion Museum, and tenders for the necessary alterations, involving about £10,000, are to be invited immediately.

The *Auckland Herald* points out that the railway revenue returns for the four weeks ending January 30 show that the North Island lines earned £5686 more than those of the South Island, though the latter has 441 more miles of line open.

A despondent looking land-hunter, who had taken part in 23 ballots for Crown lands, mournfully told a representative of the *North Otago Times* that he had grown grey in the effort to draw the right marble, and had now given it up as a bad job.

The rain last week did a great amount of good to the rape and turnip crops in South Canterbury, which were beginning to hang out signals of distress as a consequence of the long spell of dry, hot weather. The downpour was, therefore, welcomed by farmers, to whom it conveyed an assurance of a good supply of winter feed.

The Southland Acclimatisation Society a short time ago recommended the Minister of Internal Affairs to withdraw the protection on Paradise ducks during the ensuing season, and the secretary of the society has been notified that it is not intended to comply with the request in the meantime.

The Timaru Borough Council has resolved in connection with the renewal of the waterworks loan of £60,000, next year to submit to the ratepayers proposals to add loans of £18,000 to improve the water supply, £6000 for permanent improvements in the streets, and £4000 for municipal buildings. The valuation of the borough (annual value system) has just been completed. The total is £95,629, an increase of £4913. One of the six wards shows a decrease of £2.

It is expected (says the *Press*) that in about a month's time a new telephone system will be in working order in Timaru. Under the new system a subscriber wishing to communicate with another subscriber will not require to ring up the exchange; by the mere act of removing the receiver from its hook he will indicate to the exchange that he wants to be put in communication with a subscriber; the number of the subscriber wanted will, of course, be given to the exchange by the subscriber desiring to be connected. The exchange operator will then notify the second subscriber by ringing a bell near the second subscriber's tele-