

The real struggle of the workers for the right to live humanly extended from about 1833 to about 1850. The Reform Bill, the growth of trades unions, the Chartist movement, all contributed to extend their influence. The 'orthodox' political economists regarded the worker as they did a horse or a steer or a threshing-machine—a mere chattel, in fact—and furiously opposed remedial legislation. Conspicuous among them were Sir ROBERT PEEL, Lord BROUGHAM, and 'the Tribune of the People,' JOHN BRIGHT. Lord SHAFTESBURY became the champion of the working people. After a long struggle and many evasions and delays tolerably effective Workshops and Factories Acts were passed. These (1) regulated the sanitary and safety arrangements affecting all classes of workers; (2) prohibited certain classes of labor—on moral and sanitary grounds—to women and children; and (3) determined the hours of work for some or all of the six categories into which working people were divided. These, be it noted, were mere instalments of some of the rights that were accorded, as a sheer matter of course, to workers of every degree in the days when England was at the same time Catholic and 'Merrie England.' Yet they lifted the worker from the Slough of Despond in which he had been stuck fast for many of the early years of the late Queen's reign. The changes effected in the political, social, and domestic condition of the British artisan and laborer were equivalent to a revolution. But at the close of VICTORIA's long period of rule much, nevertheless, remained to be done. English miners and factory operatives are still far off from the eight hours' day of their Catholic forefathers of three hundred to four hundred years ago. New Zealand, the Australian Commonwealth, Switzerland, and Germany stand in the van of enlightened and humanitarian factory legislation. The character of all such legislation is, however, necessarily limited, negative, and protective in its nature. It does not solve the social question, nor secure constant employment, nor the certainty of a reasonable wage. Much less can it restore the old familiar and friendly relations between master and man that prevailed during the Catholic days of the middle age. Employer and employé have drifted apart into two distinct and frequently antagonistic classes. And that drift has caused the conflict which has inflicted untold misery upon the working man and created that hostility between labor and capital which has time and again threatened the whole fabric of our civilisation and social system with disruption.

Diocesan News.

DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

February 11.

The retreat of the clergy of the diocese concluded on Saturday morning after which a synodal meeting was held. Thirty priests were present in retreat.

Acting on behalf of his Lordship the Bishop and clergy, who were at the time in retreat, the Rev. Father Kerley and Mr. E. O'Connor awaited the arrival of the Imperial troops on Thursday night for the purpose of extending a welcome to the Catholic chaplain, Father Foran, and inviting him to spend the night at the episcopal residence, which invitation was accepted. The army chaplain celebrated Mass in the Pro-Cathedral next morning, and subsequently rejoined the troops.

The Imperial troops met with a most enthusiastic reception on their arrival in Christchurch on Thursday evening last. For an hour before the advertised time of the special train people poured by every street leading to the centre of attraction to see the men who fight the Empire's battles. When the march from the Railway Station to the Exhibition Buildings commenced, the entire route was simply a mass of humanity closely packed, so much so that at intervals it was with difficulty the troops were able to march. On the next day (Friday) the same enthusiasm prevailed when the visitors were marched through the city to Hagley Park, where they went through various military evolutions in a manner that was a complete revelation to Colonials, volunteers as well as civilians. The cavalry, dragoons, hussars, and lancers all mounted, presented a sight never before witnessed in New Zealand, and it will probably be many a long day before a similar spectacle will be afforded. After the parade, in which the local forces took part, the Imperials were provided with light refreshments and then entrained for Lyttelton to rejoin the Britannic which shortly after sailed for Wellington.

The St. John the Baptist (women's) branch of the H.A.C.B. Society held their usual fortnightly meeting on Tuesday evening last with a good attendance of members. The chair was occupied by the President, Sister Harrington. The Very Rev. Dean Foley,

S.M., who takes great interest in the Society, was present and gave good advice, counsel, and encouragement to the members. He referred to the death of the Very Rev. Dean Chervier, extolling the noble work done by the late Dean in the early days of the parish, and later on in various parts of the diocese, and recommended them to pray for the repose of the soul of the good priest, the last and best tribute they could offer. The general business of the branch was transacted in a most satisfactory manner all present evincing great interest in the proceedings. The business sheet of the district meeting, to be held shortly in Dunedin, was discussed with much interest, the secretary being instructed to acquaint the delegate, P.P. Sister Burke, with the various decisions arrived at. The balance sheet for the past quarter was, on the motion of Sister Donnell, seconded by Sister Dinneen, adopted. Bros. Sellars, McCormack, and Doolan, officers of St. Patrick's Branch, who were in attendance, congratulated the branch on its encouraging position, and commented in complimentary terms on the members' efforts to maintain a satisfactory state of the society's affairs. A vote of thanks was passed to Bro. Sellars for auditing the books, and to Bros. McCormack and Doolan for valued assistance at the meetings. On the invitation of P.P. Sister Burke the members will attend an 'At Home' in the meeting rooms on Thursday, February 21st, to welcome Bro. Taskar, who recently returned from active service in South Africa.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

February 9.

Rev. Father Goggan, of Te Aro, is at present preaching a retreat to the students of Meane Seminary.

A meeting of the ex-pupils of the convent is called for Monday to make arrangements for their annual picnic.

A high school, in which 21 pupils have begun work, has been opened this year in connection with the Newtown Convent.

The inmates of St. Joseph's Orphanage were treated to a picnic by Mr. and Mrs. Martin Kennedy at their residence, Gladstone Terrace, on Thursday.

By the last mail Rev. Father O'Shea received word that Very Rev. Dr. Pestre, late Provincial of the Marist Order, had been appointed head of the second novitiate at Villa Maria, Sydney.

Very Rev. Father Lewis, Adm., V.G., left on Friday with several of the visiting clergy to be present at the laying of the foundation stone of the new Cathedral, Christchurch.

Dr. Mackin writes to Rev. Father O'Shea of the magnificent ceremony which took place in Bethlehem on Christmas Day. Both he and Mrs. Mackin were present on that occasion.

Miss Maginity, organist of the Sacred Heart Church, Thorndon, leaves on a holiday tour through America next week. During her absence Miss Putnam will replace her at the organ.

Rev. Father Petty, an invalided military chaplain from the Transvaal, arrived here last week. It is his intention to remain in New Zealand, and he has taken up his residence at the Lower Hutt with Rev. Father Maple, whom he will assist during Very Rev. Father Lane's absence.

The visiting prelates, who officiated at the opening of the new church on Sunday, left for the West Coast on Monday last accompanied by Archbishop Redwood. It was their intention to travel overland to Christchurch, thus seeing some of the grand scenery for which the route is noted.

The Children of Mary of Te Aro parish during the last three days have attended in satisfactory numbers a retreat conducted by Rev. Father Piquet, of Sydney. The thanks of the members are due to the Rev. Father O'Shea, spiritual director of the society, for his obtaining for them a favor so highly appreciated.

The organ at present in the Dannevirke Church has, through the generosity of Mrs. Malcolm Trestone, of Auckland, become the property of the church. The Gleeson family during their residence in Dannevirke contributed in a great measure to the excellence of the musical portion of the church services, and their loss there will be keenly felt. Father Cahill and his parishioners feel deeply grateful to Mrs. Trestone for this latest proof of her generosity.

The balance sheet of the Fabian Dramatic Club in connection with the production of 'Arrah-na-Pogue' in aid of the furnishing of the Newtown Convent has now been printed. The balance was £32, from which had to be deducted a sum of £17, an outstanding liability on the Club's production of 'Caste' last year, leaving a net balance of £15. This sum has now been handed to the nuns.

Very deep sympathy is felt for Mr. and Mrs. Poll, of Thorndon, in the untimely death of their son, Mr. Herman Francis Poll. Early this week, while engaged in the construction of a punt at Havelock, the dingy in which he and a fellow-workman were travelling capsized, with the result that Mr. Poll was drowned. The deceased, who was an ex-student of St. Patrick's College, was just 23 years of age.—R.I.P.

There was an immense congregation at St. Joseph's Church on last Saturday afternoon, on the occasion of a memorial service in connection with the death of the Queen. His Grace the Archbishop presided, Deans Kirk and McKenna being the assistants at the throne. During the service Father S. Mahony sang the 'Pater Noster' and 'Dies Irae,' and the 'Benedictus' was chanted by the priests present. His Grace delivered a short discourse extolling the many excellent qualities of the Queen. The panegyric was mainly on the lines of that delivered on the previous Sunday and concluded with a prayer for the King.

The following are the marks of the pupils of the Palmerston North Convent in the examination in practical music, held last November by Mr. Charles Edwards on behalf of Trinity College:—Senior grade. Singing (honors)—Isabel Oliver 95, Mary Scanlon 85, (pass) Rae Oakeley, 76. Senior grade: Piano (honors)—Frances