

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND.

(From our own correspondent.)

May 22.

The Hibernian Society's fortnightly social, held last evening in the Hibernian Hall, was a decided success.

Rev. Father Kehoe, who is staying at the Bishop's House, is far from well. His many friends earnestly pray and hope for his speedy restoration to health.

At St. Benedict's Church on Sunday there was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from last Mass until Vespers. The faithful in large numbers made their visits during the day. Sermons were delivered by Rev. Fathers Russell and Gillan. The altar was tastefully decorated, the work reflecting much credit on the Sisters of St. Joseph.

The members of the City Schools' Committee have resigned in a body because the Education Board set aside the recommendations made by the committee in the teaching staff of two of the city schools. One of those recommended was a lady Catholic teacher, and there is just a suspicion that the members of the Board were not actuated by the highest motives. The Catholic teacher in question is credited with being one of the best under the Board, and has had an experience of 22 years.

Mother Mary, Superior of the Order of St. Joseph, who came across from Sydney for the benefit of her health, and proceeded to Rotorua with the same object, took a turn for the worse last week. So serious was her condition that several of the Sisters who were summoned from Sydney arrived here on Monday and proceeded to Rotorua. His Lordship the Bishop went there also, and administered the last rites of the Church to the sufferer. Mother Mary improved slightly within the last few days, and her friends were enabled to bring her to Auckland yesterday. It is to be hoped that she may soon be restored to health. The sufferer is staying at the convent Newmarket.

The question of Bible in Schools was revived this week, when a number of Protestant clergymen met and set forth their demands in the following resolution:—To demand such alteration of the Education Act as will prescribe: (a) That Government schools be opened daily with the Lord's Prayer; (b) That on certain days of the week simple lessons on selected portions of the Bible be given by the teachers during school hours. Provided (1) That these lessons shall be of a strictly undenominational character; (2) That teachers who conscientiously object to give these lessons shall not be compelled to give them, and scholars whose parents have conscientious objections shall not be compelled to receive them. (2) To urge members of Parliament and candidates for election thereto to press the above alteration upon the Legislators.

[This letter arrived too late for insertion in our last issue.]

NAPIER.

A representative committee, including the Rev. Fathers Goggan, McNamara, and Bell, has been formed in Napier, for the purpose of providing a hall for the Catholic Young Men's Association. The committee has issued a circular asking for assistance in their good work, and from which we take the following extracts:—

'The young New Zealander, by those competent to judge, is considered a whole man specimen of a many-nationed stock. His manliness and bravery are a theme of universal praise. These qualities prove that he possesses the grit of which true manhood is made. But his very love of sport and outdoor games is, by some, laid at his door as a great fault. These Solons would have him more moral and more anxious to attain the nobler aspirations of life. Every social worker for the uplifting of his fellow beings, strives but to place the opportunity of attaining this moral growth and intellectual development within the reach of the masses. The world-history of man attests that the environments mar or make the character of beings. This is particularly true of the stages of juvenescence and ripening manhood. In very few places, however, in New Zealand has the youth even the remotest means of evolving the innate and higher potentialities that make the perfect man. Why blame him and decry him, then, for failings that are the direct outcome of the lack of social equipment for life? Thousands of homes in the Colony are small—the environments staid—hence the young man must spend his leisure hours either abroad or in those places of amusements where the allurements are, in some instances, often stronger than youth and youthful passions can withstand. Give these young men, then, a hall where they can have their physical culture exercises, games, library, debating room, musical evenings, and a place of meeting other than the lighted thoroughfares of our cities.

'The object is worthy of your earnest consideration—it is none other than the betterment of your own sons, and consequently the best protection both of woman's lily virtue and the unsullied honor of your escutcheon. To attain this the Catholic young men of Napier met lately at the request of their priests. At that meeting it was resolved to purchase a piece of land in the centre of Napier and erect thereon a hall. This work has the hearty approval of both his Grace Archbishop Redwood, S.M., D.D., and the Very Rev. Dean Grogan, S.M. But a few weeks have elapsed and already the collectors, appointed at above meeting have over £200 in hand. Every section of the community has generously helped. If parochialism is to be the limit of well-doing, we know that we have no right to bring our wants under your notice. We, furthermore, are aware that in return for your liberal help—sincere thanks, in anticipation, for same—we have no recompense to offer save in promising to do our best to help you, some day, in a similar work. Your reward, we trust in God, will be the knowledge that you have helped to better here the moral, social, and intellectual development of the young New Zealander.'

Irish Literary Roll of Honor.

It is true that Ireland has not produced a Dante, a Shakespeare, or a Cervantes, yet, during the past century (says the *Gael*), she has given a magnificent account of herself in the domain of dramatic, lyric, and ballad poetry. Even the great novelists of modern Ireland, though few in number, have given immortal contributions to the world's literature. The eloquence of Ireland is almost unique, and her orators will compare favorably with the best that Greece and Rome have given to history.

We recall with singular pride the intellectual supremacy of Swift, the marvellous genius of Burke, the genial philosophy of Goldsmith, the golden pages of Steele, the celebrated fiction of Sterne, the iron logic of Molyneux, the journalistic abilities of Lucas, the glorious idealism of Berkeley, the superb poetry of Parnell, the sparkling wit of Sheridan, the immortal rhetoric of Grattan, the forensic greatness of Curran, the Demosthenic force of Plunket, the comprehensive talents of Flood, the dramatic powers of Macklin, the constitutional erudition of Saurin, the imperishable letters of 'Junius,' the Spartan patriotism of Wolfe Tone, the famous speech of Emmet, the rhetorical splendor of Bushe, the sublime simplicity of Burrows, the historical acumen of Barrington, the chaste witticisms of Lysaght, the lyric grandeur of Moore, the cultured scholarship of Petrie, the vast learning of O'Curry, the Gaelic lore of O'Donovan, the attic compositions of Maginn, the martial ballads of Drennan, the learned translations of O'Connor, the splendid biographies of Madden, the mighty eloquence of O'Connell, the oratorical brilliancy of Shiel, the valuable researches of Wilde, the peerless writings of Tyndall, the patriotic songs of Ingram, the matchless essays of Giles, the powerful reasoning of Doyle, the literary curiosities of Roche, the linguistic acquirements of Mangan, the brilliant diction of Phillips, the rollicking fun of Lover, the quaint humor of Carleton, the picturesque descriptions of Lever, the idiomatic style of Banim, the expressive dialect of Lefanu, the fervid lays of De Vere, the descriptive faculties of Edgeworth, the majestic tragedies of Knowles, the raucy comedies of Boucicault, the poetic imagery of Joyce, the classic verse of McCarthy, the thrilling pathos of Griffin, the rare culture of McGee, the stirring poems of Barry, the sprightly rhythms of Graves, the scholarly attainments of Duffy, the varied endowments of O'Reilly, the fascinating tales of Kickham, the ballad poetry of Ferguson, the exquisite melodies of Prout, the delightful lyrics of 'Speranza,' the national odes of Walsh, the beautiful harmony of Callinan, the flowery language of Sullivan, the charming persuasiveness of Butt, the inspiring oratory of Meagher, the burning invective of Mitchell, the humorous versification of Williams, and last, but not least, the Celtic versatility of Davis.

A Perennial Evil.

In the lengthy catalogue of man's offences against the divine law (says the *Ave Maria*) there is doubtless many a more grievous sin, but scarcely a more common one, than uncharitable speech. Serious reflection on this subject during ten minutes, and a vivid recollection of the habitual drift taken by the conversation of ourselves and our friends and acquaintances, will suffice to convince us that St. Jerome had excellent reason to write: 'Rarely do we find any one who is not ready to blame his neighbor's conduct'; and that St. James hardly exaggerated when he declared: 'If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.'

The quasi-universality of this evil explains the affectionate insistence with which the Beloved Disciple St. John used in his old age to reiterate to his flock: 'My little children, love one another.' Love is, in very truth, the only charm that can effectively tame our rampant desire to impart to others whatever we know to the discredit of our neighbor. We divulge nothing that is prejudicial to ourselves, whom we love very sincerely; we sedulously keep secret anything detrimental to the good name of the friend of our bosom; and, just in proportion to the genuineness of our charity—our loving our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God—will be our reticence concerning that neighbor's vices, crimes, sins, faults, or backslidings.

Perhaps the most singular circumstance connected with this very general sin of detraction is the slight account made of it by those who incur its guilt. It would be difficult to discover any other offence in the whole 'table of sins' concerning which so many people, even normally good people, have erroneous consciences. Penitents who are scrupulously exact in detailing their transgressions will gloss over sins of detraction that are unquestionably mortal, as if such lapses scarcely merited the name of imperfections. Yet it is obvious that neither imperfections nor even venial sins render us 'hateful to God,' and it is thus that St. Paul characterises detractors. Indeed, the defamation of our neighbor is anathematized in Holy Scripture in a manner that clearly proves it to be, in its nature, a grievous sin—a 'sin unto death.' But, of course, it admits levity of matter; and thus many (let us hope, most) uncharitable speeches are only venial. It is well, however, to bear in mind the remark of St. Alphonsus: O fool! thou dost declaim against the sin of another, and meanwhile, by evil speaking, dost commit a far greater sin than that which thou blamest in thy neighbor.

It is elementary that the detractor is not freed from guilt simply because, as he is wont to declare: 'After all, I told only the simple truth.' Unless the simple truth that is detrimental to my neighbor's character is generally known, is notorious, I very certainly sin against the justice which I owe to him when I divulge that truth to others. Just as certainly I am bound to repair, as far as is possible, the injury which has been occasioned to him by my detraction. And this is another point that merits some insistence.