

triumph and glory of their holy Mother, the Church. And Protestants no less than Catholics will be led to realise that the Pope, 'the spiritual Father of all Christians,' 'the Shepherd and Teacher of all Christians,' as the catechism calls him, can never be a partisan. Never, we may be sure, in the long history of the Church, has the uncompromising impartiality of the Vicar of Christ, and his fatherly solicitude for the temporal as well as the eternal welfare of all of his children, been more luminously set forth, or been of greater service to the highest interests of Christianity.

A Word to Critics.

Critics ask why does not the Pope take this side or that side? Why does he not pronounce for one set of Powers or the other? What would German Catholics, no less staunch and faithful than ourselves, say, what would they feel, if they saw their Supreme Pastor siding with their enemies? What should we, British or Belgian Catholics, say, and what should we feel, if we saw our common Father 'going over' to our Teutonic enemies? What would become of loyalty and devotion to the Pope if any among the Catholic belligerents had the least reason to suspect him even of being displeased with their patriotism or of frowning upon their cause? Assuredly, whoever should have been elected to the Chair of Peter to-day would have equally held the balance between opposing nations. But assuredly, too, no Catholic can fail to see a special act of God's Providence in the choice of a Cardinal who is a trained diplomatist to preside at present over the destinies of the Holy See. As Pius X. was raised up by Almighty God for the problems of his generation, so is Benedict XV. raised up for the needs of this. Who, looking around at the innumerable and intricate questions that will, sooner or later, require for their solution the most consummate statesmanship and the wisest diplomacy, who, I say, can doubt that the present Pope is indeed the 'sent of God'?

Westport

(From our own correspondent.)

March 26.

Mr. W. Lander, of the Public Works Department, a prominent member of the local branch of the Hibernian Society, has been promoted to an important position in the department at Wellington, and leaves on Tuesday to take up his new duties. His successor, Mr. C. A. Carmine, is well known in Catholic circles throughout New Zealand, having filled for some time the position of secretary to the federated Catholic clubs.

In the recent examinations the following successes were gained by the pupils of the local Convent School: Intermediate M. Parsons, D. Moroney, M. Corby. Matriculation—N. Norman. Senior Civil Service—Passed in four subjects, N. Norman; partial passes (first section), Class D: M. Parsons; two subjects, Class C: A. M. Bell. The Sisters of St. Joseph's Convent of Mercy secured six Class C certificates, one full D; and one candidate received credit for success in four subjects for Class C.

The annual meeting of St. Canice's Catholic Men's Club was held in the club rooms on Sunday last, the president (Mr. F. M. O'Gorman) in the chair. The annual report and balance sheet showed that the progress of the club during the past year had been satisfactory. The following officers were elected for the ensuing term:—Patron, Ven. Archpriest Walsh; spiritual director, Rev. Father Long; president, Mr. F. M. O'Gorman; secretary, Mr. J. A. Carmine; executive—Messrs. J. Radford, J. S. Matthews, J. P. Carmine, A. J. Haugby, J. Hughes, T. Long, F. J. Haugby, R. H. Annibel, J. Kidd; auditors, Messrs. J. P. O'Gorman and J. J. L. Pearce.

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'STAND FAST IN THE FAITH'

(A Weekly Instruction specially written for the N.Z. TABLET by GHIMEL.)

THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

A new era dawned in men's faith in immortality when the Son of Man stood in the midst of them and said: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live: and every one that liveth and believeth in Me, shall not die for ever' (St. John xi., 25-26). These words of weighty Divine power and gentle human sympathy were spoken not to some chosen and lofty spirit in an hour of sweet communion with its Creator, but to one of ordinary mould, whose heart had been awed and awakened by the visitation of death, chastened by bereavement. And the life-work of the speaker overflowed with proofs of the mighty utterance. Whatever He touched received life. He laid His fingers on dead eyes and they saw. He commanded dead ears to open and they heard. He allowed the hem of His garment to touch the fatal disease and life sprang back into the distempered veins. He placed His hands on the lifeless body of the widow's son and it awakened from the sleep of death. He went into the grave Himself and, with the power of resurrection, left it empty on the third day.

'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' Our Lord requires belief in His own Person. He draws the eyes of Martha away from one reality to another—from the grim fact of death to the greater fact of His own Person and power and love: He confronts her with this dilemma she must pronounce either death or Himself to be the greater reality.

'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' The words mean something more than a promise of resurrection at the last day. Martha thinks only of that remote time when she and her brother will be reunited. Jesus says, 'I am the Life, here and now. In Me the dead live. Lazarus has indeed passed away from you, but he has not gone to nothingness, for to Me he lives, since I am the Life and in Me the dead live.'

'I am the Resurrection.' Christ rose again from the dead, and He has power to raise us up. (1) He is 'the Firstborn out of the dead,' the same as before death, yet mysteriously and loftily transformed. In this highest sense He is the Resurrection. (2) He has also the power, in the fullest sense of the word, to make us live. 'Though he be dead,' He says, 'he shall live.'

Of course in a very real sense Christ did die and so do we: the housing of the soul, in His case and in ours, is torn away, the tent taken down. But in another sense death does not touch life, our essential, personal being; that flows on, an unbroken current, and rises into more perfect fulness. Belief in and union with our Redeemer secures the possession of that eternal life, which victoriously persists through the superficial change which men call death.

'I do hear
From the revolving year
A voice which cries:
"All dies;
Lo, how all dies! O seer,
And all things too arise:
All dies, and all is born:
But each resurgent morn, behold, more near the Perfect
Morn."'

—Francis Thompson.

'I am the Life.' When God raises the soul of man by grace to the level of His own holy life, He will not allow death to destroy His handiwork. The artist does not spend long years in carving a statue out of rare materials, only at the end to break the work to pieces. God does not give His best gifts to men in order to make them His true children, and then refuse to dower them with immortality. Our Redeemer sheds His Blood that men may have spiritual life. Will He lose His own work when it is almost complete?