

against us. From the Reformation up to the present time there has been nothing like a Catholic middle class in England, and, therefore, nothing like a Catholic periodical press. The Protestant press had every thing their own way. Catholic people, at home and abroad, were by them held up to public suspicion, or odium, or ridicule; the Pope himself being often the villain; and for this there was no remedy. It paid the press to abuse and calumniate Catholics, and they were abused and insulted accordingly. They could make no reply. In a somewhat similar way, though not to the same extent, Catholics have been wronged in the British colonies. But all this is changing for the better. In England there is now a growing Catholic middle class. It was sufficiently numerous to support four weekly metropolitan newspapers, for 50 years back, up to the present time, with several "Monthlies;" and it would appear that it is now sufficiently numerous to support one daily journal besides. The impartial portion of the English public, of all creeds, will now have an opportunity of reading true and authentic intelligence on Catholic affairs, and of learning what the political principles and designs of Catholics really are. They will have this opportunity not merely at intervals of a week, or a month, but daily, and this is a great matter. It is the constant and daily repetition of calumny and misrepresentation against us by the Protestant press which has done us so much mischief. When men see things, however incredible and false, daily repeated for years or generations, they come at last to regard them as gospel truths. It is thus that many Protestants have from their cradle been persuaded to believe the most monstrous falsehoods regarding their Catholic neighbours, and to receive them without doubting. In England, Catholic journalism has not hitherto been a paying business. But for the public spirit and zeal of a few Catholic noblemen and gentlemen, and one Catholic lady, a convert to the faith, some of the Catholic journals in England could not have fought their way as they have done to their present position of influence and usefulness. In these colonies the like newspaper press is but in its infancy. Yet, by the generous support of the Catholic population, it may be reasonably hoped that it will overcome its present difficulties, and in due time take up a respectable position among its competitors. My impression is we ought to have no Catholic newspapers in the strict and exclusive sense of the word, but only newspapers under such a just direction as will do full justice to Catholics as well as other classes in the State. When a newspaper assumes a Catholic name, and harps so constantly on purely Catholic questions, its influence on the public mind generally must be greatly impaired.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## SONGS AND BALLADS OF THE LIVING IRISH BARDS.

To the Editor of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

SIR,—It has been frequently asserted that Ireland produces no poets, or never did. The calumny on the poets of our land is about to be removed. Ireland *did* produce poets, equal to those of any other land, if not superior. Our Ossianic bards were by no means inferior to Homer or Virgil; but it must be confessed that during the last few centuries we had none the peer of Shakspeare and Milton, and little wonder. If men will only glance at the history of the two nations they will easily perceive why. But at present I emphatically state without any hesitation whatsoever, that our living Irish poets are infinitely superior to those of the more favored sister country, and had Mr D. F. McCarthy and his brother patriots sang "God save the Queen," instead of "God save Ireland," the laureate's crown would have rested on the brow of an Irish poet, but fortunately for Mr McCarthy, like the free-born Byron, he is able to sing and publish independent of court favors.

Can England produce a living poet of any standard merit?—certainly not. It is only in the absence of a better that the author of "I stood on a tower in the wet," received the Laureateship. Can the admirers of England's bardic sons point even to a single lyric, which for fire, sweetness, grace, or melody can compare with those "beautiful but rebellious" lyrics of Erin.

To prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that Ireland *does* produce bards of no uncommon merit, Mr John Fitzgerald, of Cork, has taken up the gauntlet flung down by the living historian Froude, and requests of each living Irish bard at least one poem never before published, leaving the choice of a subject to the writers themselves, thus producing a book which promises not only to be intensely "raev of the soil," but novel as anything which has ever emanated from those surprising go-ahead residents of the United States. The attempt is not only a laudable but a commendable one, and those who wish to contribute their mite should send it at once to the talented editor, whose address is 5, Adelaide street, Cork Ireland.

Of Mr Fitzgerald himself it is unnecessary to say much. His fame, like the Irish race, is world wide. From a note in the "Popular Poetry of Ireland," by Duncuthan, I learn that he is an humble mechanic of "Cork's own town," supporting a large family by the labor of his hands. Yet withal he finds leisure not only to study but to add to the literature of his native land, and is author of a small volume of exquisite poetry published a few years ago in Cork, under the name of "Songs, Ballads, and Legends of the Lea," in which occur among other graceful poems "The Apostle's Grave" (Father Matthew) and "The Blarney Stone," which have enshrined their author in the hearts of his countrymen. He has besides lately written some beautiful legends and sketches of several of the castles of Munster in the "Shamrock," which prove that poetry alone is not his forte.

As everyone is not born a poet, it would be well if those generous sons and daughters of toil, who glory in the rich, deep, mellow music of the bards of our land would form themselves into associations in every town and village of our adopted home to aid in the publishing of this great national work, by subscribing a little, say the price of one copy each, which I think will hardly exceed five shillings, if even half that. They will thus set an example of patronage far dearer than

court favors, and stimulate to greater exertions the men, and women too, whose latent talent would do credit to any nation.

April 14, 1874.

I am &c.—J.S.P.

## NASEBY.

To the Editor of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

SIR.—I have carefully looked over several numbers of your paper and failed to observe any mention of this district. Judging from what I have seen, during my short visit, I am impressed with the idea, that this district seems to have been left out in the cold; either through the anathy of your correspondent, "if such a personage exists," or probably, the circumstance of other more remote districts or provinces being of greater moment. I will, however, with your permission, endeavour to supply that want which, I must say, is keenly felt by many of your supporters here, by briefly expressing the opinions of a comparative stranger in this flourishing mining centre. As a Catholic my first object, on arrival, was to ascertain the state of Church and school affairs. With respect to the former I am pleased to have to announce, that, notwithstanding the many obstacles thrown in the way of the much and deservedly respected pastor of this district, he has now in course of completion a very neat and substantial church building, which, I am informed, is to be used for school purposes. The Rev. Father Royer is so well known throughout New Zealand as a most exemplary priest, and for his unremitting zeal in the cause of Catholic education, steady and unflinching toil, in the pursuit of his holy mission, that I cannot add to his well earned laurels. I am glad to say that his efforts, especially in the cause of education, has been so far crowned with success. The newly appointed teacher, Mr Sproule, arrived here last week and has already opened the school with an attendance of 40 pupils. This gentleman's deservedly high reputation as a most successful teacher is a sufficient guarantee that the Naseby Catholic School will, under Mr Sproule's able management, be second to none in the Colony. I must certainly compliment the Rev. Father Royer and his School Committee upon their judicious selection.

On Sunday last the holy sacrifice of the Mass was offered up in the new church. I was highly delighted with the appearance of this building, though unfinished. The Rev. Father Royer with his usual fervour, delivered a most judiciously selected discourse, upon the duties of parents respecting the education of their children. The sound and purely original, and I must add, high minded views propounded, were unanswerable. The rev. gentleman's well-known high scholastic attainments are prominently elucidated when addressing his people. The subject of Catholic education is one in which he particularly excels; his philosophical deductions are peculiarly happy and evidently seem the unalloyed emanations of one who has the spiritual and temporal welfare of his flock at heart. What most forcibly struck me during his discourse was the simple manner in which he placed the subject before his attentive auditors; he spoke feelingly to the heart, and notwithstanding his foreign accent, his everyword fell upon the ear with a most pleasing effect. The singing of the children (Gregorian chant) at Vespers was very creditable to their teacher, their simple and very sweet voices conveyed the purest harmony to the soul. The children are all very young, but seem to have received very careful training. The Catholic body here have taxed themselves beyond their means, and judging from what I have already seen, they are most willing to contribute and give their mite cheerfully; yet this I am in dread will not be sufficient without external aid. It is the unanimous design of the Catholics here, that their much-esteemed pastor would visit Dunedin and obtain the sanction of our worthy bishop to collect funds in other districts, so as to enable the pastor and people to complete the noble Christian work which they have so creditably begun.

I feel quite satisfied that it only requires to be known that Father Royer solicits aid to carry on his arduous mission work. His many friends throughout the Colony, would I am sure be only too glad to rally round him. I have great hopes in the future prospects of this district, not only in a monetary, but a religious and educational point of view. I shall be happy to see in future issues of the TABLET a small space devoted to the highly deserving Catholics of Naseby. The fact of having secured the services of a gentleman of education as teacher, suggests to me the advisability of soliciting his services as correspondent for your paper.

In conclusion I cannot express the joy it afforded me to see Catholicity flourishing so illustriously in the promising district of Naseby. I pray most fervently that Almighty God will long spare their evangelical pastors to direct and assist them in their spiritual and temporal requirements.

I am, Yours &c.,

CATHOLICUS.

Naseby, April 27th, 1874.

## A CONTRAST.

The following article, with letter attached, we clip from the 'Dublin Evening Post,' and have no doubt both will be read with deep interest.

A reverend correspondent has favored us with an interesting sketch of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Roscrea, and forcibly contrasts the peace, order, and contentment prevailing in that institution, unrecognised by the State, with the misery, vice, and idleness existing in the cold Elizabethan structure, known as Roscrea Union Workhouse. We are grieved, for the sake of our countrywomen, to learn that the female paupers are much more troublesome than the males. We cannot, however, feel surprised that such should be the case. Females are peculiarly amenable to moral suasion, but are likewise peculiarly independent of the restraints of any other kind of discipline. The *Petroleuses* of Paris, who fiercely defied the armed soldiery, became calm and docile under the influence of the nuns in charge of the female penitentiaries. Moreover, it is only aged and enfeebled men who now have any need to reside in Irish workhouses. Whereas, the comparative dearth of female employment compels many women, young, vigorous, and healthy, to pine out a wretched existence in a workhouse. The question now arises whether it would not be more econo-