

flooded her in after days, and the traces of which are now her abiding and most endearing charm.

The man must, indeed, be dull of intellect and cold of heart, who, in gazing upon some one of the many lovely scenes which nature presents to the sojourner in Ireland, does not feel the hills, or the dales, the lakes and the woods around him filled with an indefinable presence, which adds, as it were, a spirit to these inanimate things; for in their midst he is ever sure to see the ivy-clad remnants of some ecclesiastical building; it may be the broken arch of a doorway, or a mullioned window, which alone marks the spot where once stood a church; or, perhaps, it is the picturesque and extensive remains of a stately abbey, that contains amongst its ruins the tomb of a king belonging to a by-gone dynasty, or the representation in fresco on its crumbling walls of the fate of some prince of the olden time. How easy is it then in imagination to fill the silent air with a sound of the mellow pealing bells, that summoned the surrounding neighbourhood to mass or vespers, and to people the deserted hill-sides and valleys with the pious rustics of a time long past, all hurrying towards the house of prayer; to picture the busy monks working at their farm, whose superior cultivation has left the area of ground, immediately around each mouldered pile, of a quality much better than that of the soil which lies beyond it; and to fancy that the fallen roof, once more erect, is sheltering a studious colony engaged in copying manuscripts, and in the various arts, by which the learning of the ancient world has been transmitted to a generation, that is deeply ungrateful to those, through whose beneficent labours so precious a possession has been rescued from destruction.

These ruins speak to us of Erin's greatest glory; of the period when the coldness of her heathen days and their dreariness had melted away before the warm light of the Gospel, when she fondly cherished—as she still does, thank God—and richly honoured, as now, alas! she can no longer honour, the holy treasure which Rome conferred upon her, at the hands of St. Patrick—the Catholic faith. For, when God's chosen time was come, Patrick, a youth who had been carried off from his native France by pirates and made a slave in Ireland, now escaped and grown a man, at his own earnest prayer was sent by Pope Celestine to preach the faith in the land of his captivity: and nobly was an answer given to his call. "From the moment," says Ozanam quoted by Montalembert, "that this green Erin, situated at the extremity of the known world, had seen the sun of faith rise upon her, she had vowed herself to it, with an ardent and tender devotion which became her very life." And her devotion was no barren and selfish feeling; it was not enough for her that she herself had learned the way of salvation; she would have others partake the knowledge with her, and for this purpose she sent her sons abroad, over all the nations of Europe that were still in darkness. "They covered the land and seas of the west." (Montalembert is again our authority.) "Unworn navigators, they landed on the most desert islands; they overflowed the continent with their successive immigrations. They saw in incessant visions a world, known and unknown, to be conquered for Christ." So valiantly they fought that to this day their marks are to be found.

And their spirit seems still to rest upon the race from which they sprang. Everywhere Irish immigrants have been the pioneers of the Church. Collectively they have without fail enacted the part of saintly missionaries. Would, that as much could be said for them individually. What a beautiful sight it would be, if each, by a line of conduct consistent with the teaching of the blessed creed he holds, and worthy of the nation which drank in with the avidity the teaching of St. Patrick, should consider himself bound to testify to the sanctifying power of the Catholic faith; or, if this be falsely thought too high an aim, how consoling would it still be, should each, at least, abstain from doing or saying anything that may seem to compromise his religion in the eyes of those who are ignorant of it; such, it must be admitted, is plainly the duty of all Catholics, and he who neglects it is unworthy of the name of Irishman, and still more of that of a son of St. Patrick.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

In accordance with the notice given in our last issue, a meeting was held in St. Joseph's Schoolroom, on Tuesday evening, the 14th inst., for the purpose of considering the steps, which it would be necessary to take, for the successful holding of a bazaar in aid of the Christian Brothers' School Fund. The attendance was by no means as large as it was hoped that it would have been, but it is reasonable to suppose that the deficiency of numbers may be accounted for in some other manner, than by attributing it to indifference as to the

object in view. It is admitted, on all hands, that the settlement of the Christian Brothers amongst us is most devoutly to be desired; their efforts in the cause of education have, in every part of the world, been crowned with the most striking success. A short time after their arrival in all cities, where their services have been secured, the aspect of the schools, and the general conduct of the children placed under their care have been universally acknowledged to have been, almost incredibly, changed for the better. The vital interests of every Catholic family in the town of Dunedin, perhaps we might say in the province of Otago, depend upon their settlement amongst us; it would surely, therefore, be no more than becoming, if the whole Catholic community would energetically join in the attempt to accomplish their establishment in our midst, and would come forward generously and assume at least a portion of that burden, which has hitherto seemed to rest entirely upon the shoulders of his Lordship the Bishop, who personally is completely independent of the matter. The meeting has been adjourned to Tuesday evening next, the 21st inst., when, it is most earnestly requested, that nothing may prevent a full attendance as well of ladies as of gentlemen.

THE opening night of the Opera Season, under the able management of Mr Simonsen, took place on Saturday night, and seldom has there been such a "house" as assembled within the walls of the Queen's Theatre on the occasion. The piece selected was the opera bouffe of the Grand Duchess, but we are inclined to doubt that the choice was a judicious one. Although possessing some exquisite gems, most of the compositions of Offenbach have secured their popularity on account of the vein of humor by which they are pervaded, and which crops up on every occasion. It is necessary, therefore, that to give a successful representation of such pieces as "The Grand Duchess," and "Genevieve de Brabant," those engaged should not rely solely upon their abilities as vocalists. This was made painfully evident on Saturday night. With the exception of "Say to him" and "Lo! 'tis the Sabre," the music throughout the opera is light, airy, and of a vivacious comic nature, and, of course, requires that the manner in which it is rendered should be of a similar character. That the first representation was not all that could be required in this respect must be confessed, for many of the ludicrous scenes with which the opera abounds passed off with a tameness very foreign to the conception of the author. Of course allowance must be made for drawbacks of a first night and the difficulties incidental thereto; a plea for which there appears to be good grounds, inasmuch as the second presentation was a vast improvement on the first. There cannot be a doubt that Mr Simonsen has spared neither effort or expense, and while the strength of the company far exceeds that of the Allen troupe, there is no comparison as to the manner in which the pieces are dressed and put upon the stage. Of course, of Madame Simonsen it will be almost superfluous to speak, and yet we are bound to say that the rôle of the Grand Duchess is not the one in which she will appear to the best advantage. Faultless as was her personation of the Wayward Sovereign, it will be found that in the tragic rather than bouffe opera will she secure the greater triumphs. The magnificent solo, "Say to him," was given amid breathless silence, which burst forth into rapturous applause at its conclusion, and continued until Madame Simonsen responded to the *encore*. Indeed the manner in which this gem was rendered was a treat rarely enjoyed, and amply atoned for any defects of the other members of the company during the evening. Of Mr Morley, perhaps it would be more just to defer our criticism, as his first appearance was made under the disadvantage of a severe hoarseness which rendered it impossible he could be judged on his merits. Mr Steinback possesses a clear ringing tenor, and sang the comic solo, "This is what the people say" with effect, but marred the success of the character of Prince Paul by excessive timidity and nervousness. The General Boom of Mr Tombold cannot be deemed a success, for although the character was admirably dressed, it was far from the General Boom designed by Offenbach. Indeed in many of the scenes he was sadly deficient in the text, and at other times totally inaudible. We scarcely imagine it is policy to try and improve upon the author, and in future it would be well to speak the words allotted to the character, rather than indulge in questionable wit. We must conclude by stating that any shortcomings, which were apparent, should be attributed to the male portion of the company, for from the Prima Donna Assoluta down to the chorus singers, the ladies of the troupe were every thing that could be desired. The quartette by the maids of honour in the opening of the second act was greeted with deserved applause, and enjoyed with Madame Simonsen the honor of an *encore*.

THE following passage occurs in the Lenten Pastoral of the Bishop of Sandhurst:—"Every system of education not based upon religion and the acquisition of that knowledge necessary for eternal life must necessarily be, for Catholics, an evil of the greatest magnitude; and such is the State education now prevalent in this colony, for whilst it unites, in the same school, pupils and teachers of every creed, or of no creed, it must necessarily promote, not only indifference in regard of a religion, but also that spirit of infidelity which denies the very existence of the Deity. Catholic children brought up in such schools betray the grossest ignorance of Catholic discipline. And we frequently see that in their after life they proclaim opinions at variance with Catholic doctrines, and manifest not only a want of respect for the ministers of religion, but even an utter dislike towards the laws and precepts of the Holy Catholic Church. Dearly beloved, you cannot, unless at the peril of your salvation, permit the Catholic children of the rising generation to be educated in schools where this godless system prevails. Wherefore, we most earnestly exhort you to assist your pastors by your liberal donations in procuring for your children a Catholic education in your own schools, where they will obtain, not only that secular instruction required for their advancement in this life, but, also, that moral and religious instruction necessary for the salvation of their immortal souls in the next. This is a duty that God demands of you, and for which you will have to render unto him a rigorous account at a future day. Give liberally out of the means that God has given you, and you shall receive, in return, an ample reward from the Giver of all Good Gifts, always