

themselves for, if they permit Abolition to become an accomplished fact.

### PARALLEL CASES.

IN the early days of Christianity, while the professors of the new creed were everywhere being put to the test by blood and fire, it did not require much to save the life of one who was about to suffer martyrdom; all that was demanded from him was, that he should burn a little incense in honor of an idol. The performance of this trifling action alone was needful to deliver him from a terrible death, and to restore him to prosperity and honor; and we can well understand that his refusal to perform it was looked upon with bewilderment by the Roman magistrates, who could in no wise comprehend what might be these absurd scruples—as they considered them—which engendered this marvellous obstinacy, and led to such grievous consequences. Yet for fifteen hundred years the voice of the civilised world has loudly applauded the staunch Christian, who refused to compromise his principles, and who, rather than betray them, suffered death—whatever fierce and horrible form it should assume;—and there has been handed down to undying infamy the memory of those officers of justice, falsely so called, whose determination it was to overcome scruples they neither understood nor sympathised with. But, nevertheless, it is evident that the spirit, by which these latter were actuated, is still in being, and still contrives to make itself felt—the same in kind, if different in degree.

It would, perhaps, be difficult to persuade certain of our modern—and even colonial—legislators, that, when a Christian martyr was about to suffer, and all Rome had gathered to the spectacle, the spirit of the Cæsar, who sat to view the dreadful show, bore kindred to that by which they are actuated in supporting some of the ordinances enacted by them. There is, no doubt, much modification: the world is vastly changed since DIOCLETIAN'S reign; and where death, with every circumstance of horror accompanying, would then have been inflicted, inconvenience, pecuniary loss, social disqualification, and such matters may now only be looked for; but the motive which prompts the infliction of these is akin to that which led the Roman to the spectators' benches, and brought the Christian face to face with the wild beasts, the fire, the boiling oil, and all the terrible implements of the arena. Let our modern legislators read ecclesiastical history, and find if it is not so. Who were the men who thus encountered death? They were Catholics, and they were so treated, because they firmly refused to do that which they believed to be a flagrant breach of the law of God, and because CÆSAR was determined that they should observe practices which he approved of, rather than those enjoined upon them by the Faith.

And, *mutatis mutandis*, so it is now. The Catholic must suffer privation and loss, because his religion forbids him to follow the course chosen for him by various of our law-makers. Take, for example, secular education. The Secularist says, We consider this system better than that which you desire. Your scruples are absurd; we do not understand them. We do not ask much of you, and we are determined to use every means in our power to make you yield. So CÆSAR said in ancient times, when the Christian Church was young; he only asked those of the Faith, who were arraigned before his tribunals, to offer a little incense to a false god—surely, in itself, it was not much,—and he was determined to employ every means possible to enforce the accomplishment of his will; those means were unlimited, and he was relentless and cruel as a tiger, but he failed—the Church was constant, and suffered, and overcame. It seems a little thing to Secularists, that they should demand that Catholic children be sent to their schools; the scruples of Catholic parents are nothing to them; they do not sympathise with, nor understand them, and they vigorously make use of every means they possess to overcome them; but these petty tyrants must be taught, that if, in this, their spirit be that of CÆSAR, the Catholic is actuated by the same motives, that induced the Christian martyrs to stand firm under the utmost tortures that unimagined cruelty could devise. For he, likewise, is called upon to offer a sacrifice to demons, in giving over, as much as in him lies, the souls of his children to the enemy of God and man; therefore he is required to resist to the uttermost, and as energetically,

as if, having lived in the early centuries, it had been demanded of him, that he should partake in the adoration paid to the gods of imperial Rome.

### NEWS OF THE WEEK.

WE are happy to inform our readers, that the long-looked for arrival of the Christian Brothers has at length taken place. The Arawata, which reached Port Chalmers on Sunday morning last, brought in her from Melbourne four members of the famous Order, named respectively, McMahon, Healy, Bodkin, and Dunne. His Lordship the Bishop, accompanied by a number of gentlemen belonging to the Catholic congregation, went to the Port to meet them, and they were conveyed to Dunedin in a carriage, as it was feared that, had they waited to come by the train, they would have been late for the 11 o'clock Mass; for which, as it happened, they were in ample time, owing to the capital driving of Mr. Fitzgerald, who drove them up from Port Chalmers, a distance of nine miles, in three-quarters of an hour. The fact that the Melbourne boat came in on Sunday morning was unfortunate, as it prevented the Bishop from being attended by any of his clergy, and hindered other persons, who were most anxious to do so, from taking part in the reception given to the Brothers. However, there is no doubt that the most heartfelt satisfaction prevails on all sides, and this may well atone for whatever was wanting in outward manifestation. It is most pleasing to encounter everywhere expressions of gratification at the fulfilment of a desire so long entertained, and the supply of a need so severely felt, as that of efficient means of educating the Catholic boys of Dunedin. Those means are now at hand, and the sincere congratulations heard on all sides, afford the Christian Brothers the best possible augury of that success and happiness in their new position, which we join in most earnestly wishing them.

H.A.C.B. SOCIETY, INVERCARGILL BRANCH, No. 96.—The sixth quarterly meeting was held in St. Mary's Schoolroom, on Thursday, March 16, at the usual time; the president, John Kirwan, in the chair. Present—John Flanagan, V.P., John Maher, S., Thomas Meehan, W., Richard Fahy, and Owen Gallaher, S.V. There was also a good attendance of the brethren. The St. Patrick's Day Committee report that they have resolved to disallow at the evening amusements, what is known as fast or round dancing. Report received with applause. It was moved and seconded that the members of this branch attend in regalia, in a body, at the opening of the New Church at Riverton, which would soon take place. This was carried with acclamation. A member was found guilty of violating law 94, clause 15, by the Committee of the Branch, and for such offence, was suspended from all receipts for six months, and fined 20s. The sum of £4 11s. 9d. was passed for payment to Secretary, and postage and stationery. Contributions received, £14 16s. 6d. The Rev. Father Higgins was present for a short time during the evening. After the usual routine business, the meeting was closed with prayer.—A MEMBER.

BALFE'S opera, "The Bohemian Girl," was produced at the Queen's Theatre on Monday last. The music of this opera is of a light nature, and is characterised all through by brilliancy and prettiness. It was admirably put upon the stage, and the excellent scenery and well chosen dresses much enhanced the general effect, which was exceedingly good. Of Madame Simonsen's singing in the rôle of Arline it would be difficult to speak too highly. There are few songs which have obtained so lasting a hold upon the popular taste, as that well known one which occurs in this part, "I dreamt that I dwelt in Marble Halls," and it has rarely been more charmingly rendered than on the present occasion. The tenderness and playfulness of the wayward gipsy maid were charmingly expressed, and the vocalisation was of a very high character, more especially in the piano passages on the upper notes, which were remarkable in the extreme, being of exceeding sweetness and, with all, wonderfully clear and distinct. Throughout the whole opera, indeed, the singing of the lady in question was exceptionally charming, so that it is impossible to select any portion more particularly to commend in addition to the above mentioned song; but if there be anything that deserves mention more than another, it was the staccato notes which occurred in one or two of the harmonised pieces, and which were given exquisitely. Mr. C. Florence as Thaddeus sang and acted capital. His rendering of "Then you'll remember me" was honored by an encore; and had he not been resolute in discouraging a second attempt made at conferring a like compliment upon him, he would have been obliged to give another repetition of the same. In the concluding part of this air, he, with much success and a charming effect, made use of one or two falsetto notes, but on trying the same in an allegro passage of one of the concluding choruses, he was not equally happy. The part of Devilshoof afforded Mr. B. Levison scope for his excellent acting, and he played the wild Bohemian admirably well. Mr. Hodgson sang correctly in the character of Count Arnheim; he possesses a voice of considerable power and of much sweetness, but as an actor he wants ease and spirit. Miss Lambert as the Gipsy Queen sustained her reputation; her part was rather a subordinate one, but her mellow contralto was heard to much advantage, and the dignity of the untutored mistress of the wandering tribe was well portrayed by her. Mr. Steinbach proved himself, as Florestein, an amusing *farceur*. The choruses, in which this company is particularly strong, were, as usual, exceedingly good, and the orchestra was, in itself, worth going to hear, the violin and clarinet playing especially. This evening and to-morrow, an opera new to the colonies, and named in French, "Les Dragons de Villars," and in English, "The Hermit's Bell," will be performed, and we take it upon us to advise any lovers of music, who have not as yet heard this excellent company, to avail themselves of the opportunity of doing so, while it is in their power.

DURING a recent thunderstorm at Timaru, a large srolite of metallic structure fell, and has been forwarded to the museum.—'Weekly Argus.'