

'Tablet,' because that journal attributed the ill-feeling that has so long existed between England and Ireland to religious differences. Now, we ourselves are rather inclined to adopt a view opposed to that put forward by the 'Pilot'; for we cannot forget that the Anglo-Norman invaders of Ireland became in the course of time "more Irish than the Irish themselves." As the literature of Greece subdued the victorious Romans, until, as HORACE tells us, the conquered became the conquerors, so did Celtic influences take possession of the minds of the English settlers in the Emerald Isle; and whatsoever feuds they may in course of time have become engaged in, it can hardly be affirmed that they acted on principles genuinely derived from a difference of race. It was not until the so-called reformation had taken place that England can truly be said to have become the oppressor of Ireland. But, although we felt inclined to doubt the justice of the 'Pilot's' views, we did not for a moment hesitate to insert in our columns the article that contained them; for we felt that we should be conferring a benefit upon our readers by placing before them an open question dealt with in the masterly manner common to the writers in the journal to which we refer; and we held the matter to be amongst those on which Catholic journals may "agree to differ," and which they may discuss from opposite sides amongst themselves with all friendliness.

There are, however, certain subjects which it belongs to the office of a journalist to comment on, and concerning which all newspapers rightly termed Catholic must of necessity put forward like views, in whatever language or style they may be couched. Such, for example, is secular education, which is and must continue to be denounced by the whole Catholic press; and such are the secret societies. Should an editor admit into his columns an article or a paragraph advocating the one, or excusing the other, or should he publish an apology for the FALK laws, or a commendation of the Government of VICTOR EMMANUEL, we should at once say that he had forfeited his title to rank with Catholic journalists, and that his show of being one, if he were still to make such, was a mere pretence. On all other secular subjects, except such as are of like nature with these, it is lawful for Catholic journalists to differ as other writers do, and the columns of Catholic journals may be expected to contain opposite views on many points.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

We observe that a most satisfactory examination of the pupils attending St. Mary's Catholic School, Invercargill, has lately been held. The school has made marked progress under the direction of Mr. Sproule and Miss Thompson, and the fact that out of a total number of ninety names on the roll, there has been an average attendance of eighty, in itself speaks volumes. Generally throughout New Zealand Catholic education appears to be progressing with the best results, bearing testimony to the self-sacrificing efforts of Catholic parents to preserve the faith of their children, and the zeal displayed by the clergy in enabling them to do this.

On Christmas Day a number of the younger pupils attending at the Dominican Convent Schools in Dunedin were admitted into the sodality of the Holy Childhood. This Association is composed of children, and it has for its object to rescue from paganism the children of China and other heathen countries. The members are distinguished by red badges with medals which bear an image of the Divine Infant Jesus.

The prizes intended for the Art-Union to be held in aid of the Conventual Buildings in Dunedin, have been increased by the addition of two admirable views of the Ocean Beach, painted in oils by Mr. Power.

The annual concert and distribution of prizes took place at the Dominican Convent, Dunedin, on Monday, the 18th instant. His Lordship the Bishop of the Diocese distributed the premiums, and according to the usual custom of the establishment crowned the young lady who had been awarded the prize for good conduct. The music performed on the occasion was very admirably executed, and several recitations were delivered in excellent style, but owing to the want of accommodation it was found, as hitherto, impossible to admit the parents and friends of the pupils to witness their proficiency. This is extremely to be regretted; but it is hoped that by next Christmas this difficulty will be obviated, for the new conventual buildings are being rapidly proceeded with, and it is expected that long ere the end of next year the Nuns will have been settled in them. The necessity indeed that exists for better accommodation for the community of Sisters and their pupils is very apparent and hardly needs to be recalled by the exclusion of their parents from the very creditable exhibition of the children's talents and acquirements alluded to.

At a Concert of Sacred Music given in the Queen's Theatre, Dunedin, on the evening of Christmas Day, the "New Zealand Anthem," written by Mr. Thomas Bracken, and composed by Mr. J. J. Woods, of Lawrence, was performed. The manner in which it was received by the audience, who applauded it enthusiastically, bore ample testimony to the excellence both of words and music, and afforded the best augury for their future popularity, as well as

furnishing a sufficient proof of the fitness of the whole piece to supply the place for which it was intended by the talented author of the verses. The melody is extremely pleasing and original, and all impartial critics must feel themselves satisfied with the judgment delivered by the three eminent professional gentlemen of Melbourne, who awarded to it the prize.

On Christmas Day several Masses were celebrated in St. Joseph's Church, Dunedin, commencing at 6 a.m., and ending with Pontifical High Mass offered at 11 a.m. The congregations throughout the morning were numerous, and the number of communicants amounted to upwards of 400. The Rev. Father Crowley preached in the forenoon, and his Lordship the Bishop of the Diocese delivered a sermon in the evening, when the church was again well-filled at the recitation of the Rosary and Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament.

We learn with much regret of the death of Dr. Hulme, which took place suddenly at his residence in Dunedin, on Wednesday last. The deceased gentleman was of well-known eminence in his profession, and for his private virtues is much lamented by a large circle of friends.

On Wednesday next, 3rd prox., a picnic will be given to the boys attending the schools of the Christian Brothers. The steamer Iron Age has been engaged for the occasion, and will leave the Rattray-street Wharf for Portobello at 10 a.m.

Amongst the more useful publications relating to matters connected with health, current at present, may be reckoned a 'Treatise on Scarlet Fever,' by Mr. R. H. Bakewell, M.D. An excellent method is here described of dealing with the dangerous illness in question, so as to obtain a speedy cure. Directions are also furnished for preventing the spread of infection, and many valuable hints are given in language plain and easy of comprehension.

THE DOMINICAN CONVENT SCHOOL.

On Thursday afternoon a large number of ladies were invited by the Lady Superior of the Dominican Convent to be present at a dramatic performance by the pupils attending the school, prior to their dismissal for the holidays. The piece chosen for representation was a dramatised version of the late Cardinal Wiseman's celebrated novel of "Fabiola." The drama is in five short acts, and the plot is very simple. All the interest is centred in the persecution of the Christians by the Roman Emperor, the conversion to the Christian faith of Fabiola, a haughty Patrician Roman lady; and the martyrdom of her gentle cousin, the Lady Agnes, and the heroic boy Pancratius. In the first act the characters are all introduced at the house of Fabius, a Pagan nobleman of Rome, when a warm discussion upon the merits of Christianity and Paganism takes place between Fulvius and Sebastian. The young ladies who enacted these characters played their parts admirably, especially the former, who, entering thoroughly into the spirit of the piece, looked and acted the part of the Syrian spy to perfection. Fabiola, the learned and philosophical daughter of Fabius, was played by a young lady with becoming dignity and appropriateness of gesture. The young lady who undertook the part of Pancratius, one of the most difficult in the piece, did so upon very short notice, notwithstanding which she acquitted herself most creditably. Agnes, the martyr, and the Christian slave Syra, through whose instrumentality Fabiola was converted, were played with carefulness and effect; as were also the characters of Corvinus, Tertullus, Alfra, and the Sentinel. Throughout the whole piece the young ladies played with that natural easy grace and unaffected demeanour which can only spring from perfect culture and careful training. The musical part of the entertainment was all that could be desired. Two of the pupils presided at the piano during the afternoon, and the excellence of their playing was very much admired, especially a difficult selection from "Fra Diavolo," by four of the young ladies, and the "Marche aux Flambeaux." During an interval of a quarter of an hour the visitors were hospitably entertained at the Convent. The second part of the programme consisted of "Whittington and his Cat," which caused great amusement, the performers, with one exception, being very small. The amount of dramatic talent exhibited by the youthful players was really astonishing, especially the little lady who played the part of the hero. She was not only letter perfect, but seemed to thoroughly appreciate and give expression to the quaint humour of the character. The dresses in both pieces were appropriate and tasteful. The school-room had been decorated and darkened, and the stage lighted by footlights. The scenery had been kindly lent by Mr. Hume, Superintendent of the Asylum. The whole performance was very enjoyable, and eminently successful from an artistic point of view. The following day the children attending St. Joseph's school received their holidays, and at their concert displayed considerable musical proficiency, both vocal and instrumental. The concert was followed by an amusing little trifle, "The Peasant Queen," in which two of the girls created amusement by their comic impersonation of the characters of Bettina and Mrs. McMurdo.—These pleasant entertainments have a beneficial influence both in affording the children an object of interest to which they may look forward while at school, and as pleasant reminiscences of their school life after they have left their school days behind them. The parents of the children educated in the Convent owe to the nuns a debt of gratitude far beyond the mere repayment of a fee, for, owing to the untiring zeal and patience of those ladies, the children educated under their care, when they leave school, do so with minds well stored with sound principles of morality, with intellects cultivated, and manners refined, and are thus fitted to take their places in the world as useful members of society and accomplished ladies.

Mr Dion Boucicault has promised to write a drama, the subject of which will be the escape of the Fenian convicts from the Australian penal settlement.