

## Correspondence.

(We are not responsible for the opinions of our Correspondents.)

## CATHOLIC MATTERS.

To the Editor of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

SIR.—Following up the subject of my last letter, I may inform you that His Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Redwood has paid us a solemn episcopal visit this week. This visit, as he announced from the altar on Sunday morning, he intended to extend to the whole province, but circumstances prevented him at present from extending it further than this city. He gave the people his solemn episcopal blessing, and granted them an indulgence of forty days. After briefly explaining the nature and meaning of indulgences, he had the Latin formula read, which enunciated the present indulgence. His Lordship gave a very beautiful and impressive exhortation to the children, and to those who were about to be confirmed, on the dispositions with which they should approach the sacrament, and on the graces which it infuses into the souls of those who receive it worthily. His Lordship then celebrated solemn High Mass, assisted by Fathers Ginatz and McNamara, as Deacon and Sub-deacon. There was a very large congregation, amongst whom might be seen a large sprinkling of Protestants, who were no doubt attracted by the presence of His Lordship. After Mass was over, all those who were to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation approached the rails, the boys and men first, the girls and the women coming after. They were of all ages—from ten to forty, and considering the great number that approached the sacrament, the order that prevailed throughout was astonishing. The greatest credit is due to Mr. O'Connor, the head master of the boys' school, for the order and the appearance of the boys under his charge. It would be difficult to conceive anything more edifying than the manner in which those children, with innocence and fervour, and devotion gleaming from their pure, unsullied souls, approached the rails. The girls were under the direction of the Nuns, and were all robed in white, with red sashes, emblematic, I suppose, of the battle which, from that day forth, they were admonished to wage against "the world, the flesh, and the devil,"—a battle as yet undreamt of in its severity to not a few of them. One might, as he looked on that innocent crowd of children, meditate with profit on the harassing conflict with the unkind world,—on the perpetual and ever-recurring struggle for existence,—and on the dismal, rugged path which the impenetrable future has got hidden away in its dark bosom, and is, perhaps, now slowly developing for God only knows how many of those buoyant, happy, light-hearted children. May the armour which they put on to-day be a shield and a defence to them in the ceaseless combat with the world, and may He in whose service they are now enlisting themselves, and under whose banner they are enrolling themselves, help them to fight His battles like valiant soldiers of the Cross. There were altogether over two hundred persons who received the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation, and His Lordship seemed quite exhausted when the ceremony was over. In the evening, after Vespers, he preached to a still larger congregation than that of the morning, the church being, in fact, densely packed with persons of almost every shade of opinion, who were anxious to hear him. He took for his text a passage from Matt. xxiv. 13: "He that persevereth to the end shall be saved." Upon this text he delivered an eloquent and impressive sermon, showing the necessity, and pointing out some of the means, of perseverance. He dwelt at some length on the fact—and I believe that the doctrine was new to some of his hearers—that grievous sin may be committed in thought alone, and proved most conclusively that the gravity of the sin lies not alone in the act, but in the thought—that is, the free consent of the will, and that the act itself but gives to the sin an accidental malice. His Lordship has an agreeable, easy, and fluent delivery; his illustrations are always happy, and his metaphors well chosen; and, from the very beginning of his discourse to the last word of it, he rivets the attention of his hearers.

His Lordship was waited on by a few gentlemen on Saturday respecting the petitions which I mentioned in my last letter to you, and he expressed a sincere desire to help them in every way that he could to procure a bishop for Canterbury. He alluded to one or two trifling inaccuracies that had crept into the petitions by mistake or inadvertency, but in the main he agreed with them, and would, he assured them, do all in his power to get the province of Canterbury off his hands. He is to receive the deputation and to give his answer formally on to-morrow (Wednesday), after which, in all probability, I shall send you a condensed report of the result of the interview.

Christchurch, June 10th, 1877.

RATRREALENSIS.

## SPIRITUALISM!

To the Editor of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET.

SIR.—Does it not seem a peculiar mockery of the evil one, that persons, who reject the Christian evidences and the possibility of the resurrection of the body, should believe in disembodied spirits wandering about in space, and expressing very crudely digested theories upon all and everything, through the mouths of peripatetic lecturers? Solomon was indeed very exact in his definition of the man who has no faith in a personal Divinity, when he designated such a one "a fool."—Yours, &c.,  
X.

## LIBELLING A NATION.

[From the Nation.]

(Concluded.)

INDEED, the utter hopelessness of expecting fair play for Ireland from British *litterateurs* of any class whatever must impress itself upon any one who looks after what the British people read. Look wheresoever you may, be the writer high or low, be the audience gentle or simple, your discovery is the same. Ireland is a place to be sneered at; the Irish are a people to be run down. We have before us as we write a copy of the current number of a London weekly paper—an organ of high pretensions and high price. By way of a novel attraction for its readers it has started the publication of a story by William Black, who is, we believe, a Scotchman, and who is, we know, the writer of several clever novels,—books which have won for him a very considerable reputation, and carried him a good way towards the foremost rank of living writers of fiction. Such a writer, we would imagine, has no need to degrade his art, and ought not to have any inclination to do so, by making himself the creature of political prejudice and the mouth-piece of mean slanders against a people. Yet, on the threshold of his story, Mr. Black commits this gross and wanton sin. In one of his earliest chapters he introduces a member of Parliament—the "member for Ballinascreen." Ballinascreen, we need not say, is an Irish borough. It has a population of five thousand, and a constituency of three hundred and eighty, and we are informed that the Honourable Oliver Glynne spent £10,800 in getting elected for it, and, when he was unseated for bribery, that the electors, out of "regard" for him, elected his friend Hugh Balfour, a young Scotchman, who owned a fortune of some thirty thousand a year, but did not part with any of it to the worthy Ballinascreeners. This Balfour is an excellent person, rich, yet frugal, young, but wise, very clever, very high-principled, full of enthusiasm and of industry, a sort of member any constituency should prize. But Ballinascreen does not warm to him. It wants to lay hold of his money, and, failing to do so, it waxes wroth, and sends to London a deputation to demand from him a surrender of the seat. The chief of this deputation, and its spokesman, is "a small man with a large chest, a white waistcoat, and a face pink with anger, or whiskey, or both." He says "Sorr" for "Sir;" "Gentlemen" he expresses by "Gintlemen;" and "unseated" becomes "onseated" in his mouth. "In the idyllic seclusion of the back parlour of a Ballinascreen public-house" he has prepared a speech, which he now delivers, calling on the unpopular member to resign. Balfour replies that he will not. He adds that disfranchisement is too good for such a hole as Ballinascreen; it should be burned out of the political map. He will not swallow their Home Rule bolus; he will not give up his time to their wretched projects; he will not bolster up their industries that are dwindling only through laziness; he will not try to get every man of them a post or a pension. "Gracious heavens!" he cries, in a burst of political purity, "I don't believe there's a man child born in the town but you begin to wonder what the Government will do for him. The very stones of Westminster Hall are saturated with Irish brogue; the air is thick with your clamour for place." This amiable representative tells his visitors that he believes not a man of them came clean-handed out of the last election. He reminds them that Mr. Glynne kept the whole constituency drunk for three months, and bids them an abrupt good morning, with the meant-to-be-crushing remark, "Well, you must try to find a Home Rule candidate who will keep the town drunk for three months at a stretch."

This offensive and wanton burlesque has been read, and will be read, by a great many honest people who know nothing at all about Ireland, and who, without desiring to think ill of anyone, will be misled by Mr. Black into regarding the pink-faced orator as the type of an Irish spokesman, and Ballinascreen as the model of an Irish borough. We need not say to any person acquainted with this country that the history of Irish elections is in great part a record of threats defied, and losses endured, and sacrifices made, for the sake of principle. Bribes have been spurned, and beggary embraced, for the sake of the public good. Ireland returns poor men to Parliament, what England and Scotland do not, and never did. It is a conclusive comment on the libel of Mr. Black that an absolute majority of the Irish members of Parliament are at present men pledged to independence of the Government—men selected by their constituencies *not* to beg favours for their supporters, but sternly to resist the fascinations of Ministers and the blandishments of official life. The story of the recent Waterford election, which returned a Home Rule candidate, a man of moderate means, and rejected contemptuously the suitor who was supported by the threats of the landlords and by abundant wealth, reads instructively side by side with Mr. Black's romancing. The facts are all against him, but his fiction will pass for fact amongst those for whom he labours, and the hopelessness of expecting that Ireland will be fairly dealt with by English writers and English readers is illustrated by the fact that there is a market for such rubbish, and by the circumstance that a writer of ability and mark is found willing to sell his talents in such a market.

The victory gained on St. Patrick's day last, by the Apostles of Temperance in London—and at the head of the gallant corps stands the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster—deserves to be proclaimed with the sound of the highest praise. It is from the *Tablet* we gather the intelligence of the victory, in its remark "that on Monday (St. Patrick's Day was on the preceding Saturday) the charges of all descriptions at the police courts in London were lighter than they had been for some considerable time, and there was not a single one which could in any way be attributed to the celebration of the festival on Saturday." The *Tablet* justly glories in proclaiming this fact, by which, "our Irish fellow-Catholics have taught the inhabitants of London a lesson."