

WELLINGTON.

(From our own Correspondent.)

January 19, 1878.

THE prizes won by the boys attending the Marist Brothers' schools at the first yearly examination, were distributed to the successful competitors on Thursday evening, the 20th December, at the school-room, Boulcott street, by the Rev. Father McGuinness, who delivered an address appropriate to the occasion. There was a large attendance of the parents and friends of the scholars; several Catholic ladies and gentlemen occupying seats in front of the stage, where the prizes were distributed. The schoolroom was most tastefully decorated with flowers and evergreens by the Brothers, who took the deepest interest in the getting up of the entertainment, and in all the proceedings. Before the well-earned trophies were presented, the boys treated the audience to several songs and choruses, which were very well sung and spoke volumes for the instruction which the good Brothers are giving in this branch of education alone. The boys having received their prizes, the stage was cleared for the next part of the programme, which was an historical four act drama entitled "Sebastian;" or, the "Christian Martyr," got up by the senior boys attending the school, under the supervision of one of the Brothers, as an exhibition of their elocutionary and histrionic abilities and for the amusement of those who would honour them with their presence on this their first essay in public. The acting of the piece was splendid, showing that the actors were sensible of their respective impersonations, while the whole of the dialogue was delivered without a stammer or pause, and did not require the assistance of the prompter. The dresses and scenery were appropriate, representing Roman customs in the early days of the Empire. The boys went through their parts with the greatest earnestness, sustaining the different characters comprising the *dramatis personae* of the play in a manner that would do credit to a "professional." Where all were excellent, it would be hard to particularise; but the acting of Master Eddie was admirable. At the conclusion of each act the audience demonstrated their hearty appreciation of the efforts of the juveniles, by loud applause. The Brothers certainly deserve the warmest praise for their zeal in the cause of the boys, and the great pains and loss of time, which they devoted to make this, the first exhibition of juvenile native talent a success.

At the examination, previous to the breaking up of the school for the holidays, the youths acquitted themselves in a highly creditable manner, and to the entire satisfaction of the clergy; while the programme gone through at the entertainment must have afforded equal gratification to the parents and to all those present, who in any way helped to found this admirable scholastic institution; one which will turn out young men able successfully to compete in every walk of life with their perhaps more fortunate youthful fellow-countrymen, who will receive the benefits conferred by a paternal government in the baneful cause of godless State education.

On New Year's Day, the children attending the different Catholic schools in the city, to the number of four hundred, were treated to a picnic and *fete* by the clergy of both parishes. The procession, which consisted of thirty-five vehicles of all descriptions, under the charge of the Rev. Fathers Kearney and McGuinness and the Marist Brothers, started from St. Mary of the Angels, Te Aro, at ten o'clock, for the grounds of Mr. James Burke, situated at Evan's Bay, which were kindly lent for the occasion. The place chosen was a beautiful one; the fresh breeze coming in from the Straits, tempering the great heat and making it just enjoyable for the little ones, who enjoyed themselves immensely. Several of the friends of the children who accompanied them, held their parties on the slopes of the hills along to the waters' edge, and after satisfying the cravings of nature, mingled with the children, the gentlemen helping in getting up races among the boys. The children were regaled in the most sumptuous manner. The parents of the children might have lent their presence in larger numbers than they actually did. After spending a most enjoyable day's amusement, the children returned to town, after first giving three cheers for Mr. Burke and his family for his kindness in allowing them the use of his house and grounds.

A large number of the members of the Hibernian Society were present in their regalia at St. Mary of the Angels on Sunday morning, the 6th inst, by the directions of their chaplain, to partake of the Blessed Sacrament. The sight was a pleasant one, to see so many humbling themselves at the foot of the altar, and was not without its effect on the congregation present. This was the first of their quarterly communions, which have been established in the branch, and are intended to be punctually continued. In the evening, after Vespers, at the conclusion of the ordinary sermon, the Rev. Father Kearney delivered a short forcible address to the Hibernians who were present in their regalia, exhorting them in plain though eloquent terms, not to allow the spirit of disunion in any way to enter into their body: to remember that as Catholics they must go at least every three months to their duty; to obey the laws of the Church, and the laws of the land, and never to forget that besides being Hibernians in name they were also by birth, coming from that dear old land, which after the many centuries of persecution that have swept over it, has still clung to that grand old faith, and preserved it as pure and unsullied, as when received by their forefathers on Tara's mount, from the lips of the illustrious St. Patrick. On the following evening, a special meeting of the society was held at the meeting room, for the purpose of forming a juvenile contingent in connection with the branch; as also for the formation of a brass band among the men, and a fife and drum one among the juveniles. The President, Bro. J. Curry, was in the chair. The weather being very inclement the attendance both of members and juveniles was not so large as it otherwise might have been. About sixty youths expressed their desire of becoming members of the branch. The Rev. Father Kearney, as chaplain, delivered a short address to the youths on what would be required of them as juvenile Hibernians. It was arranged that the juveniles should meet on every alternate Thursday evening; their first meeting to be on the following Thursday. The names of about thirty of the eldest and most intelligent of the juveniles were

taken down for the purpose of being formed into a fife and drum band, who are to be provided with the different instruments at an early date; one of the members of the parent society having kindly volunteered his services to instruct them. They will also be provided with a uniform. The requisite number to form a full brass band was found in the society, having knowledge of music and capable of performing on the different instruments. The members are now in practice, and hope to make their first appearance in public on the national festival, St. Patrick's Day. When fully formed, the band will be a great acquisition to the society here, and will be the means of increasing their strength, besides giving them a respectable appearance in their various demonstrations in public. On Thursday evening, the 10th, the juveniles held their first meeting for the purpose of initiation, and to elect their various officers—Master Tuohy being elected President. Several new members joined the ranks, which promise soon to reach the strength of the parent branch.

There is nothing very interesting to your readers in the political atmosphere just now. Our junior city member, Mr. Travers, intends going to Europe by next steamer, but has not signified his intention of resigning his seat. It is, however, probable that he will do so; as the local Press are calling him to account on the subject, and are urging the ratepayers to form a meeting, and call on him to give up his seat, so that the Empire City may have its full strength in the ensuing season, which promises to be an important one. When Mr. Travers was elected ten months ago, it was manifestly and entirely by the Catholic vote. During the last Session he has shamefully broken the confidence which the Catholics reposed in him—in his support of the Education Bill—when the only thing they received at his hands was a short letter to one of the local journals, in which he admitted the justice of what they demand; while in the House he gave his vote and voice in favour of that tyrannous measure. It is to be hoped that should the election take place, the Catholic vote will be a "block vote" in the manner suggested in the leading articles of the TABLET, and be the first example in that direction for their co-religionists in other centres of population in the colony. It would be well if the Catholic electors formed themselves into a body, adopted their line of defence or attack in cases of contested elections, and threw their vote into the proper scale, which would be arranged before the polling day. By acting in this manner their strength would be great, and their influence felt, and they would soon be in a position to secure the return of some honest-minded person, who would pledge himself to use his voice and vote in obtaining a repeal of, at least, that portion of the Education Act, which presses so harshly and unjustly on the Catholics of New Zealand. It was by means of organisation that the Irish electors in the various large manufacturing towns in England were able to place their candidates at the head of the poll, in face of the Conservative and Liberal opposition, and it has now caused them to be acknowledged as a political power, the support of which many eminent politicians consider themselves happy in obtaining.

THE FUTURE POPE.

A GREAT amount of curiosity has been excited and conjecture aroused concerning the Cardinal most likely to be chosen as Pope in the future conclave. This curiosity and this conjecture have chiefly existed among non-Catholics, and the Ministers and journals of anti-Catholic governments on the Continent of Europe—especially of Italy. Certain correspondents and editors have canvassed the claims of each Cardinal, even of some who were dead—as if each were a candidate for a ward election, and have given each of them a character with a facility and in colours possessed only by "special."

Amongst Catholics in Rome the question of future Pope is rarely spoken of. When a distinguished Cardinal dies, it is not unfrequently said that, "had he lived, in all probability he would have worn the tiara." Whether it is that they trust in Providence to give them a good Pope like Pius IX., or that they give up conjecturing while the marvellous life of the present Pontiff continues, certain it is that the Romans—ecclesiastical and lay—speak surprisingly little of the future conclave.

But what may particularly account for the silence of Catholics and Catholic journals on this subject is the nature of the Conclave itself. It differs most essentially from all other elective bodies. There is no candidate beforehand; there is no one or more pointed out by the public voice, which is of no weight in this assembly, and has no influence over it. Governments, besides, have no longer the voice of the veto. There are no parties. Any Cardinal who enters the Conclave may depart with the tiara on his head. Each thinks, or may think, that it is himself who may be elected. They are but human and the thought is natural to them, as they are the body from which the Pope is chosen. There are at the present moment sixty-two members composing the Sacred College. Of these, perhaps ten, through humility, old age, or from a feeling of incapacity to struggle with the difficulties which surround the Papal throne at present, might refuse to accept the dignity of Pontiff. But then there would be fifty-two, any one of whom might accept the tiara, on receiving more than two-thirds of the votes, the number necessary. One Cardinal may make up his mind to vote for another, whom he thinks worthy of being raised to the position of Pontiff; but in such a voting body what party in that Cardinal's favor could he form?

We speak of this question from a human point of view. The religious guidance of the Holy Ghost, directing the mind of the Conclave, we do not speak of; but humanly speaking, the Conclave is unlike other elective bodies. The members at present composing the Sacred College number 38 Italian, and 24 foreign Cardinals. It has never happened previously, so it is said, that the Sacred College contained so many members who are not Italians. Thus it is quite possible that one who is not an Italian may be chosen Pope, and that will be a departure from the ordinary course of things; but who the future Pontiff will be it is impossible to guess, and there is not the least light to lead to a conjecture. True, a happy chance may lead some individual to hit upon the name of him who will afterwards rule the Church, but such guessing is of no value in answering this question—Who will be the next Pope?—*Pilot.*