

THE DUNEDIN HOSPITAL.

II.
(Contributed.)

THE Hospital supporters ought at once to organise themselves for the purpose of securing the efficient working of that institution. They ought if possible to know from the government—1st. What is the amount to be expected in aid of its support? 2nd. A Committee ought to be formed under whose inspection, made weekly, or when they deem fit, the Hospital arrangements in every department may be efficiently conducted. 3rd. We would suggest that the Hospital be divided so as to admit of classification according to the character of the inmates; taking care that notorious characters should not be allowed into the same ward with respectable and well-conducted persons. 4th. We feel certain that if special portions of the Hospital were allotted to the principal religious denominations, many advantages would follow to the inmates from such a course. The Catholic inmates have very often been annoyed by the distributors of Protestant tracts, leaving their articles on the beds of the Catholic patients, and by the oft repeated phrase, "Do you know the Lord?" Roman Catholic clergymen have had to complain again and again of the over officiousness of those not belonging to the Catholic Church. We are moreover aware that Protestant instruction was often given aloud to the entire ward at the same time that some Catholic patients were in the ward. If the different denominations had their separate wards, then all this trouble would be removed, and in the contributions handed in by the public, the charge of favoritism would be avoided; and the public spirit of the different denominations would be effectually tested. If the Government gave a *pro rata* sum for each patient, and some such plan as that now suggested were adopted, it may prove a blessing to the inmates. In our proposition there is no clashing of creed with creed; it is precisely to avoid the unpleasant circumstances of the past, that we venture to propose the measure. We think it does not say much for the wisdom or prudence of the Government and the Provincial Council to take away from the Hospital the definite sum necessary for its efficient working, without at the same time providing some sure resources for that purpose. If left as it is, as to system and the means of providing funds, certainly before a twelvemonth passes many complaints will be forthcoming against the Government measure, and the usefulness of the Hospital will be diminished, without a counteracting advantage arising out of the course adopted.

A CHANCE FOR MR MACANDREW.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Mr Macandrew, in his hustings speech on the occasion of the Superintendency contest, said:—

"Well, gentlemen, I should say that no man is worthy of being called a statesman—at all events a colonial statesman—unless his great object is, and he uses his influence towards getting a regular accession of industrial population to our shores.—(Hear.) I believe that any statesman is unworthy of the name, unless his aim is the attainment of that object."

I thoroughly endorse Mr Macandrew's utterance; and to make things more practical, I will give him a hint of a way by which his broad policy may be carried out the more successfully. Dr Featherston has, on his own showing by the immigration reports just to hand, left some 25 counties in central and southern Ireland unworked as a field for immigration. Strong representations being made from the colony of his neglect of duty, he writes to show that from the north of Ireland—taking into account the relative populations of the home countries—"a proportionate number" of Irish has been sent out. What an absurd idea! The great medicine man acting as a balancer of nationalities—*à la* the Scottish agency. Is it not Dr Featherston's business—he has the spending of some £7000 in salaries and office expenses to do so—to work all the available fields of immigration, and get as many suitable immigrants for the country as he possibly can get, and so avert the failure of the great colonial scheme? Or, is it the business of the balancer of nationalities, and is the £7000 a year given for doing it, to do the grand in the West End, and not try even in the slightest degree to turn New Zealand-wards the enormous current of immigration daily flowing from Dublin and Queenstown to the United States and Canada? Also, is a civil servant, however high, to set the Government at defiance and do as he pleases, which he did when he disregarded its instructions? The Government no doubt is to a great extent to blame by shielding him at first; but now the question appears to have almost resolved itself to this: Shall they go out of office or shall he keep his appointment. No doubt a good stiff vote of censure will be sufficient, and it will have the wholesome effect of making Dr Featherston more careful—will make him abjure either his well-known policy or give up the Agent-Generalship; and will also have the effect of making the Government more watchful over him. I could also refer at length to important omissions and blunders in regard to the working of England and Scotland; but there are plenty from these countries to speak for them, and especially from the latter. I will not at least in this letter do so.

Again I say, here is a fine chance for Mr Macandrew. Such an opportunity may not occur again of advocating his views, and it only remains to be seen if he will act up to what he has said. He is the superintendental representative in the House of the largest Province in the Colony. As an Otago man, I look up to him, and ask him to redeem his express promise, and move in the matter within 24 hours from the time in which he sees the issue of the 'New Zealand Tablet' in which this letter appears in the Parliamentary library. I am sure my readers, at least my Otago readers, will expect him to do the same. The notice of question is, Has Dr Featherston given any explanation of the fact why he did not take steps to obtain immigrants from the central and southern counties of Ireland? and also, Does the Government know the grounds on which he dismissed Mr Farnall? Was it because he set an example to Dr Featherston of doing his duty?—I am, &c., yours truly,

VIGILANT.

THE 'NEW ZEALAND TABLET' AND THE PERMISSIVE BILL.

TO THE EDITOR.

Pitt street, Auckland, 5th July.

SIR,—Your views on the subject of the Permissive Bill appear to have been formed under some misapprehension. It is not true, as you suppose, that the Maine laws have proved a failure. They may be, indeed, often violated—what law is not? Yet they have proved eminently successful, inasmuch as they have emptied the gaols, and made the most rowdy parts of populous towns quiet and respectable, and reduced pauperism to zero. I could adduce the most authentic proof of these facts, from official sources—the testimony of American judges and governors, who, it may be presumed, are the best qualified to give an opinion on the practical working or effect of laws among the people under their rule. You mistake if you suppose that legislation can do little or nothing either to encourage or repress intemperance. Experience proves the contrary. The Licensing Acts which have been long in existence here and at home are a direct and strong incentive to intemperance, in consequence of the multitude of drinking bars, which they permit to be opened. You think the people should have no control over the issue of licenses, because that would give rise to dissension and ill blood. By a like mode of reasoning, you might refuse any popular franchise at all to be used. You cannot elect an M.P.C., or M.H.R., or the member of any local public board, without the risk of contention and ill blood. You think the friends of the Permissive Bill expect too much from that measure. But do you not err on the other side by expecting too little benefit from it, or more; why not give it a trial? It is, of course, only a subsidiary or auxiliary means of promoting temperance, and does not exclude religious and moral influences, but co-operates with these without which no moral improvement of any kind on a satisfactory footing can be hoped for. You think the Permissive Bill would cause wrong and injustice. But does the want of some popular check in the issue of licenses not cause immenses or still greater wrong and injustice to society? You must, on reflection, see that it does. I agree with you in thinking that the so-called reformation did much to encourage intemperance and every form of gross sensuality. This was truly the natural consequence of men and women breaking away from those salutary restraints which the faith and discipline of the Catholic Church impose on human passions. Nominal Catholics, who seldom or never practice their religion, must be as bad as Protestants in that respect, or worse. Archbishop Manning is not a man to under-estimate the power of the Catholic religion to reform the vicious. Yet he is a strenuous advocate of the Permissive Bill and Total Abstinence League among Catholics, and nobly leads in the cause of licensing reform at home. It is deeply to be lamented, in my opinion, that you should be leading in an opposite direction, or at least exercising your influence to damp the zeal of the friends of the Permissive Bill and total abstinence leagues among your readers. I hope you may reconsider your views on this vital subject, and yet go along with Archbishop Manning. We greatly want Catholic temperance leagues here.

I am well aware that much may be reasonably urged against the expediency or necessity of Teetotal Leagues or the Permissive Bill, by Catholics, and more especially under our circumstances in this Colony, so few and scattered as we are. There is nothing positively sinful in the temperate use of alcoholic liquor. The Catholic Church itself is a great temperance league, though not a teetotal league. All its consistent and faithful members regard themselves as pledged to temperance, and will keep their pledge. Those who are not faithful Catholics, and who seldom or never approach the sacraments, will not practice temperance—at least out of a right motive—though they belonged to fifty teetotal leagues. All moral improvement which is sudden or spasmodic, and not founded on fixed religious motives or principles, is almost sure as a rule to be evanescent, and will pass away with the enthusiasm which created it. We saw something of this in the case of Father Matthew's movement—successful beyond all precedent as he was—yet the good effect of his labors was not permanent. The Church is not only the great teacher of the ignorant, but the sole reformer of the vicious, be they drunkards or any other kind of sinners. The one thing needful, therefore, among Catholics is to get them to frequent the sacraments. That being done, everything else that is good will follow, and temperance will be the rule among us without any teetotal leagues, or Permissive Bills. Yet in spite of all this, teetotal leagues are, in my humble judgment, desirable and likely to prove useful.

The Permissive Bill is meant to confer a political privilege, and is a just and righteous measure of public policy. I cannot but think that it is the duty of every freeman, and of all Catholics in particular, to support that most just and necessary measure to the very utmost of their power. I fear many of your readers do not even know what the Permissive Bill means, though a large majority of the Irish M.P.s have voted for it in the Imperial Parliament.

JOHN WOOD, Surgeon.

NOTES.

(By a Layman.)

WHO TAKE THE CREAM: STRIKES.

We have it dinned into our ears for ever—what nobody now doubts—that railways are an immense advantage to a country as a means of promoting trade and agriculture. While railroads are building, the working classes, the publicans, and small storekeepers have money in both pockets. But after they are built, who gets the profits principally? In England, certainly not the working classes, or the middle class generally. It is found that they have been constructed chiefly for the advantage of the monied men. The agricultural and laboring classes in England are now, and have long been, on pauper wages. The same may be said of the laboring classes generally, though of late they have been better off. England has long been covered with a network of railroads, yet four and a half millions of her population are, during some portion of the year, in a state of destitution, living on public charity, and therefore in a degraded state