

ditions of men fluttering their notes in their hands as they push their way up to the temple of fortune. If these people had been asked, a week before, for a guinea towards a charitable institution, they would, at least the majority of them, have pulled very long faces, and have talked about "bad times." On Cup Day there was no thought of bad times. Everybody had money, and everyone wanted to speculate. They did speculate, and, in most cases, left the course wiser and sadder men. On the lawn the scene was very animated. Encouraged by the warmth of the morning, the majority of the ladies appeared in dresses which were not much protection against the cold, sharp, wind which, about two o'clock, began to flud its way into every corner of the grandstand, and caused a shiver to run through the frames of the gaily-dressed ladies. For a time many of them struggled against the cold and did not put on their wraps, then vanity gave place to a desire for comfort, and a number of the prettiest dresses became hidden from view, beneath long cloaks, shawls, and jackets. Still, though the bleak wind blew its very coldest, a small minority of young ladies held out heroically against covering up their attractive dresses, and all the afternoon walked about the lawn in thin white garments, though they must have been actually frozen to the bone. The fortitude which these young ladies displayed in braving the cold and in risking attacks of inflammation of the lungs, was, I thought, a very good example of the extent to which people, especially ladies, are the slaves of vanity. Bunning across the lawn in the direction of the Telegraph Office, or standing with their glasses raised to their eyes, as they scanned the horses in the distance, were to be seen the well-known forms and faces of the small army of pressmen, who are almost as much part and parcel of a race meeting as the horses themselves. Though the day was particularly raw, and the chill wind made people's teeth chatter, the sky was bright and blue, and the snowy peaks of the distant Alps, glittering through a blue misty veil, were as lovely as ever. As one stood upon the lawn at Riccarton, and looked at the wide-stretching fields, as level as a table, on every side, at the rich, bright, thick green grass, dark hedges, and trees, and comfortable homes, which everywhere met the view, the thought came into one's mind that this is a very beautiful country indeed. One felt especially inclined to echo the words of an enthusiastic Canterbury man in the train, who, after gazing out over the sunny plains, drew in his breath and declared emphatically, "It takes a lot to lick this place." So it does. In regard to its fine pastoral land it takes a lot to "lick" Canterbury. Another conclusion which one could not refrain from drawing after a close observation of the assemblage upon the course was that, though there are cases of industrial wealth amongst us, this is, after all, only a struggling community. Amongst the crowd upon the course there were men whose names would stand good for a great many thousands. Still there was no evidence of widespread wealth or luxury. The great mass of the people, even of those who were upon the lawn and grandstand, were poor people dependent upon their work for their livelihood. Such being the case one could not help thinking what a terrible evil is the wild gambling spirit which has taken possession of people. How much loss it must entail, and what an incalculable amount of misery it must cause. It is doubtful if, in a community like this, gambling is not a far worse evil than drunkenness. It is more general and it is quite as demoralising. It undermines the honesty of men and sooner or later works the ruin of those who are devoted to it. Young men with very limited incomes go to the racecourse, and with the wild fever of speculation in their veins, spend every pound that they can beg, borrow or sometimes steal upon the totalisator. Then they are financially crippled and involved for the rest of the year, men with families do the same. They pinch and screw at home and everywhere else, in order to have money to spend upon the totalisator. There is no doubt gambling is a curse which brings more misery in its train than almost any other modern vice. It is especially disastrous in young countries, in which people have to live upon the fruits of their labour, under such circumstances the waste of money upon gambling means a serious curtailment of the necessities of life. Instead of being encouraged by law, the strongest efforts of the Legislature should be directed towards its suppression.

After Cup day was over, the weather became hopelessly broken. On Derby day rain fell heavily during the afternoon. It resumed again on Thursday and continued all day. People hoped against hope, that there would surely be an improvement on Show day. But no! on Show day things were but little better. The day was showery and the east wind was in a most cutting mood. Still, adverse as were the atmospheric conditions, great numbers of people visited the grounds. Some persons regard it as almost a sacred duty to go to the Show. They have done so for years, and not to do so once in their lives would almost bode as ill to them as what Miss Von Finkelstein says the silence of the mill-stones does in a Palestine house.

The Fire Brigade's great display of fireworks in Lancaster Park had to be postponed on account of the rain. So, altogether, it must be admitted that our much-vaunted Canterbury climate has not behaved at all prettily before strangers this year.

However, the rain which has wrought such havoc with the pleasure of visitors to the city, has been a very welcome guest to the farmers. It has benefited the crops to the value of many thousands of pounds. It was just the right sort of rain for the farmers. It was of that soft and gentle kind which falls lightly upon the ground, and at once sinks into it. So, in regard to the unexpected quota of moisture which has this week been administered to us, the old adage about one man's meat being another man's poison, was amply illustrated. The pleasure-seekers and shopkeepers were in despair, but the farmers are in the seventh heaven of delight.

After all his protestations to the contrary, Mr. Arthur Towsey is going to desert us. I thought that he intended something of the sort when he went on his trip to Melbourne. There must be enough of our musicians, journalists, amateur singers, etc., in Melbourne now, to form a little colony of their own. Perhaps some day they will be all glad to return to the ship which may not be so near foundering as these runaways think: Mr. Towsey's projected de-

parture is very generally regretted. He was a good organiser, and Christchurch musical societies will miss him very much.

When mentioning the races I forgot to say that the lucky owner of Manton, Mr. P. Butler, was an Irishman. I was exceedingly pleased to see the green and white pass the winning post first and congratulate Mr. Butler upon his luck.

Mr. O'Shannessy, the secretary of the Hibernian Society courteously showed me over the Society's new hall on Saturday. The building is a most substantial one, and the excellence of the work put into it reflects very great credit upon the conscientiousness of the architect, Mr. Whitelaw, and upon the contractors, Messrs. Petrie and Co. The hall is very lofty, well ventilated and commodious. It is capable of seating comfortably between three and four hundred people. The walls and ceiling are plastered and white-washed. A very handsome dado of kauri runs right round the hall. This dado is quite a feature in the interior of the building, and was, I believe, a new idea on the part of the architect. It is not in the usual style, that of narrow, upright boards. The dado is made of wide, thick boards, which run in a line with the floor. These boards are bordered above and below and divided into panels by thick, massive mouldings of the same wood. The whole effect is very fine. The hall is lit with sixteen gas jets under enamelled sunlights. At the back of the hall there is a comfortable, spacious room, in which the members of the Society will hold their meetings. Inside the front door there is a nicely-contrived porch in which, on the occasion of entertainments, ticket holders and door-keepers can sit. The external appearance of the hall is in keeping with the internal, and gives the idea of substantialness and good workmanship. Concrete steps lead up to the door, which is strong and massive, and is designed in square raised panels. The thick cornices over the door and windows give the front of the building quite an ornamental appearance. Altogether the Christchurch branch of the H.A.C.B. Society may well be proud of themselves as the possessors of this very handsome structure, which is one of the nicest social halls in Christchurch, and is, if I mistake not, the first hall built exclusively by the Hibernian Society in New Zealand. The Hibernians will hold their first meeting there next week, but the formal opening will not take place for some weeks. Indeed I think it is almost a pity to not defer the opening until St. Patrick's Day. The feast of Ireland's national saint would be a very appropriate day upon which to open the Hibernian Hall. At all events, upon whatever day it is opened, I hope to see upon the occasion a large and representative gathering of Irish people within its walls.

The Rev. Father Lavery is, I believe, to go to Ahaura or Grey-mouth, I am not sure which. During his brief stay in Christchurch he became quite a favourite with those with whom he came in contact. I am sure that he will be warmly welcomed on the Coast. Somehow when looking at Father Lavery on the altar on Sunday last the thought came very strongly home to me of how much those young priests sacrifice in leaving the land they so dearly love, their home and friends to come out here. We are apt, I am afraid, to take all this sacrifice too much as a matter of course, and sometimes fail to appreciate it as it deserves. We are prone to forget that the priest has natural affections, and must, even though sustained by special sanctity, severely feel the wrench of breaking off all old ties and of going forth in the world to walk alone. We lose sight of the fact that beneath the cassock there is a human heart which, in a new land and among strangers, must feel home-sick, and lonely, and must sometimes crave for sympathy.

Friends of the TABLET in Christchurch—of which, I am glad to say, there are a great many—are delighted to find that the courageous little journalistic champion of Catholicity and Irish Nationalism in New Zealand is in the prosperous condition which the publication of its last balance-sheet shows it to be. *Aprors* of the influence of the TABLET and Bishop Moran, I notice in the leading Dunedin daily paper a long account, the other day, of Father Burke's lecture. Before Bishop Moran and the TABLET educated public opinion, a line of a report upon such a matter, or upon anything Catholic, would not have been admitted into a secular paper in Dunedin. Now things are very much altered, but Irish people and Catholics in this Colony should never forget to whom this alteration is due.

The ovation which Gladstone, the great representative of Home Rule in England, has been receiving during his tour in the Black Country should show us in New Zealand how widespread must be the sympathy with Home Rule. The example of such a man should give courage to us in New Zealand. At the close of this century, there is no doubt but that his name will stand out among those of his contemporaries as the greatest statesman in which this century has produced in England. Sure y, where he leads, professed sympathisers with the movement in New Zealand need not fear to openly follow. Those noble words of Gladstone's, that "the residue of his life is the property of Ireland," will doubtless become his torical, and will echo through the centuries to come.

The Literary Society is, I believe, at sixes and sevens. The "new departure" does not appear to have been an unqualified success.

The Governor's banquet on Saturday night was a very successful affair. I was told that undoubtedly the best speeches of the evening were made by Irishmen—the Governor, and ex-judge Gresson. Sir William was in splendid form, and surpassed himself in lauding up this "fine country."

On Sunday at eleven o'clock Mass Father Lavery preached. He took as his text the second part of verse 19, chapter 2 of Jeremiah, and there from preached a very finished sermon, indeed, upon the evil of mortal sin. Judging by Sunday's sermon Father Lavery gives undoubted promise that in the future he will uphold the honour of his country as being the natural home of oratory.

On Sunday there was a reception of the Children of Mary.

His Lordship Dr. Grimes is at home at present.

Mr. Lonargan is still absent and is very much missed.

The hotels in town have been crowded this week. At the Queen's there were "shake downs" upon every available space upon the floors. I am not sure that there were not hammocks swung from the ceilings. The visitors are clearing away and the city is resuming its normal state.