

## CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

January 2, 1882.

## EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

In connection with the Social Science Congress recently held in Dublin, I take the following from an English Protestant paper:—"The largest attendance was secured in the Educational Department, when two ladies, Mrs. Byers and Miss Blackburn, read papers on the Higher Education of Women; and a paper was read by Miss Cusack (the Nun of Kenmare) on Education as a Preparation for Emigration. The general enthusiasm on behalf of female higher education was not shared by Professor O'Ryan, of Cork, who was altogether sceptical as to the value of a technical college education for ladies. The ladies, however, found a champion in the Provost of Trinity College, whose argument, unfolded amid loud cheers, substantially was, that what was intellectually sauce for the gander was also sauce for the goose. Miss Cusack's paper 'A Plea for Educating People as to the requirements of Countries to which they were bound to emigrate, and for the Protection of Young Girls abroad, by founding Establishments for their reception and guidance,' was favourably discussed. Mr. Connolly, a gentleman who has entertained several sections with experiences of his travels abroad, related in rich brogue, and with a naïve self-approbation how he had dined with rich men abroad, who had educated themselves, after mere schooling at Home, in the fundamental attainments, reading writing, and religion. His version of the three R's commended itself particularly to the Roman Catholics, who largely attended this section. The Nun of Kenmare, who is not unknown to the world, was one who took part in the proceedings." Probably a portion of the above is meant as a sneer at the supposed voluntary ignorance of "Roman Catholics," but we will let that pass. I think we must all feel grateful to our venerated Bishop for his wise words lately addressed to the pupils of the Wellington Convent Schools, as reported by you in a former issue. Without such an authority and support to fall back upon, I should hardly have dared to express some of the thoughts which have been for years in my mind, and which the experience of daily life only suffices to confirm. I am quite aware that in the present rage for education so-called, it is impossible for Catholics to permit themselves to be left in the background, and that they are bound to provide at least equal advantages with those offered in the Government Schools; and yet I would respectfully inquire of what practical use in the future life of the vast majority of the pupils are the multifarious accomplishments, sciences, ologies, &c., to which so much of their time and attention is devoted? At Home it is a common complaint, even in the case of girls occupying a high social position, that on their marriage all the expensive "knowledge" they have studied so long and diligently to acquire, is quietly laid by for ever. The pianoforte is closed, the pencil and brush discarded, the French, German, and Italian books never opened, and so on through the whole list. It cannot be denied that while there are exceptional cases in which great talent or even genius exists, and which will never run the risk of being overlooked or discouraged; still the greater number of students never attain more than a respectable mediocrity—oftentimes far less than that. Would it not be far wiser and better for such as these to cultivate with diligence the one talent or more they are conscious of possessing, and perfect themselves in all those homely and domestic duties which play so important a part in the lives of each one of us? No doubt to some extent a highly cultivated mind and a very high degree of education are sources of pleasure and enjoyment to their possessors, still, especially in the colonies, where things seem often upside down, and ladies and gentlemen are, by the will of God, placed in positions for which their birth and education totally unfits them, it is not difficult to guess that very frequently their cultivation and refinement must rather be a source of discontent and repining, and thus become a strong temptation. For those born in less exalted positions I should fear there must often be danger lest the "smattering" of accomplishments they acquire should lead them to be ashamed of the position in which God has placed them, perhaps even of the good parents who have made such sacrifices to obtain for their children the advantages they themselves never possessed. Such at least is too often the case amongst the young folks who attend the State schools.

**THE RULING PASSION STRONG IN DEATH.**

The Right Hon. Sir William Heathcote, Bart., of Hursley Park, County of Southampton, has lately died. He was a very High Churchman, squire of the parish of Hursley, where stands the beautiful church built from the proceeds of the "Christian year." Some of your readers will not be familiar with the name of the author of this work—John Keble,—the intimate friend through life of the two great Cardinals, Henry Edward Manning and John Henry Newman. John Keble hovered on the borders of the Catholic faith, but less happy than his illustrious friends, lacked either the light or the courage to embrace it. Whether the Catholic "taint" was unbearable to Sir William Heathcote, or whether any of his near or dear ones actually "went over" does not appear, but his will, just proved, contains fresh evidence of the undying prejudice and hatred of Protestants against our holy faith. It stipulates that "if any person made tenant for life of his said estates, or tenant in tail before he comes into possession, shall join the Society of Jesus, or any order of monks or community in communion with the Church of Rome, he is to forfeit his interest in the said estates as if he were dead, and they are to go to the next person entitled."

This happy season was celebrated with great joy and devotion in the Church of the Most Blessed Christmas-Tide. The first Mass was said at a very early hour, and was followed by four others, large congregations being present at each; and another Mass was said at Halswell by the parish priest, the Rev. Father Ginaty. The church was suitably decorated, in a light but effective manner, the pillar and arches being wreathed with garlands, as also the pulpit and altar rails. The side

altars were covered with lovely flowers, that of the Sacred Heart in particular, which was a mass of glorious scarlet and white blooms. The church was likewise largely attended at Vespers, when the high altar was more than usually grand from the tasteful display of flowers, candles, etc., the large and handsome standards adding to the air of devotion. The sermon was on the text "I bring you tidings of great joy," etc. (St. Luke ii., 10 and 11). The object of the preacher's discourse was to instruct his hearers in the wonderful blessings which have come to mankind through the mystery of the Incarnation, and thereby to make them raise their hearts to heaven in gratitude for such favors, and consequently pay their fitting tribute of welcome to the crib of Bethlehem. The Rev. Father also enlarged on the state of the world at the time of the birth of Christ, and showed the lamentable condition of mankind when its Deliverer appeared. One is glad that at the Hospital and Asylum efforts were made to make this happy time one of joy to the poor patients. In the Hospital the corridor and wards were prettily decorated, and plenty of mottoes, wreaths, stars and crosses were to be seen. At the Asylum efforts were made for the enjoyment of as many of the patients as possible in the grounds, some of the wards were decorated, and extra tobacco was distributed. But by far the most original, and, let us hope, unparalleled way of celebrating this joyful season, took place at Pungarehu, where "the men" not only had a holiday, decorated and illuminated their tents, but also, to the number of 200, went out and destroyed about 150 acres of Maori crops, intending moreover to repeat their scandalous pastime.

**SCHOOL TREAT.** The school treat was certainly a very great success. About 700 children, and almost as many adults, were present, and a very lengthy programme of amusements was provided, all of which passed off with great éclat, under the direction of the Rev. Father O'Donnell, assisted by several gentlemen. The parish priest visited the scene of enjoyment during the day; the Rev. Father Chataigner, of Timaru, and the Rev. Father Walsh, of Lyttelton, were also present. The children, with their parents and friends, had assembled in church at 9.30 a.m. to assist at Holy Mass, and they returned in the evening about 6 o'clock for Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. At Mass the parish priest exhorted this favoured portion of his flock to pass the day innocently and happily, urging them to put away during Mass all thoughts of the coming sports; and in the evening he asked them to return thanks for having been preserved from all dangers whilst engaged in their innocent pastimes. Thus terminated a day full of joy and pleasant recollections for the children and their parents, and of sincere gratification to Father O'Donnell, who was unwearied in his exertions to promote the comfort and pleasure of all present.

## DANGERS OF MIXED MARRIAGES.

On many occasions during the past few years Catholics have heard the parish priest dwell on the terrible evils of "Mixed Marriages," and although to persons ignorant of these evils, his condemnatory remarks might appear somewhat severe, yet facts so glaring as those frequently brought forward to strengthen his arguments cannot fail to banish from our minds any misgivings—if such we could have—as to the dangers of these marriages. It is not long since the Rev. Father mentioned the cases of two families, the children of which—ten or eleven in number—are now being reared in open hostility to the Church, in the tenets of Wesleyanism; their pious mothers having died whilst the children were young. But a more cruel outrage offered to the memory of a deceased Catholic can hardly be recollected than that to which the parish priest alluded last evening at vespers. The tale could not be better told than in his own unvarnished words, which I will therefore give as nearly as possible. Having, according to a fixed and pious custom, prayed for persons ill in the parish, the Rev. Father requested prayers for the repose of the soul of a Mrs. Fisher, whose remains were yesterday interred in the Church of England Cemetery, and thus continued, "lest it should seem strange to you that I should ask prayers for one whose remains were borne to the Church of England Cemetery, I must state that Mrs. Fisher was born a Catholic, and died a Catholic. About 11 o'clock on Christmas night, two Protestant ladies called at the Presbytery and requested me to come and see the dying person. Knowing the obstacles I paced in her way as regarded the practice of her religion, I inquired if her husband wished that I should see his wife; the ladies answered in the affirmative, adding that it was at his special request they had come for me. When I reached the house, he met me at the door, and immediately conducted me to his wife's room. I requested all present to withdraw for a few moments, and after about three to five minutes had elapsed, I asked Mr. Fisher and one of the ladies who had come for me to return to the sick room. Willingly and eagerly they gave me every facility to administer the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and give the Apostolic Benediction. The following night I met with the same polite reception, and, with the husband, remained a good while at the bedside of the dying lady. Her death took place on Thursday morning, and in the evening of the same day, the husband called to request me to consent to her burial in the Church of England cemetery. Having explained to him the doctrine of the Catholic Church on the matter, and having pointed out his own unaccountable inconsistency, he retired, promising to reconsider the subject. However, he persevered in his first intention and buried her accordingly. Whilst," continued the parish priest, "I ask you to pray for the repose of her soul, I protest against such cruel tyranny, and such an outrage offered to the memory of a Catholic; I protest not only in the name of every Catholic of the city, but I also protest in the name of every Catholic of Christendom, whose feelings are outraged by having a Catholic buried without rites which she held sacred, and which some-time previously in a solemn profession of faith, she promised before the altar to revere as sacred, with God's assistance, to the end of her life." Such is the sad tale I chronicle with mingled feelings of pain, regret, and disgust, and with a firm hope that for the future the wisdom of the One True Church will be ever recognised and revered by her children in the matter of those sad and dangerous evils, "Mixed Marriages."