

## CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own Correspondent.)

October 15, 1883.

THE Anglican Synod has been for some days in session, and although details of the ways and means by which that most wonderful institution, the Anglican Church, is managed in this part of the world, are not particularly interesting to Catholics, there are, nevertheless, a few points which have cropped up in the present solemn deliberations on which I should like to say a few words. A great part of the Synod's time has been occupied in discussing a motion of the Rev. Mr. Lingard "that a committee should be appointed to take into consideration the best means to be adopted by the Synod towards carrying on more efficiently the work of the Church in the diocese, and the pecuniary position that will be necessary for this object." This proposition, apparently so harmless and simple, was yet of a revolutionary character, as Mr. Lingard explained that his wish was to absolutely sell Church property to the value of £100,000, for the purpose of paying off their English loan, releasing the parishes of the burden of debt under which they were groaning, of completing the Cathedral, and of building churches and schools. In his opinion the "Church" is in a very critical state, and he trembles for her future if something is not immediately done. More churches and more men are, it seems, wanted to "endeavour to draw into the Church the masses of the people," although Archdeacon Harris says that since the opening of the Cathedral the churches are comparatively empty, and the people are leaving them. The Cathedral, however, is not considered to be too well attended, and apparently has not been successful in carrying out its intended work of "revivifying the Church," for in addition to its being by no means self-supporting, a good many of the synodsmen objected to it as "premature," "absolutely destructive to the work in the diocese," and altogether a "nuisance." In the course of his remarks Mr. Lingard mentioned that the Church property was worth a quarter of a million, and that the Dean, at last synod, had said that it was not desirable that this should be known to the general public. Later on, however, a synodsmen, who is likewise one of the ablest financiers in our city, and may therefore be supposed to know what he is talking about, said that after examining the documents laid on the table, and those kept in the Church Steward's Office, he estimated the Church property at £384,702, exclusive of the value of the churches, parsonages, and schools—say £90,000. (The Cathedral has not apparently been included). In years gone by, in the Old Country, when the question of the failure of the Church of England to reach the hearts, and secure the attachment of "the masses of her people," was discussed, the everlasting excuse was that she was kept in a state of bondage and comparative inefficiency by the fact of her "establishment," but give her "dis-establishment," and, consequently, freedom to proclaim the truths she had hitherto been unable, in her muzzled condition, to make known, and we should see wonders past all expression. Well, here we have the exact Utopia so eagerly longed for—freedom from State control, a fair field, and, in addition to these, a purse but little inferior to that of Fortunatus, and what do we see as the result of the labours of a body of men whom it is only fair to credit with a real anxiety to do what they think right according to their respective lights? Your readers will supply their own comments; the human origin of the "Church" of England, whether there, here, or elsewhere, is but too plainly stamped on all its thoughts, words, and deeds. As to the Church property, much talk has, of course, ensued, and the *Lyttelton Times* is not alone in foreboding "confiscation" as looming in the dim future, say ten years hence, and this journal is pleased to approve of Mr. Lingard's proposals as containing "the essence of caution, and business foresight." It also recommends the friends of the Church to "flee from the wrath to come," and to "proceed to disencumber themselves of some, at least, of their dangerous wealth."—The annual debate on religious education, in the form of establishing "Church schools," which regularly comes on, occasions a great amount of talk, and leaves not the smallest tangible result, also afforded an opportunity to show how the exertions of Catholics in the way of education are appreciated by those in many ways very hostile to our holy religion. Archdeacon Harper thought that "the Roman Catholics, by their persistent efforts, were bound to succeed eventually in gaining their demand for a dual system, and the Church of England would gladly avail herself of the same system." Mr. Graham mentioned that "the Catholics at Timaru had, at an expense of £3,000, built excellent brick schools, and that the difficulty of teachers had been met there by ladies teaching the boys even up to the age of 14." Archdeacon Dudley "had often wondered how it was that the Church of Rome could get ladies to devote themselves by vows (which he, of course, disapproved), while the ladies of the Church of England could not be induced to devote themselves to train up the little ones of Christ. He was quite certain that education without religion must lead to Freethought." Here I may mention that Caeson Stanford said that from facts that had come to his knowledge, there were institutions in Christchurch which were fostering infidelity, and Mr. Graham said "he knew for a fact that Freethought was gaining a position in Canterbury College, in the State schools and in the Supreme Court." Mr. Weston "could not but admire the Roman Catholics for the sacrifices they made. Other denominations would not make such sacrifices." The Dean said that "the Roman Catholics, by their persistence, would gain what they desired—a subsidy for their schools. Why should not the Church imitate their example?" The Hon. Mr. Acland said that "the Roman Catholics were prepared to devote time and money to their separate schools. They admitted children free, though they expected one shilling a week if the children were not too poor. Mr. Swanson had stated that one of the Roman Catholic schools in Auckland was the best in the Colony. The Roman Catholics would, he (Mr. Acland) believed, get what they were insisting upon. (No.) They had a very just claim; this was undeniable. They taught 1000 children, and thus saved the

State the expense of teaching them—this showed the justice of their claim. The Church of England did not do this, and had not, therefore, the same claim. The Roman Catholics did not intend to give up their claim, and if the Church were wise in her generation she would imitate their example. When asked by the Parliamentary Committee, a Roman Catholic witness had said that he believed the State schools tended to infidelity. The Catholic theory was that religion must pervade the whole system of education." On the whole the present Synod seems less lively and amusing than usual, but one thing does occur to me as worth mentioning, and that is the astounding and inexplicable, to a Catholic mind, manner in which Anglicans treat their Bishop, and what use he really is to most of them would be hard to say. For instance the "Primate," good worthy man, took occasion to say in his opening address, that he would recommend that the parish of Lyttelton should be divided, and a new parochial district formed. He also ventured to hint that although some members of the Church might be dissatisfied, and even unseemly strife and ill-will might follow, still it might be permissible for the Bishop to take on himself the responsibility of instituting an official inquiry, when, from his own observation, or from information received from others, he may consider some division essential to the spiritual welfare of the inhabitants. Finally he plucked up courage to ask the Synod to appoint a select committee to consider and report on his proposal; and let no one make fun of the words I have used, for the Bishop's courage was really admirable, considering that he had previously received a severe snubbing from the Lyttelton Vestry, which "deprecated unasked-for outside interference with any parish," and the letter in which these respectful words occurred was carefully read by the Lyttelton synodman to the Synod. A fierce opposition was the result of Dr. Harper's well-meaning attempt to do something for the spiritual welfare of that amiable and docile portion of his flock, until, wonderful to say, it occurred to two gentlemen present that "it would be ungracious to refuse so reasonable a request from his Lordship," and that "great want of courtesy to his Lordship had been shown by the opponents of the motion;" and ultimately "His Lordship" was actually allowed his select committee. To a Catholic it would seem that "His Lordship's" position must often be miserable, as, for instance, when he has to listen to the most opposite and heterogeneous "views" of men of all shades of opinion, who, nevertheless, belong to the all-embracing Church of England. I take one example: There was a great lament over the want of earnestness in "the Church," and a motion, scarcely complimentary to the piety, if creditable to the humility of the clergy of Canterbury, was passed, asking that the Archbishop of Canterbury should be requested to send out a clergyman with the special mission of "stirring up" Anglicans here, both clerical and laymen. Amongst other propositions, was one that a second church should be built in each parish, to be worked on the Methodist system, and to be used for "conversions." Now, those who know Dr. Harper will also know that a proposal of this nature would be unspeakably distasteful to him, and yet he let it pass without comment. After delivering his address, he is almost silent, he listens, and gives a casting vote when required. If anything particularly heterodox shocks him, he is probably consoled by the reflection that the beautiful comprehensiveness of his "Mother Church" sanctions these opinions equally with his own, and altogether long habit has, no doubt, made him tolerably callous. I remember some time ago making use of the term "dummy bishop"; I should have forgotten doing so had I not been sharply censured by some excellent friends, who, in my hearing, although they were quite ignorant of the culprit's identity, warmly censured the application of so "shameful" a term to a man like Bishop Harper. Nevertheless, I think I was amply justified, so much so that I now repeat the expression, since it cannot be other than the exact truth with regard to any bishop or shepherd who, instead of leading his flock, suffers his flock to lead him.

His Excellency the Governor is to be present at the Races and the Agricultural Show early next month, and has been invited to open the Industrial Exhibition in December. Mr. Cunningham, now in London, has selected some handsome cups, now on their way out, to be offered as prizes at the Show.

At the last meeting of the Industrial Exhibition Committee, a really splendid light, brilliant, clear, and steady, was exhibited by Mr. Crompton, made from petroleum from Gisborne. The quantity of space applied for at the Exhibition now amounts to 12,640 square feet.

The Hospital Board having intended to apply the Government grant to the erection of new buildings at the hospital, in preference to spending it on the drainage, which has been reported as a most necessary work, are disgusted at finding that Government has given the money for drainage purposes only. New buildings are no doubt urgently required, and a deputation of the Board are about to wait on the Colonial Secretary, drawing his attention to that necessity.

The most inclement and drenching weather of Saturday put an end to the various events which were to have taken place that day, such as the opening of the boating season, for which great preparations had been made, and the first of the Cup matches, between the Midland and Lancaster Park Cricket Clubs. Judging from the appearance of a good many fruit trees yesterday morning, which were covered with withered black leaves, a very sharp frost appears to have succeeded the deluge. The wind was so fierce, I scarcely remember its like, and its effects were to be seen in damaged houses, roofs, verandahs, fallen trees, etc.

I have received the following communication from Halswell, and have much pleasure in giving it a place in my letter.—A very pleasant gathering took place last Wednesday at Mr. Joseph Kennedy's, Halswell, the occasion being a picnic given by the parents of the children attending St. Agnes' School to the teacher, Miss Noonan, who is about to resign charge of the school. Over one hundred people were present during the day. A number of games, races, etc. were indulged in by the children, each of whom received a prize, and a plentiful supply of good things—lollies, cakes, etc. Altogether a very enjoyable day was spent. During the afternoon the following address was read and presented to Miss Noonan by Miss Burrows (one of her pupils), accompanied by a very handsome fern picture,