

O A M A R U.

(From an Occasional Correspondent.)

July 23, 1894.

AFTER fifteen months work our new church is now approaching completion. The masons have nearly finished their part of the work, as also have the plumbers. The slate roof is completed, but the beautiful panelled ceiling will not be included in this contract. The lack of funds, consequent on the bad times, will not allow of the whole contract being gone on with; consequently the carving in the interior on the pillars, the erection of the towers, and the architraves in the front will have to be deferred for the present. But notwithstanding this the church presents a very imposing appearance, and occupying, as it does, a splendid site, it may be seen from all parts of the town, to which it is a decided ornament. The opening will, I believe, take place before the end of the year, and that his Lordship, Bishop Moran may be preserved in health, so that he may perform the ceremonies in connection therewith, is the sincere wish and prayer of his very many Oamaru friends.

The half-yearly meeting of the local branch of the Hibernian Society was held in the schoolroom, Usk street, on Thursday evening, July 5. There was a good attendance of members, Bro Corcoran presiding. The quarterly balance-sheet showed that financially the Society was in a very satisfactory position. Though only little more than two years in existence, there are now over 50 members enrolled on the books of the Society and the value of assets over liabilities reaches nearly £120. The following officers were elected for the ensuing term:—President, Bro P. Corcoran (re-elected); vice-president, Bro J. P. Martin; secretary, Bro P. J. Duggan (re-elected); treasurer, Bro Jos Maxwell (re-elected); warden, Bro J. McMahon; guardian, Bro J. Evans; sick visitors, Bros A. Direen and D. O'Connor. The installation ceremony was immediately proceeded with and after a hearty vote of thanks to the retiring officers, the meeting was closed in the usual manner.

H. A. C. B. S.

THE half yearly meeting of St Patrick's branch, No 192, was held in the school-room, New Headford, Lincoln, on Thursday, July 12 h.

Despite the inclemency of the weather and the prevalence of Influenza, to which several persons in this district have fallen victims, there was an unusually large attendance of members, Bro E. O'Rorke, president, in the chair. The balance-sheet for the quarter ending, was read and adopted. The members expressed their satisfaction on the steady increase of the funds of the branch, and complimented the out-going officers on their excellent management during their term of office. One member was reported on the sick fund. The list of newly elected officers was then read by the secretary, after which the retiring president, Bro O'Rorke, rose and extended a very hearty welcome to the ladies and gentlemen who were present by invitation to witness the ceremony of installation which would shortly be performed. Father Foley also expressed his sense of pleasure at this new departure to invite friends to be present with them on this interesting occasion. This was doubly gratifying to him:—Firstly, because the ceremony of installation was a very impressive one—worded upon truly Catholic principles; secondly, as we must expect recruits chiefly amongst the young men of the parish, it is desirable that the fathers, mothers, and sisters of our boys would witness and judge for themselves what a laudable step their James has taken in this momentous period of his life. He on this account strongly exhorted all parents to advise their sons in this direction, who would find it to their advantage from a spiritual and temporal point of view—for none but practical Catholics were eligible as members. This first fundamental condition proved the genuineness of the colours of Hibernianism. If a member happened to be stricken down by illness or accident he received aid as a matter of justice out of the accumulated funds to enable him to procure medical advice, and take rest till he was again able to resume his former occupation. Besides, this being the only Catholic benefit Society in New Zealand, should be another incentive that all Catholic young men would avail themselves of becoming members in due time. Before sitting down, the rev speaker endorsed the welcome accorded the visitors by the retiring president, and expressed a wish that on future occasions of a like character they would, in still larger numbers, grace this hall by their presence.—*Cum vobis facite* to the visitors.

The installation ceremony was then read by the genial Past President Bro Doherty. The following are the names of the newly elected:—President, Bro William Ryan; vice-president, Bro Thomas Henley; secretary, Bro Richard Lloyd (re-elected); treasurer, Bro K. O'Rorke; warden, Bro P. O'Grady; guardian, Bro M. O'Neill; sick visitors, Fathers Foley and Bro D. McVeigh. The newly installed officers returned thanks to the members for the confidence reposed in them, and promised to do all in their power to leave as bright a record at the close of their office as that set them by their

worthy predecessors. The president and vice-president were commended all round for the apt and eloquent speech in which they returned thanks.

Bro McVeigh, at the request of Father Foley, gave his experience of the advantage to be derived from membership. After telling how the Society came to be established in the parish he instanced a gentleman who allowed himself to become unfinancial, and therefore lost his claim to benefits. Shortly after a member of his family fell ill, and in the course of a few months the doctor's bill for attendance on the sick member cost him upwards of £30. Many like incidents are met with in other branches, therefore he had no hesitation in saying that every member would find it to his own interest to persevere after enrolment. Looking around him to-night he could not but feel pleased to witness so many good friends bidding them, as it were by their presence, God speed in their brotherly union. He regretted the absence of some gentlemen, who formerly were honoured members of this branch, and he hoped these gentlemen would again allow themselves to be enrolled honorary members to keep up the ancient prestige of the Society. This would be a red letter day in the Society. The business of the meeting being now concluded Father Foley closed the meeting with the usual prayer.

Refreshments, which were provided by the wives and sisters of members, were now handed round by the ladies, and after some songs, the members dispersed.

"YOUR LIFE IS NOT WORTH A STRAW."

NOT worth a straw, eh? Then it was worth just nothing—nothing at all. Who has not used that comparison a thousand times to express absolute worthlessness? A straw? The wind blows it away, fire burns it up, cattle tread it in the mud, it rots by the roadside. What of it? Who cares for a straw?

Yet this is exactly what a doctor recently said to one of his patients, "Your life is not worth a straw." How much is a doctor worth who will speak so to one that trusts him, and has no hope but in his skill? For my part, if he were up for sale at auction, I would bid one straw for him—no more. Even if what he said was true, he had no right to say it. Such a doctor is more likely to kill with his tongue than to cure with his drugs.

A woman tells the story, and she tells it well. If it doesn't sound like the truth, then I don't know what ever does. The dates and the facts are all there, plain and orderly.

"In the summer of 1873," she says, "I found myself feeling tired, languid, low-spirited, and weak. I felt as if some evil were about to happen. My appetite was poor, and after eating I had excruciating pain at my loins and sides. There was a horrible gnawing pain at the pit of my stomach, and a rising in the throat as if I should choke. My head felt as though I had a ton weight on it. Gradually I got worse, and for months could take only liquid food. At night I lay awake for hours together.

"Later on I suffered greatly from nervous prostration. My legs trembled and shook so I feared to fall. If a knock came to the door I trembled from head to foot. I had frequent attacks which began with palpitation of the heart and sudden stoppage of the breath. At these times I was speechless and helpless. They say I looked like a corpse, cold and bloodless, my finger-nails and lips having turned black. After a while this would pass off, leaving me weak and prostrate. I got so emaciated and thin that I was only a bag of bones, and so weak I had to take hold of the furniture to steady myself as I crossed the room. As time went on the nervousness and forebodings of evil so increased that I feared I should go out of my mind. The neighbours said it would be a mercy if the Lord would release me from my sufferings.

"In this condition I continued for over four years, during which time I consulted five doctors, but nothing they gave me did any good. They all said my ailment was heart disease, and one said, 'Your life is not worth a straw.'

"In despair I gave up taking physic, as I felt that nothing would save me. In May, 1882, ten years ago, a lady (Mrs Richardson) called at my house, told me of Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and strongly advised me to try it. I did so, and felt somewhat better after the first bottle; and by the time I had taken three bottles I was completely cured. From that to this I have had no return of the attacks, and am so strong I can do any kind of work. But for Seigel's Syrup I should have been in my grave long ago. I wish others to know this, and will answer any who call or write." (Signed) EMMA WICKENDEN (wife of William Wickenden, gardener), Pembroke Villas, 123 Moffat Road, Thornton Heath, March 17th 1892.

So it turned out that her life was not only worth a straw, but worth a whole golden harvest of health and better days. Yet no thanks to the doctors. Her complicated symptoms puzzled and alarmed them, to be sure, but why? Is it not the doctors' duty to understand such things? Most assuredly. Just as a lawyer should know the law, or a pilot the rocks, tides, and lights of a coast. Had some of these medical men known that Mrs Wickenden's malady was indigestion and dyspepsia, and not heart disease, they might possibly have relieved her. But, confined by the symptoms, they were blind to the cause. We may well wonder if there are many such doctors in England.

Cases like this show that the clear sight belonged to Mother Seigel; and to her remedy hosts of people in this country are indebted for physical salvation when, in very truth, their lives seemed as straws.

Remember this was ten years ago, and the malady has not returned, showing that the cure was a permanent one.