

New Zealand Herald

TWENTY-SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

VOL. XXI—No. 13.

DUNEDIN: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1894

PRICE 6D.

Current Topics

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A LECTURE, delivered to the Dunedin Catholic PROFESSOR GIL- Literary Society on Wednesday evening, August BAY ON DR 28, by Professor Gilray, of the Otago University, JOHNSON, was one of the principal events in the Society's career. The subject was Dr Johnson, and its treatment was extremely able. The lecturer gave an admirable summary of the life and character of the great, big-bearded, manly, honest English man of letters—refreshing their memory pleasantly to those among his hearers who had read Boswell's famous book, and making those who had not acquainted with its contents in a manner to arouse their interest and incite their study. Other sources, however, besides the principal fountain of information, had been sought by the lecturer, so that his picture might have complete fulness and faithfulness, and the living man, in all his power, humour, originality and oddity, was placed vividly before the listeners, as only one who had lovingly and with perfect understanding lingered long in his presence could place it there. A chief merit of the lecture—as, in fact, was afterwards pointed out—consisted in the wise and measured condensation, which, from so vast a quantity of matter, had chosen in due proportion, and enlarged no single feature at the expense of another. For our own part what pleased us best was that which was more especially the speaker's own—what had more especially passed through the alembic of his mind, and received the impress of his particular talent—that is, his criticism of the work done by the renowned writer. His vindication of Johnson's style, for instance, from the accusation of inflation that has been brought against it, was strikingly able. Professor Gilray is plainly of the opinion that a man who presumes to offer ideas to the world is bound to express them plainly and clearly. He very aptly condemned a good deal that is otherwise put forward at the present time with much pretension. A "Germanising jargon," if we recollect aright, he called it, not that we at all understood the lecturer as addressing a word of contempt to the German language in its own peculiar guise or in its proper place—but that hardly needs explanation. The Professor afterwards spoke of Browning as the instance, *par excellence*, of obscure writing. Browning, however, may perhaps claim a poetic license, though when a man has a message to deliver to the race, and the poet who has not is improperly called a poet, he seems little excusable in wrapping it up in dark words. Browning's obscurity of language, moreover, seems to have been a conceit. So much, for example, seems certainly implied in his reply to Lord Coleridge, that, if ten per cent of what he wrote was understood by an intellect of the calibre of that of his correspondent, it was all that could be expected. The poet, nevertheless, may possibly claim a license all his own. What appears wholly without excuse is that the writer of prose should assume a similar privilege, and write so as to convince the reader attempting to understand him that, if he himself really understood his thoughts, he was acting on the principle ascribed to Prince Talleyrand and using language to conceal them. In his criticism also, the nice discrimination shown by Professor Gilray in his narrative was observed. Nothing could be better chosen than the passage selected by him, that from the "Life of Pope," in which the merits of the poet are contrasted with those of Dryden—to illustrate the conclusions arrived at by him as to Dr Johnson's place as a writer. There, indeed, is a passage of classic dignity and simplicity. Terseness, fulness of matter, clearness of style, vigour of expression, and force of antithesis, could find no finer example. There is language, not employed in grotesque conceit, or in aping foreign idioms, but straight and honest, drawn from a well of English undefiled, not used to conceal thought, but revealing it beyond even the desire of the writer, who deprecates the partiality which in spite of himself he has made apparent. There is hope, therefore, still for English prose. Professor Gilray speaks cheerfully of the renewed consideration commanded by Dr Johnson in the world of literature. Of the appreciation referred to, indeed, the lecturer in his own person gave a notable proof and in a manner thoroughly calculated to communicate it to his hearers, or at least to induce them

to betake themselves to studies that must produce such a result. In every respect, we say again, the lecture was most able, entertaining, and profitable.

OH! NOT AT OR THREE WEEKS AGO AT A MEETING OF THE IRISH ALL, MR NATIONAL FEDERATION IN WELLINGTON, BY THE HON MR M'COLLOUGH. M'COLLOUGH, M.L.C. WE DO SO UNDER PROTEST, STRONG AND EMPHATIC, WHERE ONE PASSAGE OF THE SPEECH IS CONCERNED—THE STRONGER AND THE MORE EMPHATIC BECAUSE THE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED WERE ALLOWED TO PASS UNCHALLENGED BY A MEETING LARGELY CONSISTING OF CATHOLICS. THERE WAS NEITHER A HISS TO MARK DISSENSION WHEN THE WORDS WERE SPOKEN, NOR AN AMENDMENT TO REJECT THEM WHEN THE RESOLUTIONS WERE PASSED. ON THIS WE ARE UNABLE TO CONGRATULATE THE CATHOLIC PORTION OF THE AUDIENCE. IT ILL BEFITS CATHOLICS ANYWHERE TO SHOW A PUSILLANIMOUS SPIRIT WHEN THERE IS A QUESTION OF THEIR RELIGION OR THEIR PRIESTHOOD. THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD THE SPEECH TO WHICH WE ALLUDE, OR WHO READ IT NOW, AS REPORTED IN OUR COLUMNS, WILL HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN PERCEIVING THE PASSAGE WHICH WE REFER TO. IT IS THAT IN WHICH THE SPEAKER, WITH SOME SLIGHT ATTEMPT TO APPEAR IMPARTIAL, MADE A BITTER ATTACK ON THE IRISH CATHOLIC CLERGY. OTHER CLERGY, WE UNDERSTAND, WERE BROUGHT IN TO ACT AS A CLOAK. FOR THE "HEADS OF ALL THE CHURCHES," TO WHOM THE SPEAKER ESPECIALLY ADDRESSED A WORD OF ADVICE, WE MAY READ THE POPE. BUT WE ALREADY KNOW HOW THE POPE IS READY TO RECEIVE; THE HON MR M'COLLOUGH'S KIND SUGGESTION. THE POPE, FOR HIS PART, HAS VERY FULLY GIVEN THE WORLD TO UNDERSTAND THAT IN HIS EYES THE SPIRITUAL AND THE POLITICAL ARE CLOSELY CONNECTED. THE PRIEST, HE SAID FOR EXAMPLE THE OTHER DAY, MUST LEAVE THE PRESBYTERY AND COME OUT AMONG THE PEOPLE. LET MR M'COLLOUGH AND THOSE WHO SYMPATHISE WITH HIM FIND THEIR ANSWER IN THAT. WHAT, INDEED, AT THE PRESENT DAY, DOES THE POLITICAL SEPARATED FROM THE SPIRITUAL TEND TOWARDS, IF NOT THE DISMAL AND MURDEROUS BYSS OF ANARCHY? WHY, AGAIN, SHOULD THE PRIEST RENOUNCE HIS PRIVILEGES AS A CITIZEN? TO DEMAND THIS OF HIM IS TO CAST A SLUR UPON RELIGION AND EMULATE THE SPIRIT OF THE CONTINENTAL REVOLUTIONIST. THIS IS A TAIN THAT CATHOLICS WILL EVERYWHERE INDIGNANTLY REPUDIATE. CARDINAL LOGUE, A FEW WEEKS SINCE, IN SPEAKING AT LIMERICK, ALLUDED TO THIS PROPOSAL. "HE READ NOT ASSURE THEM," HE SAID, "THAT IF THERE WAS NOTHING TO BE DONE FOR THE COUNTRY—THE TEMPORAL INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY—AND IF ALL THE CLAIMS OF THE COUNTRY WERE SECURED, THERE WAS NO ONE IN IRELAND WHO WOULD MORE GLADLY RETIRE WITHIN THE RAILS OF THE SANCTUARY THAN HE WOULD; BUT SO LONG AS THE PEOPLE WERE STRUGGLING—THE PEOPLE WHO WERE THE MAINSTAY OF THE PRIESTS, HE THOUGHT IT NATURAL FOR THE PRIESTS TO JOIN WITH THE PEOPLE AND MARCH SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH THEM, AND KEEPING THEM WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF WHAT IS JUST AND RIGHT AND CONSTITUTIONAL AND IN EVERY OTHER RESPECT TO ENTER WITH THEM, WITH ALL THE ENERGY THEY CAN COMMAND INTO THE GRAND STRUGGLE THAT IS BEING MADE BY THE IRISH PEOPLE FOR FREEDOM." WE DO NOT PRESUME TO ADD ANYTHING TO HIS EMINENCE'S WORDS. BUT IT MIGHT BE THOUGHT THAT WHAT WAS IMPLIED IN MR M'COLLOUGH'S ARGUMENT ITSELF WOULD BRING INDIGNANT REMONSTRANCE AND REJECTION TO THE LIPS OF EVERY IRISH CATHOLIC WHO HEARD IT. THE PRIEST, HE SAID IN EFFECT, HAS BEEN YOUR FRIEND AND STAY IN THE PAST. WHEN YOU HAD NO OTHER FRIEND THE *soggarth aroon* stood beside you and helped you—often laid down his life for you. WHO BUT HE, THE PATRON OF THE HEDGE SCHOOL, AND THE PROTECTOR AND INSTRUCTOR OF THE HEDGE SCHOOLMASTER, GAVE YOUR FATHERS SUCH A SHARE OF EDUCATION AS THEY HAD, AND GUIDED AND INSPIRITED YOU UNTIL HE AND YOU FORCED YOUR CAUSE UPON THE ATTENTION OF THE MEN IN POWER? BUT, NOW YOU HAVE GAINED STRENGTH THROUGH HIS DEVOTION AND FIDELITY TO STAND ALONE, TURN YOUR BACK UPON HIM; TREAT HIM AS THE STOOL BY WHICH YOU HAVE MOUNTED, AND KICK HIM FROM BENEATH YOUR FEET. SEND HIM TO BUY THE SUPPORT OF BIGOTS.—WE CANNOT CONGRATULATE THE IRISH CATHOLIC LISTENERS WHO HEARD SUCH AN EXHORTATION WITHOUT A HISS OR AN AMENDMENT OF REJECTION OR REMONSTRANCE. FOR OUR OWN PART WE REPUDIATE IT UTTERLY AND PROTEST WITH ALL OUR FORCE AGAINST IT.

THE *Weekly Freeman* of July 27, publishes a letter in which Mr Timothy Quinlan O'Brien, secretary of the Denniston Branch of the Irish National Federation, acquaints Mr John Dillon with the formation of the branch. The *Freeman* in a leader lays much stress

PHOTOGRAPHS. C. H. M'NAMARA, Royal and Vice-Royal Photographer } Especially patronised by His Lordship BISHOP GRIMES. High-class CABINET PHOTOS from 10s per dozen. Studio: 150 Colombo Street, Christchurch