

described the system under which the convict population were governed, and while it had much to recommend it, yet there was a great weakness in the system, inasmuch as the young lad of 17 was placed in company with the most hardened criminals, thus making reform almost an impossibility. The convicts had a great antipathy to work, and rather than do any, they inflicted injuries upon themselves so that they would be sent to the hospital. The only punishment that had any terrors for them was imprisonment in a dark cell with a diet of bread and water and a bare board for a bed. The lecturer caused considerable amusement by the humorous way in which he described how the convicts made a proposal to marry, for on the island there is a settlement of women as well as of men, and these men and women are permitted to marry if they feel so disposed—that is when they have served their terms of imprisonment. There is a fine cathedral, several churches, including a Presbyterian church, on the island, the latter being the only church besides the Roman Catholic represented in the settlement. The natives gave the party a hearty welcome. They have been brought under the influence of Christianity, and it was in connection with the jubilee of its introduction among them that the visit to New Caledonia was made. The Island of Pines, some 70 miles from New Caledonia, was visited and described, as was also one of the islands of the New Hebrides group. Fiji was likewise visited, and the lecturer gave a particularly interesting description of the Fijian and his mode of living, and the various customs which prevailed among them. He described the peculiar manner in which they painted their bodies, sometimes one side black and another red, or striped red and blue alternately, while some were altogether black with the exception of a red painted nose. But the glory of the Fijian was his hair, in which he took a special pride. The lecturer referred to the products of the island, and pointed out the almost unending uses to which the coconut tree was put by the natives. The manner in which the kava (the whiskey of all these islanders) was made was also amusingly described. But we have not space enough to refer to half of what the lecturer mentioned in his two hours' description of what he saw on his trip; all we can add is that the lecture was both interesting and instructive throughout, the audience marking their appreciation at its conclusion by a hearty vote of thanks."

The proceeds of the above lecture are to be devoted to the parochial school fund. There has been a notable falling off in the payment of school fees this year. In the case of some families this is due, no doubt, to the bad season we have experienced, but I feel bound to say that in many cases it is due to gross carelessness. The deficiency had become so great as to cause our zealous parish priest to speak last Sunday in rather forcible terms to the defaulting parents. He urged them to make the necessary sacrifices to enable the devoted Sisters of St Joseph to continue the work of educating their children with the success, which until now, has attended their noble and self-sacrificing efforts. I have often heard of the generosity of the Waimate people, but when I consider that more than one half of the parents do not pay their school fees, I fail to see where the generosity comes in. It is, indeed, sad to know that when we have such splendid schools organized and conducted by those who want to return merely the necessaries of life, there are parents who, while taking the fullest advantage of all the opportunities afforded to them, contribute nothing or make no sacrifice, however small, to assist the cause of Catholic education, and to prevent our children from losing their faith. I hope that the appeal which was made to the Catholics of this parish last Sunday will be responded to, and that there will be no cause for complaint in the future. It is the intention of Rev Father Regnault to deliver his interesting lecture in some of the country districts, and I hope that all those who can be present will make an effort to go and assist in so noble a cause. The lecture, as you will see by the above report, is certainly well worth hearing, and bristles with anecdotes both humorous and pathetic.

I hear that our new presbytery will soon be commenced, the tenders are to be received on Wednesday next. I may be able to tell you more on a future occasion.

The pedestrian Grandin, who walked over 14,000 kilometres in America and Europe, is about to embark for Africa, where he intends to endeavour to walk from Oran to Timbuctoo, crossing the dreaded Sahara. On the way he will be accompanied by ten picked men, non-commissioned officers, representing both services.

At San Sebastian, the watering-place where the Spanish Royal Family passes the summer they are now organising an Infant Army to welcome the young King on his arrival. Young Alfonso, mounted on a little pony, will review the army, which consists of 400 boys of from five to eight years of age. It has been recruited from the Basque Provinces. The infant soldiers wear a blue uniform with red cap, and carry small guns manufactured for them. All classes are represented, from the general's son to the workman's son. The chief of the corps of sappers and miners is a boy of five years of age. A band composed of fifty boys of ages ranging from five to seven, is taking lessons, and can already play the National Anthem and some other popular marches. The miniature army is composed of six companies, each with its captain and lieutenants.

Dublin Notes.

(From Contemporaries.)

SIR CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY, after a visit of a couple of weeks, has left London for Nice. The veteran does not hope ever to see London again, or, at least, he has no intention of paying it another visit, and so he bade a last farewell to his most intimate friends in the metropolis. He presided at a meeting of the committee of the Irish Literary Society (of which he is president), at B'comebury Mansion, and when he unexpectedly announced that it was probably the last the members would see of him, and tendered his resignation as president, an affecting scene took place. He presented the committee with an interesting collection of autographs and literary relics and curios which he collected in the course of his life. The collection will be exhibited in the coming winter, and, if deemed advisable, will be afterwards sold for the benefit of the New Irish Library.

The Armagh Orange papers, in treating of the recent rowdism in Armagh, as expected, corroborate and add to the mis-statements which have already been circulated in the Orange Press. These insignificant productions would not really be worth noticing were it not to expose the means they employ in endeavouring to blacken the Catholics of Armagh in the eyes of the public and to create bad feeling in the city. The *Armagh Guardian*, a Protestant organ, to its credit, admits that "the Presbyterians of Armagh had the fullest confidence that their children would not be interfered with, and their anticipations were correct." It goes on to say that "not a hand was raised towards a child or one of the party." And again—"Those ladies who did not wait for the procession, but brought their children on, were met with kindly wishes that a pleasant day had been spent, and not a single word said to annoy them."

The Unionists of North Antrim have thought it better to ask Mr Connor to retain the seat, as he was willing to do if they so desired. They have shown much good sense in this, though, to be sure, small thanks are due to the same party for preferring to hide the political rags into which their garments would be certain to be well torn. Then, again, Mr Connor will continue to make a much more respectable representative than any one the party would be likely to get to step into his shoes. This is the great and powerful Unionist party, you know!

"Mr Healy was warmly congratulated in the lobby," says the *Star*, "upon the excellence of his speech on the Evicted Tenants' Bill. One of his colleagues was so carried away by enthusiasm as to declare that it was the finest oratorical effort which had been heard at St Stephen's since Mr Gladstone's valedictory address. Whether this was so or not there is no doubt the member for North Louth was never heard to better advantage, and the fact is the more noteworthy because he followed directly upon Mr Chamberlain. As a rule there is a general exodus from the House when Mr Chamberlain sits down. Everybody wanted to hear Mr Healy, and the lobby was deserted until he had finished. As soon as he could escape from the felicitations of his friends, Mr Healy made for his favourite corner in the library to dispose of his correspondence for the evening. At all times the personification of coolness, he never seems more self-possessed than after a successful coup."

Lady Aberdeen's report of the result of the investigations made by the Irish Industries Association into the condition of the people of Achill should stir the public, whose sympathy was roused by the recent disaster, to help forward the work of permanent improvement in the island. The deputation from the association visited the island to see whether something could not be done to provide employment for the people—and especially for the young women and girls—in their own homes. They have come to the sad conclusion that it is practically useless to endeavour to introduce any home industries with any chance of success, under the present circumstances of the people. Yet Lady Aberdeen does not despair. The present is a moment when an attempt to change those conditions that make the outlook appear so black would, in her opinion, probably meet with success. She sees in the representative Mansion House Committee a body that could well achieve what is required, if it be properly supported by the public; and she entreats a generous response to the appeal of the committee. "A strong pull and a long pull and a pull altogether is needed, if a real and abiding change in the condition of the island as a whole is to be effected." The letter is one more service rendered to the peasantry of the West by the Countess of Aberdeen; and we are certain her testimony in favour of the objects of the Mansion House Committee will secure widespread support throughout the United Kingdom.

The Irish Literary Society, London, which continues to progress very satisfactorily, is the subject of many eulogistic paragraphs in the London Press. The *Civilian*, the organ of the Civil Service very pleased to see that the Civil Service is strongly represented in the society. "Of the officers," it declares, "the hon secretary, Mr. A. P. Graves, son of the Bishop of Limerick and author of the renowned song, 'Father O'Flynn,