

SCHOOL BOOKS.

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CATALOGUES FORWARDED ON APPLICATION.

Sunday Corner.

CALENDAR.—OCTOBER 7—13.

Sunday, 7—21st Sunday after Pentecost; Holy Rosary of B.V.M.
Monday, 8—St Brigid, widow.
Tuesday, 9—St Dionysius and companions, martyrs.
Wednesday, 10—St Francis Borgia, confessor.
Thursday, 11—St Canice.
Friday, 12—St John Leonard, confessor.
Saturday, 13—St Edward, king, confessor.

The New Zealand Tablet.

FIAT JUSTITIA.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1894.

PROGRESS AND JUSTICE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

THE Catholics of New Zealand provide, at their own sole expense, an excellent education for their own children. Yet such is the sense of justice and policy in the New Zealand Legislature that it compels these Catholics, after having manfully provided for their own children, to contribute largely towards the free and godless education of other people's children!!! This is tyranny, oppression, and plunder.

WHAT SHALL WE SING IN OUR CHURCHES?

FOR some time lovers of Sacred Song have anxiously awaited the appearance of a document which, it was known, was being prepared on the subject of ecclesiastical music. Various reports were circulated as to its probable tenor. According to one rumour, which caused considerable consternation to choirmasters, figured music was to be banished and a return made to the severe style of

Plain Chant. The decree of the Sacred Congregation has now seen the light, and its moderation is another proof of the wide-reaching solicitude of the present glorious Pontiff. Leo XIII, by his great encyclicals and the wise acts of his pontificate, has caused the Papacy to be respected by people who do not acknowledge him as Father. His own children, even in small matters of Church discipline, have experienced almost innumerable proofs of his paternal care. Leo is, first of all and above all, a Great Priest, who, imitating the sweetly quiet ways of Divine Providence Itself, gently affords an efficacious remedy to existing evils. There have been, without doubt, abuses in the domain of Church music, the object of which, according to St AUGUSTINE, should be to lead the weak mind of man, by the pleasing strains which strike the ear, to emotions of piety. Unfortunately, in but too many Catholic churches the music often heard, even when well rendered, instead of raising the heart to heaven, causes, by association of ideas, the mind to wander to the house around the corner. The music of the theatre should be excluded from the church. Each style has its own particular province. It is not necessary to be a musical decorator to at once see that the meretricious music of certain modern schools is entirely out of place in the house of God. The sublimation of folly is reached when the words of the sacred liturgy, to which music should be the handmaiden, are twisted and mutilated, and rendered worse than unmeaning by senseless repetitions. We once heard the assertion made that in a certain Mass by a great composer, the sacred words were arranged in such topsy-turvy style that the Holy Ghost was declared to have become man: "*Spiritus Sanctum natum.*"

If the arrangement of the words does not frequently lead to the confines of heresy, it pretty often brings choirs to the borderland of absurdity. The insisting by the bishops on the rules drawn up by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and approved by Leo XIII, will put a speedy end to much that is indecorous. Only those compositions which are "inspired by the character of the sacred ceremony," and which are "in keeping with the sense of the rite and the liturgical words," are considered worthy of the house of God. Among the compositions "capable of exciting the devotion of the faithful," Gregorian chant holds a foremost place. This chant, regarded by the Church as her own, requires to be performed intelligently and well in order to produce its grand effect. We know that choirs ordinarily do not care to learn and render this ancient song. They have not been trained to appreciate its beauty. In St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin, the "*Tantum Ergo*" as found in the severe Ratisbonne books is frequently sung by the choir. The heartiness with which it is sung, and the fine effect of this unison hymn, make it clear that it would not be difficult to quietly introduce, with pleasure to singers and edification to congregations, more of the Gregorian chant into our services. A little trouble in Catholic schools will be followed by great good results in Catholic churches. The rule concerning part music will be specially interesting to choirmasters. "Part music, the compositions of Pier Luigi da Palestrina, and of his faithful imitators, is very worthy of the house of God. As to chromatic music, that is worthy of the divine worship which is composed by the great masters of different schools, both Italian and foreign, especially the compositions of those Roman masters whose works have been praised for their religious character by competent authority." The Sacred Congregation is hard on those ambitious choirs which indecorously attempt pieces of part music when they cannot possibly be sure of a happy result. Simpler music, especially Plain Chant, should be substituted in such a case by the Church authorities. A word of direction is given to organists. The figured music for the king of instruments ought generally to be of "a sedate and grave tenor." "The accompaniment ought to sustain the chant and not to drown it." The prohibition is again formulated against using in strictly liturgical functions any tongue but that belonging to the Rite. With us, therefore, pieces *ad libitum* taken "from the Sacred Scriptures, from the office, or from hymns and prayers approved of by the Church," ought always be sung in Latin. When in other functions English is used, the words should be taken from devout and approved compositions. "Profane music, especially if it be inspired by theatrical motives, variations, and reminiscences," is strictly forbidden. "In order to safeguard the respect due to the liturgical words, and in order to prevent prolixity in sacred functions, all music is forbidden in which the words are even in the slightest measure omitted, turned aside from their sense, or indiscreetly repeated." Capable organists in their *a fantasia* improvisations are to play "in a way calculated to respect the rules of music and to foster the piety and recollection of the faithful." We have given the salient points of the latest decree on Church music. No doubt special instructions will be issued by Ordinaries for their various dioceses. Meanwhile Catholic teachers can do a great work and effectively carry out the wish of the Holy Father by training the children in Catholic schools to sing the praises of God in the Sacred Song of the Church.

SOME hope had been entertained that the Most Rev Dr Moran would be present at the opening of St Patrick's Church next Sunday. Indeed his Lordship himself had thought it possible he might be able to drive down and visit the building for a few minutes. But, unhappily, within the last few days, his condition has again taken a turn for the worse, and no hope of the kind can now be felt.

AT the conclusion of Father O'Neill's lecture on Friday evening, the Very Rev Father Lynch, A.M., announced that he would give a prize of three guineas for the best essay on the creation and preservation of a spirit of Irish patriotism among the children of Irish settlers in New Zealand.—The competition for the best paper on "The most effective means of fostering in the children of Irish-born colonists a great love for the Dear Old Land" is to be open to all members of the Catholic congregation resident in Dunedin and its suburbs. The essays are to be sent in, on or before Wednesday, November 7, under cover to the editor of the NEW ZEALAND TABLET—each signed with a *nom de plume*—the true name of the writer being enclosed, at the same time, in a sealed envelope with the *nom*

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