

CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE report of Dr Giles, Royal Commissioner, on the recent inquiry into the management of the Christchurch Hospital has been published in the local papers and read with much attention. The whole affair, which for weeks has been the sensation in this city, is said to have arisen mainly from the publication in a local newspaper of a letter signed "Tongariro," the writer of which has been proved to be Dr Stewart. Dr Giles condemns the anonymous letter, which was the method of attack adopted by Dr Stewart, but it is contended that there would have been no inquiry without the letter. Dr Giles, who takes the allegations and innuendoes *seriatim*, shows in his report, which is a very carefully written and lengthy document, on account of the extent and variety of the allegations, and the great number of witnesses examined, that nearly all the charges made against the institution have no reasonable foundation. The report shows further that a few errors have been committed, and that some matters need improving, but nothing has been found seriously amiss. During the agitation many regrettable things have been said and done, but the people in this city have a great admiration for the institution, and the hospital authorities may be congratulated on the favourableness of the commissioner's report.

The superior of the Marist Brothers in this city, Brother Daniel and the other Brothers and pupils, were honoured on Thursday last by a number of visitors from Timaru, and their school room and grounds were *en fete* and greatly thronged with people. The occasion was a football match, arranged between the pupils at the Marist Brothers' school in this city and the pupils of the Marist Brothers' school in Timaru. Three Brothers and thirty-four of their pupils arrived at noon by a special excursion train from Timaru. They were met at the railway station by Brother Daniel and his pupils and conducted to the schoolroom, where Mesdames Stratz and Holland and Mesdemoiselles O'Connell, Kearny, Hynes, Whelan and Hickmott had, unsolicited, kindly prepared, and were in attendance at an excellent dinner. The Right Rev Dr Grimes, accompanied by the Rev Father Galerne, presided and said grace. The meal ended, fifteen pupils from each school were formed into two teams, and over them Mr H. T. Evans was appointed referee. The contest, which lasted an hour and ten minutes, took place in the school grounds, and two thirty-five minute spells were played. Good play was shown on both sides, and the "Shamrocks," as the members of the local team are named, were in the second spell about to gain a decided advantage over their Timaru opponents, when the sound of a locomotive engine whistle warned the latter that the time of their departure was near. The game was therefore pronounced drawn or rather unfinished, and both teams returned to the school room, where the same ladies who had waited on them at dinner, were in attendance and provided them with a capital lunch. The Rev Father H. G. Bowers was present, and when the repast was over, the three Brothers and their pupils were escorted to the railway station by the Brothers of this city and their pupils, who gave three hearty cheers as the train containing the welcome visitors departed at 4 p.m. for Timaru.

The business of the Supreme Court, at which was a great muster of the Bar, was suspended on Thursday last in respect for the memory of the late Mr Justice Richmond, of Wellington. Mr Justice Denniston referred to the sad event, and when he began to speak the members of the Bar rose, and remained standing during the address.

Mr H. B. Webb and others propose that the site in Hagley Park of the old running ground, which is now never used for the purposes for which it was formed, should be converted into a small lake. The spot at present is merely a boggy depression covered with rushes, and without question such a work as the one proposed would add to the beauty and attractiveness of the park. But the situation which, is bounded by trees on three sides, is very picturesque, and, were a little taste displayed in constructing a miniature lake, with one or two islets in it, the work might probably become one of the park's prettiest features. No great expenditure would be necessary to accomplish this work as no great depth would require to be excavated, and a couple of artesian wells, with a pipe drain to carry the overflow to the river ought to include the required water supply. As has been suggested, could not the unemployed be engaged in the construction of the work? Were they engaged in forming a lake there would be something permanent to show as a result of their labours. The Winter Fund, subsidised by the Government, might be expended in the construction of the lake, and it is to be hoped that the City Council and the Domain Board will take the matter in hand.

Mr J. P. Young occupied the chair at a meeting of the League of the Cross on Thursday evening last. The programme was impromptu speeches. Ten minutes were allowed each speaker, and Messrs Findlay, Edmonds, Ormandy, Courtayne, Power, and Tehan made good speeches on the occasion. This manner of passing an evening affords a fair opportunity for a member to practice the art of speaking, which is an art almost everyone should have some ambition to acquire. What Greek or Roman youth did not study eloquence when he wished to qualify himself to take an active part

in the affairs of his country? Such was the wisdom of the ancients, and in this particular it is pleasing to record a fact which many persons must have noticed, that not a few of our Catholic young men, who are or have been members of the League of the Cross, or Societies somewhat similar, can speak very well. New members are steadily joining the League, and the association is not only increasing in numbers but also advancing quietly yet effectively the great cause of temperance. At a previous meeting the members forwarded an expression of their sympathy to the Very Rev Father Cummings, V.G., whose delicate state of health has caused him to disengage himself from the cares of his parish, and to sojourn for a short while in a climate warmer than our city. May he soon return in excellent health.

ONLY FOUR TO MAN THE PUMPS.

DEAR, dear! When you come to think of it how closely related things are; how one thing brings up another. Ideas are like a lot of beads on a string, aren't they?

A letter I have just been reading makes me remember what happened to me one winter about twenty years ago. The story is too long to tell here, so I'll merely give you the tail end of it. I was supercargo on a bark bound from London to Rio. A tremendous gale, lasting five days, wrecked us. Forty-eight hours after it ceased there were four men and no more left on the vessel. The captain had been killed by a falling spar, three of the crew washed overboard, and the rest of the ship's company (save us four) went away in the long boat with the first and second mates. We were taking in water through a leak at the rate of six inches an hour. Working with all our might the four of us could pump that out in forty minutes, but we must do it every hour. It was awful work. For two days we kept it up, without sleep. Then we stopped, took to the quarter boat and shoved off. The sea was quiet—no wind. While we lay to within a mile of her the ship threw up her nose and went down stern first. We were picked up the next day by a Danish brig.

Now the odd thing is that the letter which reminded me of that experience has nothing whatever to say about ships. Please help me to find out the association.

The lady who writes the letter says that in July, 1881, she got a bad fright. Exactly what it was she doesn't tell. I wish she did. Anyway it so upset her that she didn't get over the effects of it for nine years. After that her appetite fell off; she lost all real relish for food, and what she did eat only made trouble instead of nourishing her. It gave her pain in the pit of the stomach and (curiously enough) between the shoulders. She says her eyes and skin presently turned yellow as a buttercup. Her face and abdomen swelled, and her feet the same, the latter so much so that she was obliged to have her shoes made larger.

"I got little sleep at night," she says, "and was in so much pain I had to be propped up with pillows. For weeks together I could not lie down in bed. I had a dry, hollow cough, and bad night sweats. Then diarrhoea set in, and my bowels became ulcerated. I was often in dreadful agony for forty-eight hours at a time. Then I would have a chill as though a bucket of cold water were poured down my back. I got so low I could no longer sew, knit, or do any housework or look after my children. My sister had to come and help in the house.

"Everybody said I was in a decline and must die. What I suffered for eight years tongue cannot tell. The doctor could do nothing for me. He said my complaint was complicated and bad to deal with. In 1886 I went as an outdoor patient to the Shrewsbury Infirmary, but only got transient relief."

The writer is in good health now, but why did her case remind me of the shipwreck? Let's settle that first. The association is easy and natural. Just see. The ship sank because we four men hadn't the strength to pump out the water as fast as it came in. Twenty men might have got her into port. It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back; the last unsupplied need that makes poverty abject and desperate.

These bodies of ours carry the seeds of disease with them all the time—chiefly the poisons created by imperfect digestion, made worse by careless habits. But as long as nothing extraordinary happens we manage to scrape along in a half-and-half sort of fashion. Yet we've got in our blood the stuff that any of a dozen diseases is made of, only waiting for something to set it afire. While the liver, kidneys, lungs and skin keep us fairly free—that is, don't let the load get too heavy—we say, "Oh, yes, I'm tolerably well, thank you." Little pains and unpleasant symptoms bother us now and then, but we don't fancy they mean anything.

By-and-by something happens. A cold, too hearty a meal, a night of desipation, an affliction through death or loss of property, a fright, as in Mrs Bunce's case, etc. Over we go. The last straw has crushed us. One loose spark has blown up the barrel of powder. The crew is too small to save the ship. The kidneys, liver, skin, and stomach strike work, and we must have help right away or perish. All of which means the explosion of latent indigestion and dyspepsia poisons in the blood.

There! isn't it plain why I thought of the ship? Now for the conclusion of the lady's story. She says: "In 1889 I first heard of Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. Half a bottle made me feel better, and by keeping on taking it I was soon strong and well as ever. (Signed) Mrs Ann Bunce, The Park, Worthen, near Shrewsbury, February 22nd, 1893."

If there were only a way to save sinking ships as certain and trustworthy as Mother Seigel's medicine is in the case of sinking human bodies, what a blessing it would be to poor sailors.