

only safe course for Catholic electors is to be guided by the impartial advice of their natural leaders on the school question. They have deeply at heart the best interests of the children and are surely more desirous of advancing even the material interests of the young than those whose only aim in many cases is a seat in Parliament and the coveted honorarium.

At St. Joseph's Cathedral on last Sunday Mr. Nottingham, a violinist who has lately come from Sydney and who settles in Dunedin, played a violin solo as an offertorium. Mr. Nottingham produces a good tone and plays with much expression.

THE annual reunion of the Waitaki Gaelic Society was held on Friday last and among the visitors present on the occasion was the Very Rev. Father Mackay, of Oamaru. The Very Rev. Father, in thanking the Society for the kind invitation extended to him, said he was always pleased to stand shoulder to shoulder with his "brither Scots." He could speak confidently on behalf of the visitors as to their having thoroughly enjoyed themselves. He had been carried back a long way—he would not care to say how long or they would say he was getting too old—by the familiar strains to which he had listened. He hoped the Society would have many happy reunions before it.

THE annual re-union of the former pupils of the Dominican nuns is unavoidably postponed.

THE *Nelson Colonist* thus concludes a review of the report presented by the Banking Committee of the Legislative Council.—"The most satisfactory point in the report is the complete vindication of Mr. J. G. Ward of any improper, or selfish motive in connection with his part in the whole business. The report contains, however, the following sentence. 'Your Committee is of opinion that Mr. Ward ought, when he became aware that his financial position was seriously involved, to have acquainted his colleagues in the Government, and that he ought to have tendered his resignation of the office of Colonial Treasurer.' A similar opinion was expressed in these columns at the time the disclosure came, and it is to be regretted that that course was not adopted, but it is satisfactory in the public interests to find that the Committee declare that Mr. Ward did not in his official position seek to advantage his private position, but that he rather placed himself at a disadvantage while seeking to serve the Colony."

OWING to the present delicate state of health of Mr Thomas Bracken, it will be practically impossible for him to do anything substantial for himself in the future, and in view of this a number of the friends and admirers of the poet met together on Thursday evening last to consider the best means of rendering assistance to him and his family. Mr T. S. Graham occupied the chair and among those present were Messrs J. B. Callan, J. J. Connor and H. Gourley. Apologies were read from a large number of prominent citizens, all of whom expressed hearty sympathy with the object of the meeting. After some discussion Mr. McIndoe moved, Mr. Callan seconded, and it was carried unanimously.—That a national fund be raised by subscriptions throughout New Zealand for the benefit of Mr Bracken and his family, details regarding the forming and application of the same to be left in the hands of a committee consisting of those now present, with power to add to their number. Messrs Graham and Reid were appointed joint treasurers and secretaries.

THE *Vierge* of Paris ascribes the conversion of Jules Simon, a short time before his death, to the influence of his little granddaughter, fresh from the catechism class attended by her in the Madeleine in preparation for her first Communion. Madame Simon formerly a fanatical freethinker, had preceded her husband in her reconciliation with the Church, and had been for some years a Catholic, while the mother of the child, though a Jewess, had never interfered with her daughter's religious training. To the latter the aged Statesman spontaneously confided his desire to see a priest on his death-bed, and she was the intermediary in bringing him a confessor. He received all the sacraments in the full possession of his faculties and with every appearance of penitence and fervour.

FRANCIS GEORGE WIDDOWS, an ex-Franciscan monk, has been lecturing in the south of England and "exposing Romanism." The *East Kent Gazette*, in the account it gives of one of these lectures, says that the lecturer, in the story of his life, omitted at least one important event, and quotes from its issue of May 5th, 1888, the record of his sentence, while minister of a chapel in South Hackney, to a long term of imprisonment for conspiracy and felony. *Truth*

says that this sentence "for one of the most abominable crimes known to the law," was not his first, and it speaks in strong terms of the bigotry of those who are not ashamed to give their countenance and support to a lecturer of Widdows's character and antecedents. "What sort of religionists must they be," it asks, "who accept the ministrations of a man of this stamp?"

CONSIDERING the attempt (says a recent issue of the *Thames Star*) which is being made in many places—notably in the mining districts of the Up-Country—to rob the working man of his day of rest, a sermon on the Sabbath preached by the Rev. Father O'Reilly last Sunday touches on many points of secular interest. The Rev. Father took for his text St. Luke, XIV., quoting these verses: "And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying: 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?' But they held their peace. But He, taking him, healed him and sent him away." The Rev. Father O'Reilly said that Our Blessed Lord was God as well as man. As God he had with the other two persons of the Adorable Trinity, the Father and the Holy Ghost, given the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai to Moses, one of which said: "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day." The preacher pointed out that before no other commandment of the ten was the word 'remember' used when God gave them to Moses. This was done to impress upon the Jews and all mankind the imperative necessity of keeping holy the Sabbath day. But Our Blessed Saviour, as God, knew the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and he knew that what was required to fulfil this commandment was to worship God on this day, to rest and to abstain from unnecessary servile works. He therefore proposed the case of an ass or an ox falling into a pit, and asked which of them would not immediately remove him. As the law of charity constrains us to cure the sick on the Sabbath, so likewise in order to avoid cruelty to animals it would be necessary to remove a poor beast from such a position lest it might die. The moral of this would appear to be that all good works of absolute necessity are lawful on the Sabbath; while all labour for gain and servile or mercenary work are in conflict with the tenets of the Church. The flagrant attempt to deprive the worker of his day of rest is therefore contrary both to the letter and the spirit of the Christian religion. After a reference to the reason why the early Catholic Church changed the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first day (the day of Christ's resurrection), the preacher spoke of the continental observances of Sunday and the secularising influence of the French revolution in the 18th century. He impressed on good Catholics the absolute necessity of keeping holy the Lord's day by attending holy Mass on each Sunday. The holy sacrifice of the Mass was both a sacrifice and a sacrament. They should spend some portion of each Sunday in prayer and spiritual reading. They should make the Lord's day a day of rest. They should keep it holy, but innocent amusements such as a walk on that day were not condemned. But they should abstain on this day (as on every other) from all sinful amusements, and, above all, from wicked profanation of the Lord's day. Thus, they would keep the commandment of God.

The Benedictine Priory of St. Augustine's Ramsgate, England, has been raised by the Pope to the dignity of an abbey, and the Prior, the Right Rev. Thomas Bergh, has been made Abbot, with the title of Abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury. This is the first English abbey of (Black) Benedictines founded since the Reformation, the abbey of Buckfast being a French foundation.

THE Hon. E. Blake, M.P., speaking at Edinburgh on Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, quoted, according to the *S. H. Review*, the following instance of disproportionate representation.—Taking the Counties of Donegal, Waterford, Tipperary, Kerry and Sligo, he affirmed, among other things, that whilst the aggregate population of these was in the proportion of 660,000 Catholics to 73,000 Protestants, the aggregate grand juries of the five counties were composed of 114 Protestants and only two Catholics.

THE following is from an Oamaru exchange—A Gael from the back country came into town recently nursing a huge jaw in which a tooth had gone wrong, and moaning with his countryman Burns—

"My curse upon thy venom'd stang
That racks my tortured gums along."

He repaired promptly to a local dentist and was shown into the waiting room. Presently the dentist, who is small in stature, entered. To him the brawny Celt: "Are you the body that pu's teeth?" "Yes," replied the professional man. "Ah, weel," was the emphatic response of the visitor after a careful mental summing of the surgeon's physical capacity. "ye winna pu' mine's," and he marched forth once more into a cold and unsympathetic world.