

cussed more on their merits than they are at present, but we think it is a mistake to suppose that it will prove a panacea for all the ills that now afflict the body politic. The election of the Executive will itself afford ample scope for the practice of jobbery, corruption, and intrigue. We feel, too, that more has been made out of the example of Switzerland than the facts altogether justify. In the first place, Switzerland adopted a non-party system, not from choice but from necessity. The author of "Parliamentary Reform" says: "It would be reasonable to expect to find Party Government in its most virulent form in a country divided into inevitable and permanent parties by national and religious differences. Its complete absence from Switzerland is conclusive proof, if any were needed, that it is unnecessary in any country;" thus distinctly implying that Switzerland might have easily and almost naturally adopted the party system. This view, however, appears to be altogether incorrect. The authors of "The Swiss Confederation" (Sir F. O. ADAMS and Mr. CUNNINGHAM), which is a recognised authority on the subject, say: "The existence of twenty-two Cantons, with a population composed of four different nationalities speaking as many languages, prevents that broad distinction of parties of which there has been a striking example in Great Britain. Government by party would be impossible in Switzerland, and this fact finds its outward expression in the Federal Chambers, where there is no regular division into Ministerialists and Opposition, the members being in reality seated with little reference to their political creed." Further, the non-party system has not proved quite such a shining success in Switzerland as it is sometimes represented to be. The state of the country is thus described by the authors of "The Swiss Confederation": "The material condition of the mass of the Swiss people may, on the whole, be pronounced to be satisfactory." Surely that much at least could be said of New Zealand. "Still," they continue, "there is a strong tide of emigration among the natives flowing every year, particularly to the United States. . . . The number varies. In 1880 it exceeded 7000, in each of the following years it rose to nearly 11,000, and in 1883 it reached 12,758. Since then it has diminished considerably, and in 1887 it had dropped to 7558." There may be special causes for this emigration, but things cannot be altogether as they should be when a country loses its population at such a rate. To our mind, however, the most serious objection to the Elective Executive proposal is the effect, which we believe the system would have, of lowering the status of Parliament and of greatly lessening the interest which the people would take in the discussions and deliberations of the representative body. That is, of course, a very serious matter. The author of "Parliamentary Reform" has himself dwelt on the prime importance in a democracy of the public education of the citizens, and a system of Government which fails to discharge this educative function must be admitted to be seriously imperfect. There is too much reason to fear that under a non-party system the people would gradually cease to take any active or real interest in the Parliamentary discussions and debates, and that the House of Representatives would be in danger of degenerating into a mere debating society attached to an Executive. The Executive would be appointed for a fixed period, during which there would no longer be even the possibility of a no-confidence debate. It is that possibility—the possibility at almost any moment of an important change in the position of affairs—which gives zest and interest to our Parliamentary debates, and the removal of that possibility would inevitably tend to weaken, if not to destroy, popular interest in the proceedings of the House. As a matter of fact this has been found to be the case even in Switzerland where the people had not been spoiled by any previous experience of the excitement of no-confidence debates. "The people are supposed to take so little interest," say the authors of "The Swiss Confederation," "in the debates at Bern that the Federal Council have not deemed it necessary yet to have *verbatim* reports printed of the proceedings in the Chambers." The same work gives clear evidence also of the want of interest on the part of the electors in the leading questions of the day. "It is a remarkable fact . . . that voters as a rule are satisfied with general declarations of policy on the part of their representatives, without requiring from them detailed and clear utterances concerning the great political questions of the day" (Swiss Confederation, p. 91). And again, "The average Swiss citizen will usually think first of his Commune and then of

his Canton, and his vote is often influenced more by local and cantonal than by general Federal interests" (*Ibid*, p. 89). Surely that is not the type of elector we want to cultivate in this country; we have quite enough of them already. It is such considerations as the foregoing which somewhat damp our enthusiasm for this proposed reform. We are inclined to think, however, that on the whole the evils it may create are less than the evils it will displace, and we are satisfied that it would make our representatives more independent, would raise the standard of political morality, and would enable measures to be considered to some appreciable extent on their merits. On these grounds we would be willing to see the experiment receive a fair trial. Referring now specially to our author's pamphlet we are bound to say that he has treated his subject in a very clear and interesting way. We are glad to note that he writes as a sincere democrat, and with those portions of his work which are devoted to the vindication of democracy we are in cordial sympathy. We are sorry, however, that he should have somewhat marred his work by showing throughout an unmistakable hostility to the present Government. Some of his references to the SEDDON Ministry are only very remotely connected with the subject of Party Government, and we are quite sure that the usefulness of the book at the present juncture would have been greatly increased by the omission of all of them. A work which is written for the express purpose of showing the folly of Party Government should avoid the very appearance of party animus of any kind.

ON Sunday next, the Feast of the Assumption, Pontifical High Mass will be celebrated at St. Joseph's Cathedral at 11 a.m. at which the Papal blessing will be given by his Lordship the Bishop.

DURING the past week the following subscriptions to the South Dunedin Catholic Orphanage Fund have been received:—Mrs. Ahearn (Dunedin), £1; D. Colquhoun, Esq. (Dunedin), £1; Mr. Kett (Milton), £2 2s; Mr. J. Fox (Hawea Flat), £1; R. G. McDonald, Esq. (Dunedin), £1 1s; Mr. McLoughlin (Culverdin), 5s. Contributions towards the erection of the Orphanage will be thankfully received by the Sisters of Mercy of South Dunedin and by the Catholic clergy of Dunedin, and will be duly acknowledged in the columns of the TABLET.

A CABLE message to the daily papers of last week announced that Canon Grigson, a prominent Anglican clergyman in North Queensland, has joined the Catholic Church. It will be remembered that we published a few weeks ago a paragraph stating that Canon Grigson had resigned his living in Queensland. He was received into the Church at Ballarat and proceeds to London to place himself in the hands of Cardinal Vaughan.

At the Dunedin Dog Show held last week some fine animals were exhibited among the St. Bernards, the most noticeable being Mr. W. G. Rossiter's Prince Carlos, which took first prize and was also awarded the Kennel Club's cap for the best St. Bernard. He has now won the cap three times, and it therefore becomes the absolute property of the owner. Prince Carlos is a noble animal, and has achieved a decided record in the way of prize-taking, having won five first and four second prizes altogether at different shows. He was described by the judge as an almost perfect St. Bernard.

We gladly acknowledge receipt of a parcel of used stamps for Father Kreymborg from a young lady who took the trouble to rescue them from the letters and papers of her father. We hope such a good example will be widely followed.

WHAT the *Waimate Times* describes as an exceedingly popular wedding took place in St. Patrick's Church on Tuesday, August 3, when Miss Amelia Mary Bartos, eldest daughter of Mr. John Bartos of Waimate, was joined in the bonds of holy matrimony to Mr. Joseph Polaschek of Temuka. The church was well filled, so universal a favourite was the young lady. For many years Miss Bartos has been the leading spirit at concerts as a soloist, and she always willingly lent her aid, not only here, but in outlying districts. She has for long borne the brunt of the battle in St. Patrick's choir, and has also for a considerable time acted as organist, as well as lending material assistance in church matters. That she will be missed goes without saying. The Nuptial Mass commenced at 10 o'clock, Rev. Father Regnault being the officiating priest. The bride looked exceedingly beautiful, dressed in ivory white velvet, trimmed with satin and lace, veil and orange blossoms. She also wore a handsome bangle, gold, set with pearls, the gift of the bridegroom. The travelling dress was of navy serge, with hat to match. The bridesmaids, Miss Katie Bartos and Miss Tillie Bartos, were elegantly dressed in cream silk strops de Chine costumes, hats trimmed with ostrich tips. They also wore brooches, the gift of the bridegroom. Mr. Robert Lavery

Smoke T. C. Williams' JUNO TOBACCO.
COMPARE SIZE AND WEIGHT OF STICKS,