

the electors, who, if they were intelligent and really in earnest, could rectify this matter at the polling booths, and yet neglect to do so.

The Bishop of Dunedin requests us to say that the dispensation for the use of flesh meat on days of abstinence and fast, on account of the prevailing *la grippe*, has been withdrawn, and that consequently the faithful shall be no longer permitted to break the abstinence and fast.

ON Sunday next, the feast of Pentecost, Pontifical High Mass will be celebrated by his Lordship the Bishop, in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin, at 11 a.m.

THE movement of the railway servants to obtain from the Commissioners redress of grievances complained of by them, is one of the chief topics of the hour. The men complain of the employment of boy labour, long hours, and piece work, and propose to the Commissioners measures of relief. All the points complained of are undoubtedly objectionable and such as public opinion must support the men in their demand to have remedied. The Commissioners, on their part, seem disposed to consider the case, but require as one of their conditions for dealing with the association formed by the men that none but railway employees should be admitted to it—a demand for which there seems inadequate cause and which must act against the interests of union and arbitration generally. The matter, moreover, is not one merely affecting the railway employees and the Commissioners. It narrowly affects the whole Colony, the travelling portion of which, for instance, is personally interested in the reduction of the long hours of which the men complain, and which, among the rest, involve a serious danger to the lives of passengers.—Boy labour also is a general question of very great importance.—We agree, nevertheless, with the opinion expressed that the Association did wrong in not sending delegates as requested by the Commissioners to discuss the matter with them. The excuse given, moreover, that the men sent would become marked men appears weak and unworthy. If it were only that the force of public opinion must prevent anything of the kind, its weakness would be evident, and besides it was hardly just to the Commissioners to brand them with malevolence before they had done anything to deserve, or, indeed, given any sign of deserving such a stigma. We are glad to find that the men deprecate the intention attributed to them of going out on strike, and it is to be hoped that all temptation to do so at any time may be averted by a rational settlement of the points in dispute.

THE report of the Sweating Commission, which is now published, although, three of the Commissioners dissenting, it states that sweating properly so-called does not exist in the Colony, still shows a grave state of things. The employment of boys and girls, and in some instances even of children much under the age up to which the Education Act requires their attendance at school, is one of the prevailing evils. "The employment of these young persons to the exclusion of skilled and trained workers is the chief grievance among artisans," says the report. A hint to fine ladies is given in the clause dealing with apprenticeship. Young girls, we are told, in the millinery and dressmaking establishments give their services for the first year for nothing, and the second year for 5s a week. At the end of that time if they ask for an increase of wages they are in many cases discharged and other young girls are taken on in their places. But is it not melancholy to find such associations connected with the elegant attire in which our belles are appropriately arrayed. Laces and satins should take quite a different appearance when they are put together, even with the greatest taste and skill, by a system in some degree savouring of white slavery. But, what seems more unfortunate still, we are told that the same system prevails also in mechanical trades for men. "Boys called apprentices, but not indentured, begin at a low wage, and there is nothing to prevent their being discharged by the master, or leaving of their own accord, without sufficient knowledge of the trade. They, however, go into competition with other journeymen, not only, as is alleged, to the discredit of the craft by their inefficiency, but to the cutting down of wages." The report makes several recommendations for the amelioration of matters, of which the principal is an amendment of the Factory Act. It also expresses sympathy with the movement to secure early closing. On the whole, although things were not found quite so bad as may have been feared, they proved to be quite bad enough, and the position of the labouring classes is shown to be anything rather than what might be desired. The important question is: Who shall solve it? What are the chances of amelioration?

A MEETING in advocacy of Trades' Unionism was held the other evening in Dunedin under the auspices of the Trades and Labour Council. Several speeches were made, the speaker in every instance

displaying sound common sense and moderation. Testimony, among the rest, similar in effect to that of the Sweating Commission was borne as to the influence of the Unions in ameliorating the condition of the labourer. An assurance was also given that the working-men understood their own interests too well to do anything to drive the capitalist from the Colony, as some people feared, and thereby to deprive themselves of employment. One of the speakers very pertinently recommended the working people to look into the antecedents of Parliamentary candidates, and withhold their support from men who were not their friends. It is to be hoped that, in acting on this advice, as they will be wise to do, the working classes will not lose sight of the land question, in whose right settlement their interests are deeply involved, and which must form a first object with every legislator who is their sincere friend. On the whole, what was said at the meeting was both instructive and interesting, and such as was well calculated to make a favourable impression as to the objects and results of the system under discussion.

WE regret to learn that the Rev. Father O'Connor's progress towards recovery from his recent illness is not so rapid as could be wished. Somewhat severe general prostration has followed upon the attack of influenza, from which the rev. gentleman suffered some weeks ago. On Sunday morning last, thinking that he could conquer his indisposition, he got up in the morning, intending to celebrate first Mass in Kaiapoi, but was obliged to give up this intention owing to physical inability to carry it out. He was quite unable even to say Mass in his own church at Rangiora, and so substituted Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament instead. It is to be hoped the rev. gentleman's illness will soon pass. In the meantime he has the sincere sympathy of his many friends, and their earnest wishes to see him speedily himself again, and fit to don harness, which, indeed, he is not at present.

WE would remind our Canterbury readers that the great gala in aid of St. Mary's Church, Manchester st., Christchurch, will take place in Lancaster Park on Monday next. Father Le Menant and the Church committee have been moving heaven and earth to make the affair a brilliant success. They have contrived to secure a complete monopoly of all the sports for that day, so that holiday-makers will have little choice in respect to where they shall go to enjoy themselves. If they intend to go to any place where there will be amusement on her Majesty's birthday, they will perforce be obliged to go to Lancaster Park, for Father Le Menant has drawn every source of athletic pleasure into his net. The programme of the *fête* has been planned on a most gigantic scale. All that is required now is fine weather. If the sun happen to shine on the 26th the crowd will come, and if the crowd come Father Le Menant will reap a golden harvest for his new church. The great enterprise which he has shown in carrying this matter through in the face of many adverse circumstances certainly deserves success, of which we wish him the very fullest measure on Monday next.

EVEN Mr. Gladstone, it would appear, is not quite infallible, as the following cablegram, under date London, May 13, if correct, may inform us:—"Mr. Gladstone, in his address to the Cobden Club, expressed his regret that the colonies had not accepted the lessons of English experience. Having, however, excluded goods, it was only to be supposed they would exclude men from their territory who competed with their own artisans, who did not consume alcohol, and who worked hard for less money." The allusion is, of course, to the Chinese. It is, meantime, somewhat remarkable to find Mr. Gladstone fall into the common error that, because the excessive consumption of alcohol is the source of endless evils, abstention from its use involves the possession of all the virtues. There are men who in all sobriety are guilty of deeds that would disgrace any habitual drunkard. Still more surprising is it to find Mr. Gladstone virtually approving of a low scale of wages—a matter which we certainly had not expected from him. But it is impossible to find absolute perfection, and with this consideration we must comfort ourselves, if this cablegram prove a just report.

FROM the report of a concert recently given at the Thames, and which will be found in another portion of our columns, we learn that Miss Josephine O'Reilly, a young lady well known in the musical world of Sydney, and who has taken a distinguished place as an amateur there, has proved in Auckland her full right to the high reputation as a vocalist enjoyed by her. Miss O'Reilly, we may add, is a near relation of the Rev. Father O'Reilly, of the Thames.

DR. BARNARDO, we conclude it is Dr. Barnardo, although his name is not signed to the circular forwarded, sends us a copy of "Night and Day" for March, with the intimation that he will greatly esteem any notice with which we may favour him in our columns. The notice with which we favour him, and we do not know whether he will greatly esteem it or not, is once more to warn