

WELLINGTON.

(From our own Correspondent.)

July 2, 1892.

WELLINGTON has been in mourning during the week, and well it might, for in the death of Sir H. Atkinson it has, as well as the rest of the Colony, lost one of its noblest citizens. Bugged as a gnarled oak, but sound and true, honest, upright, and unselfish, persevering, self-relying, and tenacious of purpose, true to his friends, generous to his enemies—no, for he had none but opponents. A Conservative in name, a Radical in practice and at heart; a patriot true whose country's interest had always precedence of his own; a citizen, a settler, a soldier, a politician, a financier, a statesman, and a jurist. Such was he, who, during the past week has fallen a victim to the inexorable reaper's sickle. He was a sturdy champion of the right of Catholics to State aid in support of their schools, and never refrained from expressing his honest convictions on this important question. Well may the people of the Colony grieve for the loss of one whom it will not be easy to replace, a man who as a politician had those rare qualities difficult to find in public men—consistency and honesty, a determination to do right according to one's conscience, irrespective of questions of policy or expediency.

There have been many rumours afloat during the week as to the number and names of persons likely to be recommended to the Governor for a call to the Upper House. The names of many of the most steadfast supporters of the Government from the Labour party are not mentioned, so I presume, if the man in the street is correct, not many of our fiery Radicals will have the ill-luck to have their political morals corrupted by the Tory air of the Upper Chamber. Among those mentioned as being likely to be recommended from Wellington is that of Dr Cahill, the most popular of our medicos. However, I do not think there is any truth in the rumour, for he has never taken much interest in public affairs here, whilst his elevation would be sure to raise a storm of indignation around the heads of the Ministers which would not very soon subside.—I have it on very good authority that Sir P. Buckley has definitely decided not to contest an Irish seat.

On last Sunday a very fine stained-glass window was uncovered in St Bridget's Church, at Fielding. The window has been erected by Mr Ronald Cameron, in memory of his late wife. There was a very large congregation present, and the Rev Father Patterson preached a very suitable sermon, in which he showed how beautiful a custom it was to keep fresh in our hearts the memory of our departed friends. The musical portion of the Mass was splendidly rendered by a number of members of the choir of St Patrick's Church, Palmerston North.

Many of the friends—and their name is legion—of Mr E. D. Dunne, a prominent member of St Mary of the Angels church, will regret to hear that he is about to leave Wellington, for a time at least, and take up his residence in Southland. Mr Dunne has been for a long time a very active member of the Oriental Football Club, which he, at one time, captained, and he also took a very great interest in musical affairs. He is an enthusiastic boating man, and was a member of one of the clubs here. In fact, in athletic and musical circles his place will not be easily filled. Mr Dunne has been for over five years a valued and energetic member of the Boulcott street church choir, where his cultured baritone voice may be heard Sunday after Sunday in giving effect to the beautiful music of the Church. What is Wellington's loss in Southland's gain, and his many friends wish that he may be more than successful in his new sphere.

The funeral of Sir Harry Atkinson, which took place on Thursday last, was one of the largest that has been seen here for years. It was fully a mile and a quarter in length. It was a representative tribute of respect to the deceased statesman from all classes of the community. Among those who were present I noticed the Very Rev Father Devoy, Vicar-General, and the Rev Dr Waters. In Wednesday's issue of the *New Zealand Times* there appeared an obituary notice of the deceased, which ran into nearly four columns, being a most exhaustive memoir of his colonial life, the details of which must convince the most bitter opponents of Sir Harry, in the past, that they had no ordinary man to deal with in him. The notice was one of the finest of its kind which has appeared here, and as a literary composition it had the stamp of the master mind, of the chief of the literary staff of that paper. Congratulations were received by the proprietors during that and the following days on the magnificent literary tribute which had been paid to a political opponent.

On Tuesday evening last a large and representative meeting of Catholics was held in St Patrick's Hall, Boulcott street, for the purpose of making arrangements for the starting of a Catholic library and reading room, or at least reforming the old reading room and library which was in existence some years ago in connection with the Literary Society. Since the break up of the Literary Society their books have been stored away in the name of three trustees, and await only the furnishing of suitable rooms to be handed over to some responsible parochial body. The meeting on Tuesday was a very

enthusiastic one, and the speakers all deplored the want of suitable rooms, where the people of the two parishes could come together of an evening and talk of current events or pass the time in some equally innocent way. The result of the proceeding was that the hall is to be immediately shelved and furnished, suitable for a reading room and library, and in order to superintend the working of the proposed institution, the following officers were elected:—President—Very Rev Father Devoy; vice-presidents—Hon Dr Grace, Dr Cahill, and Mr J. J. Devine; trustees—Messrs M. Kennedy, W. M. Kennedy, and R. J. Collins; committees—Rev Fathers Dawson and Power, Messrs O'Neill, Holcroft, and Macalister; secretary—Mr M. J. Hodgins; treasurer, Mr J. Brennan; librarian, Mr J. Hyland.

Among the passengers by the Wairarapa, which arrived to-day from the South, was the Very Rev F. Cummings, V.G., Christchurch, who is, I understand, to preach a retreat here during the coming week.

The Financial Statement, which was brought down one evening during the week and which became public property next day, has, by its moderation and hopefulness, considerably enhanced the reputation of the Ministry here, and although it was supposed that a dissolution might not be an improbable contingency a few days ago, through the obstinacy of the Upper House in throwing out Government measures, yet I believe the Lords will consider their position and the improved prospects of the Ministry and not force a contest in which they would be eventually worsted.

The name of the Hon L. Walker is mentioned as a most suitable successor to Sir H. Atkinson, as Speaker of the Legislative Council.

Mr Fish has been presenting petitions from the women of the South against granting the Franchise to their sex. Mr Fish had better be careful, or he will have the whole bevy of strong-minded, spectacled, female orators scratching—not his face—but his name off the ballot papers at the next general election.

The Government have taken the wind out of the sails of Sir John Hall by making a ministerial question of the Women's Franchise Bill, so that we may safely conclude that it will be placed on the statute book this session.

On last night the energetic member for Christchurch, Mr R. M. Taylor, "heckled" the Government on the question of admitting boys attending the Catholic schools to positions in the Civil Service of the colony on the same footing as the children attending the Government schools. The grievance was so patent that the Minister for Education said that attention would be immediately given to the Hon. Member's suggestions. Instructions had been already given to the Canterbury Board that facilities for examination might be arranged for such boys, who were educated at Catholic schools and were desirous of entering the Civil Service. But considering the *personnel* of that Board, I am afraid that it is the last place in New Zealand where Catholics need look for justice, not to say favours, and any instructions in that direction from the Education Department, would be quietly ignored. However, whatever comes of the matter the thanks of the Catholic community are due to Mr Taylor for ventilating the subject.

The *Dublin Freeman's Journal* joins the iconoclasts and asserts that the famous Bastille was by no means so black a prison-house as it has been painted, but a rather comfortable place of detention, whose inmates were allowed liberty of common association and recreation, servants, visitors, books, newspapers, and even parole to go out and attend to their private affairs—in short, an earthly paradise in comparison with Mr Balfour's dungeons of Tullamore. But the fiery eloquence of Camille Desmoulins instigated the populace of Paris to its destruction and, "When the Bastille fell, that instinct felt bound to justify itself, and so the blood-curdling legends grew, and the seven prisoners became an uncounted host, who have furnished emaciated heroes to romancers and tragedians ever since, from M. Alexander Dumas to Mr Henry Irving. It is as a symbol and not as a fact that the taking of the Bastille must find its justification from history." This last sentence is undeniably true, whatever may have been the real character of the famous prison. Lafayette gave the key of the Bastille to Washington, and it hangs to-day on the wall of his old home at Mount Vernon, one of the most conspicuous relics in that historic spot.

Mrs Mary A. Livermore lectured at Music Hall, Boston, on Sunday, April 24, under the patronage of the W.O.T.U., on "Queen Elizabeth from a Protestant Standpoint." If her audience had come expecting an unqualified laudation of Elizabeth, they must have been sadly disappointed; for Mrs Livermore began by showing that according to the consensus of biographers she was "a woman of the boldest, bravest, and meanest character; in fact, some one has said she was infinitely mean." Further on Mrs Livermore touched on the part of Henry VIII, in introducing the new religion into England, and denied him the title of "reformer." She said: "This title is not righteously given, because he was unprincipled, and his appeal to the Pope was not for a principle, but simply to procure the right to marry another woman." This from a Protestant standpoint! Mrs Livermore declared her agreement with the Catholics as to the injustice done Mary, Queen of Scots; and that she, and not Elizabeth, should according to English law have succeeded Henry's eldest daughter. The lecturer then eulogised Elizabeth, according to her eminent desert, as statesman, scholar and patron of literature. The lecture was followed—somewhat inconsequently, it might seem to the ordinary mind—by the passage of a resolution protesting against the proposed State grant to Carney Hospital.