

The first of a series of entertainments inaugurated in the Cathedral parish, having for their object the raising of the necessary funds for the erection of the new marble altar, came off on Thursday evening last in St Patrick's Hall, which was thronged. Madam Tutschka arranged the musical programme, and a right good one she provided, consisting of thirteen items, including vocal and instrumental numbers. Herr Tutschka's violin solo, "Tarantella," was a treat. All the rest were well received, and the organiser is deserving of the highest commendation for her efforts in getting together such a combination. On the following evening in the same place a children's entertainment took place, with the same object in view. Father Hackett, amongst the young ones, was a host in himself; he was exactly in his element.

Leaving Parnell on the Sunday morning of October 15, Father Grogan began his week's labours under the most favourable circumstances, bar the weather, in the fine church of St Benedict, Newton, on the same evening. Dr Egan had under his care an excellent choir on the occasion. Mr John Fuller, the popular tenor, sang with fine effect Bossini's "Cujus animam," and with Mrs Kilgour and Miss Featon, Curschmann's celebrated trio, "Ti prego." Zingarelli's "Laudate," the solo by Mr Fuller, was then sung by the choir. Father Grogan afterwards ascended the pulpit, and delivered a splendid discourse, taking for his text "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his own soul." The great objects to be attained by close application to the mission services about to commence were dilated upon by the preacher, who possesses an easy and attractive delivery, and was listened to by the vast congregation with rapt attention. He urged upon those present not only to follow themselves the exercises of the mission, but also to urge and encourage others to do likewise. When the sermon concluded, "Come unto Me" was rendered most expressively by Miss Featon. During Benediction Mrs Kilgour sang the "Tantum Ergo," and Mr Thompson Weiss's "O Salutaris." At the time of writing the missionary services are in full swing at St Benedict's, and attended by large numbers.

Last Sunday a wicked and most unfounded and silly rumour was spread abroad by the "man in the street" to the effect that the Rev Mgr McDonald had died suddenly that morning at Panmure. It fell like a bomb shell amongst the Catholic community. The various presbyteries were besieged with anxious enquiries. Full credit for a time was given to the *canard*. For instance, the Hon J. A. Tole gave instructions to have postponed Mr McAlister's lecture, "Early days of Home Rule," which was announced for the following evening. Happily the esteemed Mgr was as hale and hearty as ever, and next day came into town, being everywhere surrounded and congratulated upon coming "back from the grave."

Much satisfaction is felt here at the promotion as sub-editor of the *N. Z. Times* in Wellington of Mr Patrick Nolan, late of this city. Pat is one of the rare kind, who never flinches from his set purposes, and who at all times reflects credit upon the community to which he belongs. I congratulate the *Times* upon their foresight, no more worthy selection could be made.

Judge Conolly is drawing attention to himself by his political fulminations from the wool-sack. In Ireland under Bifour he would have revelled in his element.

We have in Auckland an erratic spinster who meanders through our streets accompanied by several huge St Bernard dogs, and if you unfortunately look askance at her or the canine pets woe betide you. This vixen the other day actually set these brutes upon a small boy, whom she bailed up in a doorway and then violently turned on two men who endeavoured to rescue the poor lad. When brought before the magistrate for her offence she was let off with a paltry fine. It was the greatest pity in the world she was not sent to cool her heels in Mount Eden.

Juvenile depravity is becoming too painfully evident in our midst. Five little fellows were last week in the dock charged with breaking and entering, and stealing therefrom, etc. Commenting upon this serious matter the *Herald*, to their credit be it said, hailed with delight the advent of the missioner, Father Grogan, C.P., who is exerting himself to form an association of the Holy Family here, the primary object in view being to inculcate in the homes of the city, (1) a love for God, (2) love for our parents and home surroundings, and (3) to subject the rising generation to that authoritative control so sadly needed. This reads well from a secular journal, but more significant is this sentence. "The State now steps in and takes full charge of the children's education the parent therefore ceases to concern about that matter." Here we have acknowledged the warning voice of the Catholic Church, hitherto poured into deaf ears. Ocular demonstration they wanted, and they are getting it. The seeds have been sown, the fruit is being reaped, not as the Maoris say *taihoa, taihoa*.

Signs of the general election are apparent all around us. For the city at the present moment there are nine candidates, who are ready (as a witty writer puts it), to serve their country for 240 reasons (pounds). Nine into three you cannot, therefore six of them

are to be disappointed. Sir George Grey's intentions are shrouded in mystery. He will be a tough customer for any opponent. That being so, all those aspiring to Parliamentary fame are watching him closely. Sir George, it has been given out two or three times, is going to stand for Parnell, in which case he will oppose an old and faithful follower, who deserves better at his hands. A very great number in Parnell will, it is said, resent this action of Sir George's; others there are who aver that to return him would mean the disfranchisement of the constituency, seeing that during the last session he was unable, through ill health, to go to Wellington. What if, like Macaulay at Edinburgh in 1839, he should be rejected. He is not of the same metal as the historian, and could not bear it as well.

After an absence of over fourteen years there returned to this city from the old country one of our Catholic youths in the person of Dr William Darby, the eldest son of our esteemed citizen, Mr Patrick Darby, Ponsonby. Dr Darby has come to stay, and has already commenced his practice and will, I feel sure, be most successful. In a conversation I had with my old schoolmate he entertained me greatly with his interesting travels and experiences. Home Rule, he assured me was certain. This he arrived at after years spent in all parts of England, where the great heart of the people had gone out to Ireland. This conversion Dr Darby attributes to the spread of education and literature among the masses. Archbishop Oroke he often saw, and talked with him of Auckland and the friends he had left there. As might be expected, the young doctor notices great changes in his native city. To the old Catholic school in Pitt street, where we spent many happy days, he might wander, and with Byron exclaim,

"The schoolboy spot we ne'er forget
Though here we are forgot."

Mr J. P. McAlister, B.L., delivered his promised lecture, "Early days of Home Rule," under the auspices of the local branch of the Irish National Federation in St James' Hall on last Monday evening in aid of the Irish Parliamentary Fund. Though the rain came down copiously the hall was packed, crowds of people standing throughout. The Hon J. A. Tole, president, took the chair. On the platform were the Hon Mr Callough, M.L.O.; Messrs J. Thompson, and J. M. Shea, M.H.R.'s; Mr John Campbell, Point Erin, Ponsonby; Messrs W. Beehan, J.P., W. Mahoney, Jas. Fary, W. J. Napier, and M. G. Sheehan hon. sec. In front of the platform was a splendid likeness of Ireland's great champion, Mr Gladstone, which, on being exposed to the audience by the chairman, drew forth thunders of applause. Father Hackett occupied a front seat in the hall, also the Rev Mr Kinney, Presbyterian minister at Mobraigi, who is an ardent Home Ruler. The chairman opened the proceedings by thanking the audience for attending in face of the inclement weather, and it showed the sympathy of the people with this great cause, especially at this critical time in Irish history, when was taking place the final struggle for the regeneration of Ireland. He exhorted everyone to join the Federation, because every penny subscribed thereto was sent Home to carry on the good fight. A short musical programme was gone through before and after the lecture. Mr John Fuller began by singing "The Irish emigrant" (Lady Dufferin) in a most pleasing and pathetic manner. Upon being encored, he roused the audience to a great pitch by giving "The wearing of the green." Miss Coleta Lorrigan followed and gave "The lase rose of summer" most charmingly, and, for an encore, "O, Erin my country." This lady possesses a fine voice of great range; her lower notes are good, and I should like to hear them oftener. The next to appear was Miss O'Sullivan, now voted on all sides the best soprano in Auckland, and who sang "Kathleen Mavourneen" the rich, round, and full voice ringing through the building. It was a treat. Thunders of applause recalled the young lady, who repeated the last verse. After the lecture, the audience heard a great item, the duet, "With this treasure must I part," from the opera, "Lily of Killarney," by Miss O'Sullivan and Mr Fuller. The voices blended beautifully, though I fancied the powerful soprano suffered somewhat by subduing it to suit the tenor. The assemblage were afforded a musical evening they will not easily forget, and, as the chairman remarked, "Irish music was evidently appreciated." Mr McAlister's part I have left to the last, and about which I shall say little, because the gentleman has very kindly promised me a synopsis of it for the TABLET, and when I tell my readers that the lecturer was Mr Isaac Butt's private secretary in the early days, they will look forward with interest to it. Butt's characteristics were brought out, his statesmanlike qualities, and insight into the future, his overabounding charity, and his weaknesses. To the late Professor Galbraith Mr McAlister paid high tribute, and deservedly so. Anecdotes were given galore, and thoroughly racy of the soil; but I must not anticipate further. Miss Dargon, the celebrated Irish actress and elocutionist, through her agent (Mr Brown), contributed £22s to the fund, and promised to give an entertainment at the close of her season in aid of the Irish Parliamentary fund. The proceedings terminated at 10 p.m., all agreeing that no better "Irish evening" had been spent in Auckland. Commenting on the crowded hall, the evening paper said: "Ireland and her people are interesting subjects, when, notwithstanding the boisterous weather, there was such a crowded audience in St. James' Hall." Auckland is certainly doing her part to share in the final battle of Ireland's long and heroic struggle.

"Whether the Monarchical or Republican form of Government conduces most to the welfare of the State," was discussed last Tuesday evening at the Catholic Literary Society's meeting. Mr William Tole opened the debate on behalf of the first-named, and Mr D. Flynn that of the latter. The subject is to be continued at next meeting, when I will forward a report of it. A resolution was passed expressing pleasure at Mr P. Nolan's promotion as sub-editor of the *N.Z. Times*, Father Hackett spoke warmly in praise of Mr Nolan,