

words sufficient to eulogise the charm of Irish music. St. Aldhelm had attained considerable eminence among the Anglo-Saxons for performance on the harp; but he had learned the art from the Irish monks. Giraldus, however, awards the palm to Ireland. 'The attention of this people,' he writes 'to musical instruments I find worthy of commendation; their skill in these matters being incomparably superior to that of any other nation I have seen.' He expresses his admiration for 'the rapidity of execution,' 'the intricate arrangement of the notes,' and 'the melody so harmonious and perfect,' which Irish music displayed; and he was struck with the performance of the Irish musicians, who, he says, know how to delight with so much delicacy, and soothe so softly, that the excellence of their art seemed to lie in concealing it.'

Poetry seems to have gone hand in hand with music. Warton, in his 'History of English Poetry, attests that even so late as the eleventh century the practice was continued among the Welsh bards of receiving instructions in the bardic profession from Ireland.'

### III.

The period of Penal Laws may justly be considered the Martyr Age of Ireland, and throughout this whole period of three centuries, from Henry VIII, to 1800, three things stand prominently before us:—

1. There was no device of wicked ingenuity left untried to rob the people of their faith.

2. No nation has ever exhibited greater self-sacrifice and heroism for the preservation of their faith.

3. Throughout the whole period the Holy See was the one untiring friend of our suffering country, and Rome was the secure refuge and home of the Irish exiles.

This period of persecution recalls the sufferings of the early Christians, the martyrdom of Ignatius and Polycarp, of Agnes and Agatha, of Cecilia and Fabiola, of Lawrence and Sebastian; and it is no less unquestionable that it recalls the fervor, the constancy, the heroism, the victories of the first ages of the Church. The altars were cast down, the churches were burned or appropriated to alien worship, the people were reduced not only to poverty, but to the condition of serfs and slaves. As regards the clergy, they tasted unflinchingly of the bitter waters of persecution, they led lives of poverty, and died in most cases in loathsome prisons or on the scaffold. Suffering and exile and death were their heirlooms. It was only in secret that Mass was celebrated, only under shelter of the darkness of night could the consolations of religion be brought to the dying, and the Sacraments administered. Yet these duties were faithfully discharged.

#### Terrors of Every Kind.

surrounded those heroic men. They lived in disguise, and continually walked in the shadow of death; but nothing could chill their fervor or damp their courage. In the eyes of the persecutor, their conscience was their crime, in the sight of heaven their conscience was their crown. The martyrs of the early Church died in the arena with thousands of spectators witnesses of their glorious combat but too often angels alone saw the Irish priests with their devoted flocks cruelly butchered on the hill-side, or in the lonely woods, or in the dismal dungeons.

Wave after wave of persecution swept over our country. Confiscations and sufferings were the lot of the people—they surrendered all, but they would not renounce their glorious faith. The Penal Laws pursued their victims with

#### Malignant Ingenuity

into every detail of life. For instance: the Catholic heirs of a Protestant landholder were disinherited, and the estate transferred to the next Protestant relation. 'Papists' were incapable of purchasing lands, or taking leases for any term over 31 years, and if the profit on the farm exceeded one-third of the rent, the possessor might be ousted and the property vested in the Protestant 'discoverer'. As regards the forfeited estates, 'Papists' were allowed to dwell on them only as laborers or cottiers, provided their tenement did not exceed in value the rent of 30s a year. They were fined £20, or two months' imprisonment for not acknowledging when and where Mass was celebrated, who and what persons were present, when or where a priest, schoolmaster resided. The law on education, after the prohibition of Catholic education at home, enacted that, if any subject of Ireland should go, or send any child, or other person, to be educated in any Popish university, college, or school, or in any private family beyond the seas, or if such child should, by any Popish person, be instructed in the Popish religion, or if any subjects of Ireland should send money, etc. towards the maintenance of such child, or other person, already sent or to be sent, every such offender should be forever disabled to sue in law or equity, and, besides, they should forfeit all their estates, both real and personal, during their lives. These are but a few items of a malicious code, the best calculated to exterminate or degrade a people that the perverse ingenuity of man has ever devised.

#### The Clergy

were in a special manner pursued by the agents of persecution. Bishop after bishop, archbishop after archbishop, in all the Sees of Ireland laid down their lives to guard the heritage of the Faith and preserve the liberty of the Church of St. Patrick.

An Irish priest in the United States has penned a short poem on the priest of those penal times:—

'His altar was an uncarved rock,  
The Priest of Penal Days;  
His choir, the waves upon the lough;  
His incense rose from flow'rets wild,  
His temple, Nature undefiled,  
His acolyte, a peasant child—  
The Priest of Penal Days.

'His garden was the lonely moor,  
The Priest of Penal Days;  
His bread came from the poorest poor;  
He scorned the earth and all it gave,  
His mansion was a gloomy cave,  
His goal, a glorious martyr's grave—  
Grand priest of Penal Days.'

(To be concluded.)

## Diocesan News

### ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

January 3.

The first week of the mission in the Te Aro parish will be given to the children.

A mission will be given by the Redemptorist Fathers in Palmerston North, beginning on the 18th inst.

The Very Rev. Father O'Farrell, C.S.S.R., leaves on Monday morning for Masterton, where he will preach the Retreat to the Sisters.

Miss P. O'Leary, formerly of Blenheim, was married to Mr W Darroch, of Wellington, on New Year's Day at St. Joseph's Church. Rev. Father Galerne performed the ceremony.

The Very Rev. Dean Hoyne, of Hobart, is spending a short holiday in Wellington. The rev. gentleman, who is in charge of the Mount Magdala Asylum, Hobart, is a guest at the Te Aro presbytery.

The children's picnic, which was postponed from New Year's Day on account of the rain, is being held to-day at Belle Vue Gardens under most favorable circumstances. The children assembled at St. Mary of the Angels' and, headed by Jupp's brass band, marched in procession to the Te Aro station where, accompanied by the clergy and the members of the Christian Doctrine Society, they embarked on a special train. At the Thorndon station the children of that part of the city joined them. Arrived at the grounds an extensive programme of sports is being proceeded with under the supervision of the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Association.

### LOWER HUTT.

(From an occasional correspondent.)

December 30.

The Catholics of the Hutt and Petone held their annual picnic on Boxing Day in the Very Rev. Father Lane's grounds. The picnic turned out a very great success, notwithstanding the downpour of rain in the morning. However, the rain ceased about 10.30 a.m., and sunshine took the place of fertilising showers. The people attended in goodly numbers to enjoy the various games. The chief attraction was the tug-of-war, Hutt versus all comers, for which the prize was a box of cigars given by Mr Casey. This was won by the Petone team. Horn-pipes, Highland fling, Scotch reels, sword dance, and other Gaelic dances formed the principal games of the day. The old and young indulged in several races got up for the occasion. The Right Hon. the Premier, Mrs Seddon and family arrived in the afternoon, and were loudly cheered and welcomed to the sports. The Premier was so delighted with the little by Hayes who danced the hornpipe that he congratulated him and gave him a prize. He was also pleased with the five convent girls who danced the Scotch reel in costume that he gave Father Lane a substantial sum to distribute among the young dancers. A special feature in the afternoon's programme was the opening of the ladies' cricket match by the Premier, who bowled the first ball to Miss Dennehy. The Hutt ladies gained the victory over the Wellingtonians.

The refreshment stalls were presided over by Mesdames Lynch, Wildsmith, and the Misses Dennehy (2). The tea stall by Mesdames Nazir, Connolly, Sullivan, and Hayes, all of whom did exceedingly good work, and deserve the warmest praise and sincere thanks. The Premier left about 5.30, and departed amidst great cheering.

### WANGANUI.

(From our own correspondent.)

January 1.

On Sunday last—the Feast of the Holy Innocents—Rev. Father O'Sullivan took advantage of the presence of three priests to have Solemn High Mass celebrated. Rev. Father Huault sang the Mass, and Rev. Fathers O'Sullivan and Tymons (Wellington) acted as deacon and sub-deacon respectively. Rev. Father Huault preached for the fourth time during his short stay here on Sunday evening, his text on this occasion being from St. Luke I-48, 'For behold from henceforth all genera-

RIDE "ANGLO SPECIAL" CYCLES.