

centre, was hard to pass; Sim, half-back, was worth watching. The best forwards were: Blakey, Drummond, and Smith. In winning the banner the Christian Brothers' School played 12 matches, won 11, drew 1. They scored 223 points, and not a single point was scored against them. In 1900 the Christian Brothers' won the banner, having played 12 matches, won 11, drawn 1, scored 370 points, and had 11 points against them. The banner was withdrawn from competition in 1901 and 1902. This year the competition was resumed, two banners being offered. The Normal School wins the junior banner.

Last Hours of Leo XIII.

Shortly before the Pope breathed his last the Cardinals and dignitaries of the Pontifical Court to the number of about 60 entered the dying Pontiff's chamber. All knelt while the Grand Penitentiary, Cardinal Vannutelli, recited the prayers for the dying. At four minutes past four the Pope's head fell back slightly on the pillow, and his Holiness passed away amid the profound grief of all present. As soon as it became evident that all was over, Dr. Lapponi closed the dead Pontiff's eyes and folded his hands upon his breast. Cardinal Vannutelli then knelt by the bedside and intoned the prayers for the dead, his hearers weeping as they pronounced the responses. The Cardinals, the relations of the dead Pontiff, the diplomatists, and others present then passed before the body, each kissing the Pope's hand as he passed. All were deeply moved.

The Pope, to the immense relief of all his friends, was conscious up to the last moment. The power of speech was gone, but the light of his eyes shone brightly almost to the end. Death took place shortly after 4 p.m. It had been expected since noon, but for all that, for those who loved him it came as a shock. A little before four Cardinal Vannutelli gave absolution. The scene was impressive in the extreme. The bed had been drawn a little forward, so that it stood more in the middle of the alcove. The Pope looked already a member of the other world, so waxen was the face surmounted by the fringe of silvery hair and the white skull-cap, the sign of Papal dignity. In one hand he had the Rosary he had used for half a century. The other hand lay by his side on the coverlid. The Pope's nephews implored a blessing, and so the Pope, with the last of those fine smiles which many know so well, raised his hand with infinite difficulty and made the sign of benediction. He was unable to utter the word, although he made a visible effort to do so. Suddenly the lips began to move while the eyes closed. Those bending near thought they heard the murmur of 'Mother' and 'Father,' his mind evidently having gone back to the days of childhood. Presently the musical voice of Cardinal Vannutelli rang out giving absolution. The struggle for breath ceased and the Pope died.

After the official announcement of the Pope's death, the corpse was clad in the usual vestments—white cassock, crimson velvet camail, and white calotte and sash—in the presence of the Vicar-Camerlingo, a Notary of the Apostolic Chamber, the Pontifical Master of Ceremonies, and Dr. Lapponi. The body thus attired was then laid on the bed and covered with a cloth of damask red. The hands, which were crossed on the breast, held a small crucifix. All the windows of the death chamber were then closed. The curtains were draped with crape. The room, which was entirely hung with red tapestries, was only lighted by candles. No wreaths were placed in the Chapelle Ardente, these being prohibited by Pontifical ceremony.

Mr. J. Redmond presided over a meeting of 63 Irish Nationalist members at Westminster, when the following resolution was unanimously agreed to, on the motion of the chairman, seconded by Mr. Dillon:—

'As the representatives of a people who have attested by many centuries of suffering their fidelity to the Holy See, we hasten to associate ourselves with the hierarchy and people of Ireland in their sorrow in presence of the event which has placed the Catholic Church, and, indeed, the entire civilised world, in mourning. If anything can relieve the gloom with which the loss of our glorious Pontiff must fill all Catholic breasts, it is the consoling remembrance of all the Holy Father's noble and saintly life, his serenity in the midst of constant anxieties, and his indefatigable devotion to duty, continued to the last conscious moment of his marvellous life, have done to strengthen the influence of religion throughout the world and to elevate and ennoble human life. We request Sir Thomas Esmonde, Bart., M.P., as Senior Whip of the Irish Parliamentary Party, and Private Chamberlain to the Holy Father, and Captain Donelan, M.P., Second Whip, to be the bearers of the deep and respectful condolences of the Parliamentary

representatives of Ireland on the occasion of the obsequies of his Holiness.'

The King, in the course of his reply to an address from the Kingstown Urban Council, said:—'The death of his Holiness the Pope, though expected for some time, has, I know, brought sadness to the hearts of multitudes among my subjects, a sadness which I share, remembering as I do the kindness with which his Holiness so recently received me at Rome, and the interest which he took in the welfare of my people.'

The following is the text of the letter sent by the King's command to Cardinal Logue:—'Your Eminence,—I am commanded by the King to express to you his deep regret at the news of the death of his Holiness the Pope, which reached his Majesty yesterday evening, and to beg that you will convey to the Sacred College his Majesty's sincere condolence.—I am, your Eminence's obedient servant, George Wyndham.'

On account of the Pope's death the King cancelled the command given for a State performance at the Dublin Theatre Royal, and also ordered the military display in the Phoenix Park to be restricted to the least possible dimensions.

PALMERSTON NORTH

(From our own correspondent.)

August 30.

St. Patrick's branch of the H.A.C.B.S. held its first lodge night on Wednesday last, the full strength being present. Three new members were initiated and five more proposed, and I find that nearly every Brother has one or more members to propose next meeting night, which bears out all that has been stated in the past, in support of a branch being established in the parish. A great amount of routine business was put through, and great praise is due to the rev. president for his tactful way in dealing with it. A movement is on foot with the members to try a Catholic reunion in the parish in the latter part of September, the funds to go towards the regalia for the officers.

The parish school was examined by the Government Inspector during the week, excellent results being obtained. All the pupils passed, which speaks well for the school's reputation, and reflects great credit on the Sisters in charge.

Worms as Soil Renovators

Earth worms are not soil formers, for they are seldom met with in soils that are destitute of organic matter. They are simply renovators (says the 'Fertiliser'). Every time a worm is driven by dry weather, or any other cause, to descend deep, it brings to the surface, when it empties the contents of its body, a few particles of fresh earth. At the same time it fertilises the subsoil by opening up passages, which encourage the roots of plants to penetrate deeper, these passages being lined with excreted matter, which provides a store of nourishment for the roots. On meadow land Darwin found that these worm-casts amount annually to eight-tenths of an acre, and on good arable land to about 10 tons.

The pure areated waters of Messrs. Grey and Menzies, of Auckland, and also at Thames, Waikato, Coromandel, and Whangarei, are now so well known and highly appreciated that it is unnecessary to remind our readers in the North Island that they were awarded a gold medal at the Auckland Exhibition, a strong and convincing proof of their superiority....

The many friends of Mr. E. Power, who conducted for some years with conspicuous success the European Hotel, Dunedin, will be pleased to hear that he has become proprietor of the Masonic Hotel, Christchurch. This is a spacious house, with first-class accommodation, and especially suitable for travellers and country visitors. The genial proprietor will, we have no doubt, leave nothing undone to ensure the comfort of his patrons....

A very useful tool is Mawson's Patent Lifting Jack, for lifting waggons and carriages while oiling, etc. It is one of the handiest and best Jacks made. One man can easily lift a ton, and its weight is only 14lb. It is quick in action. A trial will demonstrate its wonderful utility as a great saving in muscular exertion. See it. The price is only 15s. Morrow, Bassett, and Co., sole

A little wonder is the Broadcast Patent Seed-sower, sold by Morrow, Bassett, and Co. For sowing turnip, rape, grass, and clover seed it has no equal, while for oats, wheat, and barley you have only to see it to know its value. A boy can work it. Sow four acres per hour, and any quantity up to six bushels per acre. Price only 20s.—***