

and, as all the world knows, for fox-hunting at its best you must go to Ireland. Over there now on certain days in each week the coverts are roused from their habitual quiet: Mullinahone, Slieverue, Slieve Coyltha, Carnagh, Dunmain, Carrig Cloney, Carrigrue, Duneshall, and how many more to which we used to jog off serenely betimes of a hunting m'orning! Shall we ever again know the tense expectation of waiting for the sight of the red coats of the whips, and then of the serried pack, as with their black and white and tan barrels and waving sterns they swung into view? Sometimes the suspense was relieved when a freshly clipped horse felt the sting of the cold morning and set an example of bucking that went like a wave motion through the assembled hunters: sometimes the bucking was no more than a few playful hoists of the strong quarters, other times it was the real thing, with a determined fight on the horse's part to get his head down and his rider on the ground. If a fox was found, in due time you saw a whip lift his cap and if you were keen of vision you might identify amid the bracken and gorse a wee red object fleeting away for dear life. And then the blast of the horn and the first flight for places to jump out of the covert, which was as a rule a very nasty spot to get out of, then hard pulling and big leaping for a field or two until the horse settled down and fell into his stride after working off his exuberant joyousness for the horse rejoices in the game as much as the man and knows his task right well if he has been hunted a season or two. Up steep slopes, when you held the mane to keep from slipping back, down mountain sides too fast for safety, over stony rivers and rotten water-soaked banks, across plough and stubble, taking your chance in the blind spots, soaring over sound banks, intent only on the pack that moved like a shadow over the fields ahead, you sped full of the joy of life, with the sweet air whipping your face and the strong shoulders of the horse rippling between your knees. "Och, Corymeela, an' the blue sky over it!"

Samuel Johnson

A query concerning Johnson's place in literature suggests a fuller note on that great man than our formal reference in "Answers to Correspondents" this week. Johnson was indeed the central figure of that brilliant and picturesque coterie that used to foregather, to discuss every conceivable topic, in the old London Coffee House. It is not unlikely that he then overshadowed and overawed greater men, just as in the perspective at this distance his great form dominates the picture. It is tenable surely that he was not the superior in any sense of Burke, that Reynolds in his own sphere was a greater genius, and that the marvellous versatility of Sheridan made him a luminary of a higher order than the kindly, ponderous philosopher. We, for our part, certainly hold that Goldsmith, the shy, awkward Irishman whom the spiteful Scot who clung to Johnson's coat-tails like a parasite derided, is easily master of them all in the realm of imaginative prose and verse. Johnson's most marked quality was his common sense. It was the controlling key to his philosophy and it gave his opinions that balance and moderation which won the admiration of the majority of cultured readers in his own day and later. He was an indolent man who would "far rather read than write. Much of what he did write was inspired by dire necessity, and although his activity covered a range of half a century his works are by no means voluminous. One would be perplexed to point out what among them was really of first rank. Practically he is forgotten save of students in our time. So sbrewd a judge as Edmund Gosse holds that his *Opus Magnum* was the *Lives of the Poets*. We cannot doubt that his fame and its vitality are in great measure due to the matchless biography of his friend Boswell. *Rasselas* is read by professors and pupils, his poems have lost their vogue, *The Idler* and *The Rambler* are placed on the shelves of most libraries and left there. But the lumbering, gigantic figure of the man himself and the memory of his noble intelligence and kind heart live in our imagination.

St. Monica

The Feast of St. Monica recalled to us this week a little book which during the year has been too much overlooked and forgotten for other, newer, less important books. We took down from its shelf once more the *Libri Confessionum* which we bought on a bygone day in the land Augustine loved and where his mother's bones were laid. We opened the Tenth Chapter of the Ninth Book and read again the beautiful words that speak with undying eloquence and ineffable tenderness of the last days of the mother and son by the sea at Ostia. Ary Scheffer's picture ought to be known as a help to understand the loveliness of the word-painting of the Saint in his sorrow. We see them still, the now happy mother and the regenerated son at her feet, looking out across the little stumbling waves of the Midland Sea as they rolled up the sands of a long dead city of Italy. Augustine tells us that in those last days their conversation was of God and of the future life to which Monica was passing: "Very sweet were the conversations we had all alone. We forgot the past and reaching forth to the things to come, discoursed of present truth, which Thou art, and of the nature of the future life eternal of the saints which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived." She told him that now that he had come back to God there was not anything on earth to hold her. And finally: "Put my body anywhere. Let not care for it trouble you. This only I ask that at God's altar you will remember me wherever you may be." With that word we will leave them. May we ask that Monica's last request be not forgotten lightly by all our readers who have like Augustine known the dumb grief for a mother's death?

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The ordinary monthly meeting of St. Joseph's Cathedral Parish Committee of the Catholic Federation was held in St. Joseph's Hall, after devotions on last Sunday evening. The Very Rev. J. Coffey, Diocesan Administrator, presided, and general business was transacted.

Mrs. M. A. Jackson, president of St. Joseph's Cathedral Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, was returned among the candidates who secured the highest number of votes, as a member of the Otago Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, at the recent elections.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in St. Joseph's Cathedral on last Sunday after the eleven o'clock Mass, and many attended in adoration during the afternoon. After Compline in the evening there was the usual procession, followed by Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

In the Soccer competition last Saturday, the Christian Brothers' first grade team after a hard, stubborn game with Green Island, suffered defeat by 3 goals to 1. The "Greens" second and third grade suffered a similar fate to their firsts, being defeated by Old Boys and Northern teams respectively. The fourth grade, playing its first match, scored a popular win over Post and Telegraph by 6 goals to 1. The defeats suffered last Saturday should prove a strong incentive to wearers of the green jersey to practise hard and constantly. They have some sterling material in their ranks, that, with systematic practice, could be galvanized into a formidable combination. On Saturday next the Christian Brothers' first grade team are to play High School Old Boys at Culling Park. A keen but friendly rivalry exists between these two teams, who have gained the reputation in past years of providing a fast, attractive game. No doubt ex-pupils of both schools will turn out in large numbers to witness this much-looked-for encounter.

ST. JOSEPH'S MEN'S CLUB, DUNEDIN.

The annual meeting of St. Joseph's Men's Club was held in the club rooms, St. Joseph's Hall, on last