

uninstructed pagan who accepts a Bible, which in few cases he can read and in practically no case properly understand.'

WE SEARCH THE CHACO.

Thus far our issue of April 6. We concluded our note by expressing our determination to get to the bottom of this evil tale. We may fairly claim to have done so. The Chaco is far off. It is half as big again as the total area of Great Britain and Ireland, and is on the borderland of civilisation. But it will soon, we trust, prove as unsafe a place for the spinning of missionary legends as the Catholic Truth Society and decent Protestant writers have already made Mexico. Thanks to the editor of the *Southern Cross* of Buenos Aires—whose courtesy we hereby gratefully acknowledge—we are now in possession of a first batch of official documents which give the lie direct to the silly story of the Bible Society's agent in Argentina.

(1) The first of three documents forwarded to us is the original letter (in Spanish) of Father Vicente Caloni, Guardian or Superior of the Monastery of San Lorenzo, the head house of the Franciscan missionaries of the Chaco. He has spent twenty-nine years in the Chaco, and during part of that time he has been twice Prefect of the Missions. Consequently he is in a position to speak. He roundly declares the story of the *Sunday Magazine* 'ridiculous,' 'repugnant,' and declares that 'the author of that falsehood has not even known how to give it the appearance of truth.' Elsewhere in the same letter he says: 'What that London magazine says is false. The Chaco is divided into two territories (*gobernaciones*), one governed by Col. Lusuriaga, and the other by Col. Uriburu, both gentlemen of excellent education and high character, and both many years resident in the Chaco. Nothing of what the Protestant magazine mentions ever happened in the territory of either.' The writer states that he time and again divided his crust of bread with the Protestant ministers who at long intervals appear on the borders of Santa Fé and the Chaco, but he is quite decided as to the fruitlessness of their attempts to convert the Indians.

(2) Another document is a letter from the secretary of the diocese of Santa Fé, to which the Chaco belongs. He declares the story a 'gross calumny,' and promises an official denial of it as soon as the Administrator of the Diocese should have an opportunity of formally communicating on the subject with Father Pedro Iturralde, Prefect of the Chaco Missions. This, however, was unnecessary, as the Notario Mayor of the diocese of La Plata (Rev. James M. Ussher), who kindly interested himself in the matter, saw Father Iturralde in Buenos Aires. Writing to the *Southern Cross* of August 18, Father Ussher says: 'Naturally he (Father Iturralde) smiled at the nonsense published by the Bible Society as the missionary reports of its subsidised agents, who run up occasionally near the Chaco, but, generally speaking, not too near the Indians, look around for a while, then go home and report all the good work they have done, the number of Bibles distributed, the number of Indians they have converted, and how many more they might have been able to convert were it not for the inconceivable, idolatrous perversity of the fanatical friars who sprinkle Ind an prisoners with holy water,' etc.

(3) Another document forwarded to us by our courteous confrere of the *Southern Cross* is a copy of a petition addressed to the Governor of Santa Fé, dated May 1, 1899, and signed by Mr. Charles Webster, a Protestant gentleman, who lives at Colonia Florencia, on the limits of Santa Fé and the Chaco. Mr. Webster's petition is strong evidence of the high esteem in which the Franciscan Fathers are held in that distant region. The petition states that the only way to prevent the destructive invasions of the Indians is 'to establish Catholic missions in suitable places,' erect schools for the education of the Indians, place them and the missions in charge of the Franciscan Fathers. In the petition Mr. Webster offered 25 hectares (about 60 acres) of land to the Fathers for a school at Florencia, and intimated his intention of personally collecting funds for the erection of the building. Another Protestant gentleman in the same district wrote to Father Iturralde urging him to further the petition by every means in his power. In this connection we may state that a similar suggestion is made the burden of a leading article in the *Prensa*, a secular paper published at Buenos Aires, in its issue of January 31, 1899. It pays a high eulogium to the priesthood for its work of civilising and Christianising the wild man in South America, and roundly declares that the priest, and not the soldier, is to be the saviour and civiliser and pacifier of the Chaco.

TRUE MISSIONARIES.

We may well conclude with the following words of Father Ussher's communication to the *Southern Cross* of August 18:—

'The Franciscans go about their work in real earnest, and make no fuss about it; they go into it heart and soul, and don't send reports to the newspapers magnifying their work, their privations, and their sacrifices. We should scarcely have known they were to be found in the Chaco at all, only that some Protestant minister took the trouble of writing nonsense about them to the Bible Society. They go out into the Indian territory where no other white man dare go; they go and say there, spend their lives there, and they are the only white men an Indian will trust. They do not calumniate the Protestant ministers who sometimes go up in that direction trying to undo the work they have been doing slowly and silently during the last hundred years. Some time ago I became acquainted with an old friar in San Lorenzo. He was eighty years of age, had spent over forty in the Chaco, and then come home to rest and quietly await his end in that historic old monastery. He has since died. Not long since F. Ermete Constanti was killed in the Chaco after living there thirty-seven years. Father Vicente Caloni has been there twenty-nine, as we have already seen; and actually there are nine other Franciscan priests in Chaco, and, dishonourable though it may be to our boasted civilisation, the Indians are not always the most uncivilised people with whom they are obliged to deal, and never the most ungrateful.'

We are endeavouring to get into communication with the Governors of the Chaco. But we were fairly warned at the outset that Argentina, like Spain, *es el país de la mañana*: the land of to-morrow—of that procrastination which eats up time and makes the soul so often weary with profitless waiting.

ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES.

(From our Wellington correspondent).

THE scholastic year at St. Patrick's College was brought to a close on Thursday evening, when the breaking-up ceremony and distribution of prizes took place. The study hall, where the proceedings were held, was artistically decorated, and a striking design of coloured electric light outside the main entrance made a very pretty effect. As usual, there was a crowded attendance, among those present beside the local clergy being the Count and Countess de Courte, Messrs. R. O'Connor, M. Kennedy, P. S. Garvey, R. J. Collins, Dr. Cahill, etc. His Grace Archbishop Redwood was unavoidably absent, and in his stead the Ven. Archdeacon Devoy, S.M., V.G., presided, supported by the Rector, the Very Rev. Father Bower, S.M., B.A., and the Very Rev. Father Lewis, S.M.

Prior to the distribution of prizes the audience were entertained with an excellent programme of vocal and instrumental music and recitations. The proceedings opened with a selection by the College Brass Band, under the able conductorship of Mr. Trowell. The item was played in a manner which showed that the band has attained a high state of efficiency. The Rev. Father Hills gave a splendid rendering of 'Shepherd of the Fold,' and in response to an encore he sang 'The Old Brigade.' Later on Father Hills sang with great taste 'The Lost Chord,' which was enthusiastically redemanded. His encore number was the 'Riderless Steed.' The College orchestra gave two pleasing items—'La Zingara,' arranged by the conductor, and a serenade by Mozart. Mr. S. Moran contributed a well-delivered recitation, 'Babs Malone,' which was enthusiastically encored, and in response he gave a humorous piece, 'The Poet's Reverie.'

At the conclusion of the entertainment the prizes were distributed by the Ven. Archdeacon Devoy. The following is the list:—

SPECIAL PRIZES.

Good Conduct, intern students, senior division (gold medal presented by his Grace Archbishop Redwood).—Richard Hoare, 1. Next in merit: Patrick O'Connor, Henry Woods, David Kenny. Junior division (prize medal presented by Venerable Archdeacon Devoy, V.G.).—Lynch Dignan, 1. Next in merit: Daniel Hurley, Edward Wilson, Albert C. O'Connor, Leonard Coakley. Day boys (prize medals presented by Very Rev. Father Lewis and Mr. Lloyd).—John Prendeville and Thomas Segrief, equal. Next in merit: Daniel Twohill, Thomas Lawlor, Clarence Arthur, Joseph Collins. Diligence, for the highest aggregate of marks obtained in class work during the year (gold medal presented by Mr. R. O'Connor).—Arthur Ongley, 1. Next in merit: Thomas Gilbert, Robert Loughnan, Richard Hoare, Thomas McCarthy.

Christian Doctrine (gold medal presented by the Very Rev. Provincial, S.M.).—Arthur Ongley, 1. Next in merit: Thomas McCarthy, Michael Mahoney, Richard Dorset.

Mathematics (prize medal presented by Very Rev. John McNamara, S.M.).—Arthur Ongley, 1. Next in merit: Robert Loughnan, Thomas McCarthy, Thomas Walsh.

Latin (gold medal presented by Dr. Mackin).—Robert Loughnan, 1. Next in merit: Richard Dorset, David Kenny.

Music (the 'Carolan' medal, presented by S.P.C. Old Boys' Association).—Robert Loughnan, 1. Next in merit: John Brady, Richard Dorset.

English Literature and Authors (gold medal presented by Mr. William B. Missen, ex-pupil).—Richard Dorset, 1. Next in merit: Arthur Ongley, Thomas McCarthy, Michael Mahoney.

English Essay Writing (special prize presented by Mr. John Curmin, M.A., K.S.C.G.).—Richard Dorset, 1. Next in merit: Arthur Ongley, Michael Mahoney.

Irish History (gold medal presented by Dr. Cahill).—Richard Dorset, 1. Next in merit: Arthur Ongley, Thomas McCarthy, Michael Mahoney.

Drawing (special prize presented by Mr. Henry Bastings).—Lynch Dignan, 1. Next in merit: John O'Halloran, Norman Crombie, Albert C. O'Connor, Arthur Garvey.

French (special prize presented by Count De Courte, Consul for France).—Robert Loughnan, 1. Next in merit: Arthur Ongley, Michael Mahoney, Richard Dorset.

Drill (prize medal presented by Mr. R. P. Collins).—Richard Hoare.

GENERAL PRIZES.

Course of Christian Doctrine, matriculation class (*vide supra*) Second class—Thomas Gilbert, 1. Next in merit: Martin O'Brien, John Larkin, Daniel Hurley, James McGarrigle, Gerald O'Kane. Third class—Patrick O'Connor, 1; Leonard Coakley, 2. Next in merit: Joseph Parker, Walter Ahlfeld, Michael Murphy, Martin Carroll. Fourth class—John Quill, 1. Next in merit: Thomas Spillane, Francis Tymons, Joseph Loughnan, Eugene McArdle. Fifth class—Michael Hanly, 1. Next in merit: Hamilton Redwood, Patrick Hanley, Rupert Evenen. Preparatory school.—First division—Thomas L. Ward, 1. Next in merit: Frederick White, Henry Kirkwood, John McDonald. Second division—Virgil McGovern, 1. Next in merit: Alonzo Dwan, Henry Bridge.

Course of English, matriculation class. Grammar and analysis.—Arthur Ongley, 1. Next in merit: Michael Mahoney, Thomas