

tion known as the 'Dames Anglaises' or 'Sisters of Mary.' They have in Bucharest two boarding-schools and an orphanage, and three other private schools in other parts of Roumania proper. The only other Catholic teaching communities of religious women in the kingdom are the Sionites. And they have two houses in Moldavia. A correspondent writing (as alleged) from Bucharest would certainly avoid so patent and tell-tale a blunder as to speak of 'the Roman Catholic sect' of religious teachers known as 'Notre Dame de Lira.' (4) The date assigned to the impossible tale under consideration is October 2. We have been perusing a considerable number of European and American papers, secular and religious, before and since that date, and have failed to come across any trace of this story, which, if even one-tenth true, would indeed be a God-send to the world's sensational press. (5) A liar might at least pay his readers or hearers the compliment of trying to be plausible. But the wild romance about 'forcing' the non-Catholic 'daughters of the highest families' to become nuns and to sign away their possessions—and that, too, in the heart of a strongly anti-Catholic population—is one which the disreputable Margaret Shepherd or the Slattery impostors might be expected to spin to an Orange lodge or a corps of the horse-marines. The 'Hokitika Guardian' probably published the preposterous story in solemn good faith—in which case the fooling of our western contemporary seems to have been a conspicuously easy job. The 'Guardian' has apparently a low estimate of the intelligence and good sense of its readers. We shall probably have something more to say at a later date about this grotesque fairy-tale from a far-off land.

Diocesan News

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

(From our own correspondent.)

December 31.

The Rev. Father Murray, C.S.S.R., was engaged during the week in preaching a retreat to the local Sisters of Mercy.

Messrs. Leydon and McKeowen speak in high terms of the warm welcome they received from the Dunedin young men at the recent Conference.

The Very Rev. Father Lewis, V.G., and Rev. Fathers Ainsworth and Holley were present at the Maori festive gathering at Otaki, held in honor of the visit of Lord Onslow's son, Huia.

I regret to report that the health of Mr. Owen McArdle during the week was for a time such as to cause his numerous friends some anxiety. He is now reported to be progressing satisfactorily.

A very pretty wedding took place at St. Mary of the Angels', Boulcott street, on Tuesday last, when Mr. Richard Fantham, of Hawera, was married to Miss Gertrude B. Walsh, youngest daughter of Mr. E. J. Walsh, of this city. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Father O'Shea.

The monster Catholic picnic on Boxing Day eclipsed all previous records. It is estimated that close on 10,000 people visited the gardens during the day. Among those present were Lady Onslow, her son and daughter, Sir Joseph Ward, Mr. Seddon, Bishop Wallis and Mrs. Wallis, and Colonel S. Porter. A large committee, with Father O'Shea at its head, worked hard to secure the enjoyment of all. Needless to say, their efforts were well rewarded with success. The children were catered for in every possible way and the sports for adults invited keen competition. The schools championship was won by young Harold Vaney, of Wellington South. He therefore secures a medal and a cup to be held by his school for the year. The tug-of-war contest caused, as usual, great excitement, and ended in a win for the Thorndon team. Mr. John Hyland acted in a very capable way as secretary for the affair. The various prizes were presented in St. Patrick's Hall to the winners on Thursday evening by Rev. Father O'Shea. The captain of the Thorndon team handed over the handsome cup won in the tug-of-war to the Rev. Father Holley.

Greymouth

(From our own correspondent.)

December 31.

The Rev. Father Venning, of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, is assisting the Very Rev. Dean Carew in the work of the parish during Rev. Father Herbert's absence.

Yesterday morning a large concourse of people assembled to witness the laying of the foundation stone for the new Town Hall. The Mayor (Mr. James Andrew Petrie) gave an address suitable to the occasion, and then laid the stone. Several other gentlemen also made remarks, including the Hon. A. R. Guinness. At the conclusion three hearty cheers were given for the Mayor and Mayoress. The contractor (Mr. Bell) presented the Mayor with a silver trowel suitably inscribed. The new hall when completed (which should be in some six months) will be one of the finest for the size of the place in New Zealand.

The church presented a beautiful appearance during the Christmas festivities, being decorated with flowers, evergreens, and banners. The Very Rev. Dean Carew celebrated the midnight Mass, and preached an able sermon on the feast of the day. The congregation was a large one and filled the spacious church to its utmost. The choir were in excellent form, singing admirably Mozart's Twelfth Mass. The leading soprano solos were taken by Miss Eily Hannan, except the 'Benedictus,' which was sung by Miss Bremer. The alto solos were taken by Misses Slattery and Beresford. Messrs. Doogan and Fraser were the tenors, and Mr. K. T. Dillon sang the bass solos. Miss E. Kemple presided at the organ, assisted by a full orchestra, consisting of Messrs. F. McCarthy and B. J. Phillips (violins), T. Goodall (cornet), F. Seabrook (cello), and D. Cocks (bass). The conductor of the choir deserves every praise for the high efficiency of the choir. The Christmas Day Masses and Benediction were also attended by large numbers. Miss Jeanie Burke gave a beautiful rendering of the 'Adeste Fideles.'

Wanganui

(From our own correspondent.)

On Thursday, December 22, a large audience assembled in St. Mary's Hall, Wanganui, on the occasion of the entertainment given by the pupils of the Marist Brothers' school. The object of the entertainment was to provide prizes for the boys who had merited them, and to form a nucleus of a school circulating library. Although it was the first time the boys had appeared in public, they nevertheless acquitted themselves in a manner for which they and their teachers deserve the greatest credit. Especially in the play the youthful performers displayed great ability. The following was the programme:—Solo, Master Loftus; chorus, 'The harp that once,' pupils; dance, Irish jig, Mr. R. McGregor; recitation, 'The Irish drummer boy,' Master William Neylon; song, 'Happy little Sam,' Master Sydney Stafford (encored); viola solo, 'Marianne Waltz,' Master H. Jury; recitation, 'Guilty or not guilty,' Master Leo Duffou; infant song, 'He, she and it,' Masters F. Jefferson, Celestine Duffou, and B. Kiely; solo, 'A boy's best friend,' Master H. Jury (encored); recitation, 'When I'm a man,' Masters F. Jefferson, J. Quirk, T. McFadden, H. McAlinden, O. Grogan, G. Cronin, and M. Grogan; chorus, 'Slumber, gentle infant,' pupils (encored); chorus, 'Haste away,' pupils. The play was entitled 'The Harvest Storm,' and the various characters were ably presented by the following boys: Charles Cronin, Thomas Boyle, Robert Flynn, L. Norwood, W. Quirk, M. Crotty, P. Lloyd, L. Loftus, and K. Orotty. The programme concluded, the Very Rev. Dean Grogan addressed the audience, and in the course of his remarks said that the entertainment was an indication of the training the boys received at the Brothers' school. He complimented the Brothers on the excellent results achieved, and asked Rev. Bro. Coleman to repeat the performance later in aid of the bazaar fund.

Rev. Brother Coleman, Principal of the school, then made a brief and appropriate speech, after which the prize list was read.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN.

The Rev. Father McGrath, who has been absent on sick leave, is on his way back to New Zealand, having left London on December 2 by one of the Orient liners.

The annual retreat of the clergy of the diocese opens on Monday evening, the 16th inst., in Holy Cross College, Mosgiel. It will be conducted by Rev. Father Claffey, S.J.