

Christian Brothers' School, Dunedin

St. Joseph's Hall was crowded on Friday evening on the occasion of the annual entertainment by, and the distribution of prizes to the pupils of the Christian Brothers' schools. The Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., presided, and the other clergy present were the Rev. Fathers Howard, O'Malley, M. Ryan, Hearn, Buckley, and Corcoran. As is usually the case, an attractive programme, representative of the varied intellectual and physical education imparted by the Christian Brothers, was presented, and, needless to say, met with the hearty appreciation of the very large audience. Every item was given in that finished manner for which the pupils of the school have always been noted, and which is a characteristic feature of the teaching methods of every institution conducted by the Christian Brothers, whose reputation as successful educators is now fully recognised in every part of the English-speaking world, and even beyond it. The programme opened with the glees, 'Hail! smiling morn,' and 'The cuckoo,' both of which were sweetly sung, the time being excellent. The recitation, 'David's lament for Absalom,' was rather an ambitious undertaking for a boy, but Master T. P. Lafey was equal to the work, and delivered it with much dramatic ability. Master W. O'Connor has a sweet voice, and his singing of 'O native music,' brought a well-merited encore. That physical training receives considerable attention in the school was demonstrated by the exhibition on the parallel bars and club swinging by the senior gymnastic class. In both instances the performers did their work well, some of the feats being such as would tax the ability of adults. The scene from 'Julius Caesar,' the quarrel between Brutus (Master W. O'Connor) and Cassius (Master C. Marlow), was an excellent item, both boys displaying dramatic powers of a high order. The part song, 'Oft in the still night,' was another vocal item which showed that more than ordinary attention is paid to singing in the school. The humorous recitation, 'De Smith at the telephone,' by Master J. Cooney, convulsed the audience. The manner in which the reciter imitated the voices of the irate subscriber and the confused telephone girl being extremely natural, and productive of great amusement. A well-deserved encore followed this item. The junior gymnastic class gave a dumb-bell exhibition, which was marked with neatness, and precision of movement. The programme concluded with a humorous sketch, entitled 'The troubles of a modern father,' in which the characters were sustained by Masters T. P. Lafey, W. O'Connor, T. J. Lafey, C. Marlow, and J. Monaghan. The accompaniments during the evening were played by Miss C. Hughes, and the senior gymnastic class was led by Mr. J. Bryant.

At the conclusion of the programme Rev. Brother Brady read the annual report, which was as follows:—

In presenting the report for the year 1905, the Christian Brothers are pleased to be able to state that the high standard of excellence achieved by the school in the past still continues. The number of pupils on the roll for the year was 261, being a steady increase on that of previous years. It is gratifying to the Brothers to notice that the course of instruction imparted to their pupils is appreciated by the general public, as several of the boys received good appointments during the year. Since our last report, Masters James Collins and L. H. McBride passed the Medical Preliminary Examination, and have been attending the University during the past year. Master Richard Burke passed Matriculation, while Masters D. Hartstonge and E. Joyce passed the Junior Civil Service, and qualified for appointments. At the annual examination of the schools, held early this year, over 90 per cent. of the boys examined passed into higher grades. In his general report the Brother examiner states that the reading, writing, and arithmetic throughout the establishment were excellently taught. He was particularly pleased with the conduct of the children and the intelligence displayed by them under examination. At the Dunedin Elocutionary Competitions, our pupils were very successful. In the section (under 21 years) we secured three places—second, third, and fourth. In the section (under 14), open to all the boys of the city, the boys from our school secured first, second, and third prizes respectively. In the essay for girls or boys (under 14) we tied for second place. Turning to athletics, we find that the boys have more than upheld their reputation. They are premiers in senior school cricket for the season 1904-05, and in this season's cricket competition have won all the matches played. In football, under the Association rules, the seniors carried off the medals for the Five-a-

Side-Tournament, and the juniors, imitating the example of the seniors, annexed the medals in the same competition. At the Otago 'Championship Schools' Sports, the school carried off 18 medals, or 50 per cent. of the medals awarded to the schoolboys' events. Very good work has been done in the gymnasium during the year under Master J. Bryant, the members of the senior and junior classes having made good progress. Under Captain Hussey, the Cadets are fast becoming an efficient corps. We take this opportunity of thanking Captain Hussey for the deep interest he has taken in this department of school life. In Captain Hussey we have one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the school. We return our sincere thanks to the parents, who co-operated so generously with us in promoting the interests of the children; and to the wide circle of kind friends who took such a practical interest in the school during the year. To his Lordship the Bishop we are deeply grateful for the kindly interest he has taken in the Brothers and their pupils. The spiritual wants of the children received the constant attention of the Rev. Father Coffey and the other priests of St. Joseph's, and to them we return our most grateful thanks. The work of the year was fittingly brought to a close when on Sunday, December 10, 30 children made their First Communion, and 52 received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Rev. Father Coffey, in addressing the audience, said they were there that night to witness an exhibition by the Christian Brothers' boys, and he was sure they all enjoyed it. They were not there to hear a long speech from him in praise of the work of the Christian Brothers, but he would not be fulfilling his duty if he did not take the opportunity of expressing his gratitude and that of the other priests, and of tendering his heartiest thanks to the Brothers for the work they are doing in this city for the Catholic children. No one appreciated this more than his Lordship the Bishop, who was unavoidably absent. The Catholics of Dunedin had reason to be grateful to the Brothers and Sisters for the excellent education which they were giving to the children. The parents could feel confident that the children were receiving a good secular education at the hands of the Brothers. But it was not the Catholics alone who appreciated the Christian Brothers as successful teachers, for he held in his hand two extracts from speeches delivered recently by men outside the Church which bore testimony to the success that had attended the teaching methods of the Brothers. One of these was delivered by the Protestant Bishop of Derry at the Diocesan Synod there, and the other was delivered at the Protestant Synod of Meath by the Rev. Mr. White. (Here the Rev. Father Coffey read the extracts referred to, both having appeared in the columns of the 'N.Z. Tablet' a short time ago.) Continuing, Father Coffey said he did not think they could get any stronger testimony to the work of the Christian Brothers than was given by the Bishop of Derry and Rev. Mr. White, and therefore when non-Catholics set such a high value on that work, Catholic parents should feel proud of their schools. The parents should do their part by seeing that the children attend regularly and constantly and that they respect their teachers. Whenever the Christian Brothers' boys have met those of the public schools in intellectual or physical competitions they had completely outdistanced them, and would do likewise in the future. He had sitting by him a successful young man who had received his education from the Christian Brothers in the person of Mr. J. B. Callan, jun., who had just passed his LL.B. degree. In conclusion he trusted the boys would enjoy their vacation in a whole-hearted manner, and that they would always show outside the school the teaching which they had received in the school.

Mr. J. J. Marlow, in moving a vote of thanks to Father Coffey for presiding, paid a tribute to the great interest which the rev. chairman had taken in the welfare of the schools in South Dunedin, an interest which, he felt sure, would be continued, and congratulated the Brothers on the result of their teaching as shown in the excellent entertainment provided, and in the many successes achieved in intellectual and physical competitions during the year.

Mr. Callan, in seconding the vote of thanks, also paid a tribute to the Christian Brothers as successful teachers. There was no body for whom he had greater respect than for the Christian Brothers, who devote their whole time to the education of the young, not for any worldly reward, but from the highest motives, for it was to them a labor of love.

The prizes were then distributed by the Rev. Father Coffey, the list being as follows:—

Dux of the school, D. Hartstonge (gold medal).

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