

day's toil was shown distinctly and undeniably. In an adjoining room the executive committee were engaged at their periodical meeting, adjusting accounts, discussing methods, and devising means for the progress of the institution.

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

(From our own correspondent.)

January 5.

Rev. Father Hills, S.M., of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, is spending his holidays here, and is the guest of the Bishop.

Rev. Father Murphy, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, will arrive by the 'Zealandia' on Sunday week on a short holiday.

Dr. Holbrook Chatfield, from the University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A., dental surgeon, has been appointed hon. dentist to St. Mary's Orphanage, Ponsonby.

Rev. Father Molloy arrived here on New Year's Day from Home. He received his education at All Hallows College for this diocese, and was ordained just before he left. Rev. Father Edge, of St. Patrick's, was for a time in All Hallows with Father Molloy.

On Friday last the devotion of the Forty Hours' Adoration began at St. Mary's Convent, Ponsonby. Solemn High Mass was celebrated at nine o'clock, at which his Lordship the Bishop presided, Rev. Father Hills, S.M., being celebrant, Rev. Fathers Holbrook and Cahill deacon and subdeacon respectively. The ceremonies closed on Sunday.

Very Rev. Father Murray, C.S.S.R., at present conducting the retreat for the Sisters of the Mission at Pukekohe, will open the retreat at the Sacred Heart College on January 7 for the Marist Brothers, and on January 14 for the Sisters of Mercy at Ponsonby, and on January 22 for the clergy at the Sacred Heart College.

On New Year's Day the local branch of the H.A.C.B. Society at Onehunga held an excursion down the Manukau on the 'Weka,' when 250 excursionists were on board. They stopped at the Huia until 5 p.m., reaching Onehunga at 7.30 p.m. Sports for the children were held. Several members of the Auckland branch attended. The branch will clear £10 out of the trip, which will be devoted to renovating the Hibernian Hall.

On Sunday last, the last day of the old year, special services were held at the Cathedral. At 11 o'clock Mass and in the evening the choir rendered the 'Miserere,' 'Te Deum,' and 'Veni Creator.' A very fine sermon was preached by the Rev. Father Edge.

At St. Mary's Orphanage, Ponsonby, great excitement prevailed on Christmas eve, when the children entered their spacious dining-room and saw Santa Claus with his snowy head and his arms laden with presents waiting to greet them. It was quite amusing to watch the joy and eagerness depicted on the faces of the little tots as they feasted their wide open eyes on the many gifts which Daddy Christmas had to share among them. Numerous scrolls and appropriate mottoes decorated the walls, and with the festoons and bunting had quite a picturesque appearance, and showed plainly that Christmas was indeed among those little ones, eighty of whom are inmates of St. Mary's Orphanage, and on their behalf the Sisters acknowledged with sincere thanks gifts from many kind friends.

Christmas Day was celebrated with the customary religious ceremonies at the city and suburban churches. At the Cathedral the first Mass was said at 6.30 o'clock, and from that time continuously until 11 o'clock Masses were said. Large congregations assembled at all the Masses. His Lordship the Bishop briefly addressed the large congregation at the last Mass. He spoke to them of the holy season and the momentous Christian events of which it is the anniversary. The great lessons it brought home to us of salvation, hope, charity, and peace should be ever before us. In the midst of our rejoicings it was sad to record the deplorable tragedy which took place in our harbor on Saturday evening when several lives were lost. He would ask their prayers for the repose of the soul of John Fletcher, who was amongst those drowned. Turning from this sad story, he wished all his people every blessing of God. He sincerely thanked the priests, choir, collectors, and all those who assisted in the good work of the church throughout the year. Rev. Father Hills was celebrant, Rev. Fathers Holbrook and Cahill deacon and subdeacon respectively. The choir, under Mr. P. F. Hiscocks, contributed invaluable service. At St. Benedict's Masses were said at an early hour and continued throughout the morning. Very Rev. Father Murray, C.S.S.R., assisted during the day. Rev. Father Dignan journeyed to Avondale, where he said three Masses. At St. Benedict's the altar was very

tastefully decorated by the Sisters of St. Joseph, and looked exceedingly well. The choir, under Mr. Jackson, rendered the music in a finished manner. At the Sacred Heart and St. John the Baptist churches the various Masses were largely attended. The choir at the former church, under Mr. Adams, rendered signal service.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

(By telegraph from our own correspondent.)

Auckland, January 8.

His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne and his Lordship Bishop Higgins, accompanied by Rev. Fathers Sheridan and O'Hare, arrived on Sunday from Sydney. The distinguished visitors were met at the wharf by Bishop Lenihan and driven to the Cathedral. After Mass they were driven around the suburbs to the Bishop's Palace. In the evening there were Pontifical Vespers, when the Archbishop preached an eloquent sermon on the feast of the Epiphany, in the course of which he dwelt at length on the qualities of divine faith, and urged the congregation to emulate the example of the Wise Men. Solemn Pontifical Benediction was given by his Lordship Bishop Higgins. The Right Rev. Dr. Lenihan was present in the sanctuary. In the evening Bishop Lenihan gave a dinner at the Palace in honor of the visiting prelates, to which several of the clergy and prominent laymen were invited.

The distinguished visitors left on Monday morning for Rotorua, where they will make a stay of three weeks. They will return to Sydney from Wellington, going from Rotorua to the Empire City by way of the Wanganui River.

THE RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN FRANCE

THE FREEMASONS THE REAL AUTHORS

One of the chief means employed by the Freemasons to carry out their plan of dechristianising France (writes the Countess de Courson in 'The Month') is, logically enough, the ruin of all schools directed by religious, and recent events have, unfortunately, given them full scope for their activity. The laws of which M. Combes is the responsible author were not the outcome of a sudden explosion of anti-clerical fury, but the result of a carefully-matured plan, which was gradually and ably executed by the Freemasons. Their chief instrument in this evil work was a league called 'Ligue de l'Enseignement.' It was founded in 1868 for school teachers, and at first seemed comparatively harmless in its tendencies, as its leaders professed to be strictly neutral as regarding religious questions.

By degrees, however, the real spirit of this association betrayed itself. Its founder, Jean Mace, is a Freemason, and though at first he kept his real opinions in the background, he acknowledged in 1879 that the task he had set himself to accomplish was, par excellence, a Masonic undertaking. In a public congress held at Lille in 1885, he made the following statement:

'We used to say that our league was neither political nor religious. This is no longer the case, and to-day we must own that it is truly a Masonic institution.'

And another Freemason, F. Duvand, has since owned that the educational laws that have been lately voted owe their existence to the crafty and patient work of the 'Ligue de l'Enseignement.'

This league is now extremely strong; it binds together the school teachers of the country, those to whose hands is committed, alas! the intellectual training of the children of the people. It draws its inspirations from a body of men whose avowed object is to 'crush God.' These bare facts open a terrific vista upon the mental condition of the rising generation of French citizens!

In most cases, especially in large towns, the school teachers no longer even pretend to be neutral. Only a few weeks ago, in a suburb of Paris, the master of an école primaire inquired of his pupils which among them intended to make their First Communion. A comparatively large number stood up, and were in consequence scolded and ridiculed for their stupidity, superstition, etc. 'And which amongst you,' then said the master, 'have made up your minds not to make your First Communion?' Another group of children stood up, and were warmly congratulated upon their enlightened views, superior intellect and 'up-to-date' opinions. Truly, there are many small heroes and heroines among the children of the Paris faubourgs!

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