

PALMERSTON NORTH

(From our own correspondent.)

February 11.

On Monday, February 5, in the Zealandia Hall a farewell social was tendered to the Rev. Fathers P. Tymons and J. Bowden on their leaving the parish. The chair was taken by Mr. J. W. O'Donnell, and with him were present on the platform Sir Joseph and Lady Ward, the Mayor and Mayoress (Mr. and Mrs. M. Cohen), Mr. W. T. Wood, M.H.R., and Mrs. Wood, and Miss D. Wood and the Rev. Fathers. An address with purse of sovereigns to Rev. Father Bowden. Both rev. gentlemen appealed in a few and well-chosen words to the parishioners to live in unity and to bring up their children in the fear and love of God, also thanking them for the addresses and the gift of sovereigns. Sir Joseph Ward made a few remarks suitable to the occasion, also the Mayor and the member for the district. After the speeches a short programme of songs and music was rendered, Mr. P. Tombs presiding at the piano. The following contributed items:—Duet, Mrs. Russell and Miss McGrath; song, Mr. Foley; song, Mrs. Gordon; song, Mr. Russell; song, Mr. McCarthy. At the termination of the musical portion refreshments, provided by a strong committee of the ladies of the parish, were handed round.

St. Patrick's choir, through Rev. Father Tymons, presented during the evening a short address on scroll, together with a large photo card, in the centre of which was a group of the choir, to Mr. P. Tombs, the departing organist and conductor. Mr. Tombs in reply spoke in most flattering terms of his choir in the way they had always supported him in his work as choirmaster.

Whangarei

The blessing and opening of St. Joseph's Convent School, Whangarei, took place on Sunday, February 4, the ceremony being performed by the Right Rev. Dr. Lenthall, assisted by the Rev. Fathers Smiers, Beckers, and Kreymsborg. Solemn High Mass was celebrated in the new school, at which a large congregation were present. His Lordship the Bishop in the course of his sermon impressed upon his hearers the vital importance of the religious training of the young. The advantage of early religious instruction, the pleasure that parents must derive from the knowledge that their children were undergoing such a course of instruction, and the joy that would be theirs when the final commendation of God was pronounced upon their action were surely motives of sufficient potency for the work they had undertaken. The present advanced state of the actual buildings, which were now almost ready for occupation and for the reception of pupils, was due to the devoted labors of Father Smiers, with the able seconding of the committee. The Sisters of St. Joseph had set themselves apart from the ordinary concerns of life with the express object of devoting themselves to the commendable object of training the minds of the children.

The collection amounted to about £17 10s, and an additional sum of £3 3s was generously donated by the Kauri Timber Company.

The new convent school occupies an exceptionally good site, with an open and uninterrupted view of the wooded hills that form the western background of the town. The schoolroom is 50ft long by 25ft wide, with a porch at either end. Perfect ventilation has been provided for. The convent proper contains a commodious dormitory, an oratory, a refectory, a music room, a kitchen, a bath-room, and a scullery. Another block of buildings, which contains the coal-shed, store-room, wash-house, and pantry, will be connected with the main buildings by a covered way. Gas and water are to be laid on wherever desirable, and the convent is so constructed that a second storey for the accommodation of 30 or 40 boarders may be added whenever the need of the occasion directs.

A sum of over £600 in aid of the convent school has been raised during the past two and a half years, due to the noble and untiring efforts of Father Smiers.

Over 30 pupils attended at the convent school on the opening day, this being a decidedly good beginning for a new establishment. The arrangements are now complete, and besides the ordinary routine of school work the Sisters intend holding classes in more advanced subjects. General satisfaction is expressed at the new building.

As the convent had not been completed, Mr. O'Gorman, on the arrival of the Sisters, very kindly vacated his house and handed it over for their use.

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