

MASTERTON

(From our own correspondent.)

March 8.

His Grace Archbishop Redwood administered the Sacrament of Confirmation at Carterton on Sunday last to a large number of children.

Members of St. Patrick's Day Sports' Association met on Saturday evening, when there was a large attendance. Gate-keepers, ticket-sellers, etc., were appointed for the sports on March 14.

The Very Rev. Dean McKenna has arranged with Rev. Father T. McKenna, of Pahiatua, to hold a combined picnic of scholars attending the Masterton and Pahiatua convent schools at Eketahuna on April 2. The Railway Department has agreed to make substantial reductions in fares for both children and adults from both towns.

DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH

(From our own correspondent.)

March 11.

The Rev. Father Marnane, pastor of St. Mary's, Manchester street, is expected to return this week from his twelve-months' tour to the Old Land, and is to be entertained at a welcome reception in the Art Gallery by his parishioners on Wednesday evening.

'Regarding the power of the press,' said his Lordship Bishop Grimes during his discourse on Sunday evening, 'the Holy Father Pope Pius X. stated to him that "no nobler mission than that of the journalist is in the world to-day. My predecessors have blessed the sword, I prefer to bless the pen of Christian writers."'

In a communication received by the president of the Particular Council of the Christchurch Society of St. Vincent de Paul from the Hon. L. F. Heydon, president of the Superior Council of the Society in Sydney, who is now at Rotorua, where it is his intention to remain until March 17, the writer states that he intends to be in Wellington on March 23 and 24, in Christchurch on March 26, and in Dunedin on April 14.

The St. Patrick's Day celebration committee has spared no effort to secure the very best available talent for the national concert on Monday evening next, and the result has enabled the presentation of a programme equal, if not superior, to any previous ones. Tickets of admission have been arranged at prices that will ensure His Majesty's Theatre being crowded on the occasion. The whole proceeds will be, as usual, devoted to the aid of Nazareth House—that great institute of charity which appeals to every class of the community, and which has done, and is doing, so much to lessen the sum of human misery in our midst.

The Exhibition still maintains its hold on the public as a pleasure resort and centre of attraction. Early this week, with present indications, will see the attendance reach a million and a half. The official closing time is now fixed for April 15, but between now and then several important gatherings, including the great 'fire-brigades' demonstration, are to take place. The pet animals' show last Friday proved very attractive. Among the speakers on the occasion was his Lordship Bishop Grimes, who stated that the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (under the auspices of which the show was organised) had done a great deal of good work, thus enabling him to testify from personal observation in many lands recently visited that the animals of Christchurch, the horses especially, could not be surpassed anywhere in the old countries. This result he attributed in a great measure to the watchfulness and efforts of the society, which he regretted, however, did not receive greater encouragement from the public. On last Wednesday the Catholic school children of Leeston, accompanied by their parents and teachers, visited the Exhibition, to the number of about seventy-five. Special trams conveyed the excursionists to the Exhibition, where the children were the guests of the Rev. Father Mahony at the various side shows. Rev. Father Ahern, of Darfield, was also of the party.

At Vespers in the Cathedral on Sunday his Lordship the Bishop preached to a large congregation, the subject of his discourse being mainly an account of his recent visit to the Apostolic See and audiences with the Holy Father. Taking for his text the 22nd verse of the 117th psalm, words (said his Lordship) that vividly came home to him as he stood before the august Pontiff, one who never dared to believe he

would be elected supreme head of the Church on earth. His Lordship then gave a striking word picture of the one who, from the simple curate, passed through the whole course of ecclesiastical offices until he attained his present exalted position. In eloquent terms he described the origin and gave a history of the Papacy. The little corner in Judea from where, over 19 centuries ago, the poor unlettered workman received the command to go and conquer the world he (the Bishop) recently visited. Three centuries of martyrdom was the answer to the message borne, but eventually the world was conquered, as now exemplified by the power of the Papacy, a power wielded by no other monarch. He described the Holy Father as being most unassuming, simple, and of dignified bearing, his most striking features being intense humility, sincerity, and frankness, as well as gentle humor. His Lordship referred to the splendid portrait of the Holy Father presented to him, and upon which his Holiness inscribed his blessing to the diocese. He also gave a translation from the Latin, in which it is written. (This fine picture, handsomely framed, was on view.) In conclusion, the Bishop gratefully thanked all who had labored so assiduously on behalf of the Cathedral during his absence, and intimated that the Rev. Father O'Connell would visit the West Coast immediately after Easter and recommence his collecting mission in connection with the debt extinction fund.

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

(From our own correspondent.)

March 8.

The Very Rev. Dean Hackett will this evening deliver his very popular lecture on 'Irish wit and humor' in the Leys Institute, in aid of the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Another beautiful stained-glass window, the gift of Mrs. Hackett and family, is in course of erection at St. Patrick's Cathedral. This makes the fourth valuable window in the church, each of which cost £110.

Several of the Hibernian delegates have arrived, or are en route to Auckland. Bro. F. Doolan, Christchurch, has gone to Rotorua, where he will stay till the meeting begins. Arrangements have been made for entertaining the visitors.

A discussion has been raised in the local morning paper on the question of the cost of school books to the parents. Though the State pays for tuition of the child it is sought to get it to pay for the books also. Rev. Brother George, Superior of the Marist Brothers' School, Pitt street, who was interviewed by the 'Herald' on the subject, said: 'The children attending the school paid 6d a week in some standards. The parents find the books. In the case of very poor children the Brothers frequently supplied books. We have no aid from the State, as you are aware. The cost of books at this school would be about the same as those for primary schools. In fact, we get the same books, in order to comply with the Education Department's requirements, the only difference being a Catholic Reader in the place of one of the two stipulated books. My experience is that the parents are not only willing to pay the school fees, but also provide the school books.'

The Hon. Mr. Heydon, M.L.C., of New South Wales, and ex-Minister of the Crown, arrived here from Sydney last Sunday, and immediately called on his Lordship the Bishop. For the present the distinguished visitor is staying at Rotorua. He will return in time for St. Patrick's Day celebration in Auckland. He is president of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He is deeply concerned in the spiritual and temporal welfare of our Catholic sailors trading in and out of Australasian ports. In Sydney, Melbourne, and Newcastle, and other Australian ports organised bodies of young men make it their business to wait upon the Catholic sailors and invite them to the club-rooms, and the best results have been obtained. Mr. Heydon is anxious to extend the operations all over colonial ports. In this direction he wishes to take the opportunity afforded by the gathering of so many Catholic men from all parts of New Zealand to attend the triennial meeting of the Hibernian Society, and to address them at the breakfast after Holy Communion on St. Patrick's Day. The hon. gentleman is most enthusiastic in the matter, and considers it might easily be arranged that the organisations at the various ports would report to each other the names of the sailors and the ships in which they work, and so meet them on arrival. Other religious bodies do this, and Mr. Heydon says we are sadly behind in the important work.