

Herr Benno Scherek, who has accepted the position of choir-master at the Cathedral, was formerly organist and choir-master of St. Francis' Church, Melbourne, and will be remembered as being in charge of the musical arrangements at the opening of St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin.

The Living Floral Carnival, which opens in the Art Gallery for a season of twelve nights, and promoted with the object of clearing all existing liabilities on St. Mary's parish, as a spectacular display promises to equal any yet produced in the city. The carnival, which is to be opened by Mr C. M. Gray, M.P., is under the direction of Mr. Wm. Densem, but practically the whole of the arrangements and preparatory work are due to Mr. Fred. Wauchop. These include tuition in the central feature, a game of euche with living subjects, with pretty dances, marches, and groupings.

There was Solemn High Mass at 11 o'clock in the Cathedral on Sunday last. His Lordship the Bishop was celebrant, the Very Rev. Dean Ginaty, S.M., V.G., assistant priest, the Rev. Fathers Hills, S.M. (Leeston), and O'Hare deacon and sub-deacon respectively of the Mass, and Very Rev. Father Price, Adm. master of ceremonies. The impressive ceremony of conferring Holy Orders was presided over by his Lordship the Bishop, when two young men were ordained subdeacons. On Saturday next, the Feast of the Assumption, these with another will be ordained deacons, and on the following Sunday they will be raised to the priesthood. At Vespers his Lordship the Bishop gave an instructive discourse on the subject of ordination to the priesthood, the significance of the ceremony, and responsibilities and duties of those entering the sacred ministry.

The various schools of the Cathedral parish, controlled by the Sisters of the Missions, underwent the periodical inspection of the North Canterbury Board of Education inspectors recently, with satisfactory results on the whole. Under the new system adopted the work of inspection and examination for promotion of pupils is undertaken on different occasions, the examination therefore is deferred to the end of the year. In his report of St. Joseph's Cathedral Girls' School the inspector, Mr. E. K. Mulgan, writes as follows (his remarks being necessarily summarised):—'The somewhat complex conditions accompanying the transition from old to new regulations have left their impress on much of the work, which it is felt cannot be judged by normal standards. An appreciable number of pupils were promoted in January last, with the result that a good deal of unevenness appeared in the subjects tested. On the whole, however, the classification of pupils and the promotions from class to class have been carefully determined, much of the written work was neatly set forth, and reading everywhere was highly commendable. The schemes of work submitted evidenced care and judgment; the registers appear to be regularly and carefully marked.' In regard to other phases of the work, there occur the remarks 'Satisfactory,' 'In general satisfactory,' 'Good,' 'Provided for,' 'As approved,' etc. The number of pupils on the roll is given as 303, and the number present 251. Mr Mulgan also inspected St. Anne's Catholic School at Woolston, which, though of recent existence, earned a very satisfactory report. 'The pupils' (he states) have been classified with due regard for their intelligence and attainments, and promotions from class to class have been faithfully determined. Examination tests revealed a satisfactory knowledge of the programmes presented, a capital spirit of work throughout, praiseworthy neatness in setting forth written work, and a gratifying readiness in responding to questioning effort. The carefully-prepared forecast of the year's work submitted would have its value considerably increased by the addition of brief teaching notes.' The general remarks include 'Good,' 'Satisfactory,' 'In general satisfactory,' 'Provided for,' 'As approved,' etc. The number of pupils on the roll is 35, and present on the occasion 34. The reports treating of the schools at Addington, Halswell, and Marist Brothers' Boys' Schools will be given next week.

### Oamaru.

(From our own correspondent.)

August 10.

The members of the Catholic Club greatly miss the Rev. Father O'Neill from their meetings. All earnestly hope to see him back soon in his accustomed place, while regretting the reason of his prolonged absence.

The most successful meeting held by the Catholic Club during the present session took place on Friday last, when a mock trial was held. The room had been arranged to represent a courthouse, and there was a large gathering of members and friends. The

characters were admirably sustained by members as follows:—Judge, Mr. T. O'Grady; crown prosecutor, Mr. John Griffiths; counsel for defence, Mr. E. Barry; plaintiff, Mr. H. Diver; defendant, Mr. J. O'Donnell; clerk of court, Mr. James Griffiths; sergeant of police, Mr. Wm. Griffiths; witnesses, Messrs. J. Cagney, F. Cooney, A. Wallace, J. Breen, J. Wallace, and T. Cooney. The jury was drawn from members present, Mr. A. Kay being chosen foreman. The various officials and witnesses appeared in character, which added greatly to the interest and amusement of the proceedings. The club president made an admirable judge, and his wide knowledge of court procedure was a distinct advantage to the carrying out of the programme. The hearing was a lengthy one, and called forth some rare sallies and local hits.

## The Cullinan Diamond

The famous Cullinan diamond, the value of which has been estimated at from £150,000 to over £1,000,000, and which was presented to King Edward on his birthday last year by the Transvaal, has been cut into two beautiful white stones, one of which will be placed in the King's crown and the other in his sceptre. The stone prior to being cut weighed over 3000 carats. The cutting was carried out in Amsterdam, and extraordinary precautions were taken for its safe keeping. The cutting of the stone was a most intricate process, and all of the ingenuity and skill that man could devise was brought into play. It contained several flaws, which had to be removed without reducing it too much in size.

The firm entrusted with the work made an exact model of the diamond, and treated this in the same way as the real stone was to be treated. By this means the cutters were able to decide into how many parts the jewel was to be divided. This being decided upon, the real cutting of the stone commenced. Special wooden 'dops,' which resemble a drumstick in appearance, were made, on the top of which the diamond was embedded in cement. This was held in the left hand, while the right hand held a thin wooden stick with cement on the top, in which was embedded a sharp-cutting diamond.

The process of cutting was a very slow and tedious one, for the greatest care had to be observed. Each incision was about three-quarters of an inch. When the desired depth had been reached the diamond was placed in a lead socket, and a specially-constructed knife-blade made of the finest steel inserted in the slit. Then, with the aid of a heavy steel stick, a terrific blow was aimed, cutting the stone in two. The other divisions were made in the same way till all the flaws were removed. As soon as this was completed, the jewels were handed over to an expert polisher, who polished the famous Excelsior diamond, weighing 971 carats, some years ago. Whilst he was working on the diamond he, with three assistants, were every day locked in a specially-adapted workshop by the manager, where for a year, from 7 in the morning until 9 o'clock at night they were engaged at their task.

Owing to the size of the Cullinan all the polishing instruments had to be reconstructed. A special 'dop' with pewter top had been manufactured, weighing about 20lb and measuring 5 1/2 in across. The mill on which the stone was polished was also much larger. It was 16 1/2 in across—whereas the ordinary ones are about 12 in—and made 2400 revolutions per minute. This was lubricated with a preparation consisting of crushed diamond powder and oil.

By the time the polishing process was completed the diamond had diminished in weight from 1 1/2 lb to 1 lb, but the two stones into which it has been cut are said to be worth at least £1,000,000.

The firm responsible for the work (Messrs. Asscher, of Amsterdam) took extraordinary precautions for the safe keeping of the treasure whilst it was in their charge. At night time, when the work had ceased, the stone was conveyed by the manager, accompanied by ten fully-armed men, from the workshop to the strong-room, where it was impossible for any of the safe-breaking fraternity to obtain admission. Its walls were three-quarters of a yard in thickness, and composed of iron and cement, secured by a formidable door, which could only be opened by a combination of numbers known to the three heads of the firm.

Inside the strong-room were several cabinets with secret sliding panels. Behind one of these, with its nine locks completely hidden from view, lay a tiny safe in which the Cullinan diamond was placed. As an additional safeguard, an armed policeman was stationed at the outer door throughout the night.

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