

which he says must be of extraordinary capacity, for without it it would be impossible to properly develop even the most perfect natural voice. He adds that he has advised Miss Connell's relatives to allow her to remain at the Convent for another year, and should her voice still maintain its purity and freshness he strongly advises a course of study in England and the Continent under the best masters that can be obtained, regardless of expense. Mr. Moore is of opinion that Miss Connell's voice is superior to Miss Amy Castles. Miss Connell, who is only 15, was born in Hawera.

The Very Rev. Father Bower, S.M., Rector of St. Patrick's College, joined the other members of the College staff in the Picton Sounds at the beginning of the week.

The Rev. Father Gannon, a Vincentian Father, from the college in Bathurst, is at present on a visit to Wellington.

The Rev. Father O'Shea, of Te Aro parish, leaves on a holiday to the West Coast shortly. He intends visiting Greymouth, Hokitika, and Westport.

The Sisters of Mercy here came out of retreat on Monday, and are now enjoying a well-earned vacation. Of those located in Wellington during last year some are visiting Christchurch and Dunedin, while others have gone to the branch houses in Palmerston North and Blenheim for the remainder of their holidays.

It is with regret I have to record the death of Mr P. Giles, which occurred at his residence, Upper Tutaenui, Marton, after a long and painful illness, on the 8th ult. His funeral took place on the following Sunday at Turakina, where the services were conducted by the Rev. Father O'Sullivan, of Wanganui. Floral tributes were placed on the coffin from all parts of the district. The deceased was the youngest son of Mr Francis Giles, Claregalweney, County Galway. On arriving in New Zealand he settled in Riversdale, Otago, and later moved on to Marton, where by all he was held in the greatest esteem, and was a valued member of the County Council. He was a man in the prime of life, and until what proved his fatal illness could boast of not knowing what a day's sickness was. He leaves a wife and child to mourn their loss.—R.I.P.

The outing to Plimmerton, held by the Christian Doctrine Society on New Year's Day proved a most enjoyable one. Leaving by the 10 o'clock train, the party arrived at their destination a little after 11 o'clock. The day was spent in various amusements, the excursionists returning to town shortly after eight o'clock.

Dr. H. St. Leger Gribben, whose success in his examinations at Edinburgh was recently recorded, is, I hear, attached to the Children's Hospital in Stirling.

HAWERA.

(From a correspondent)

The audience that crowded the Opera House on the occasion of the Caledonian Society's concert on New Year's Night had an opportunity of appreciating and were loud in their applause of the work done for musical culture in the colony by our convent schools. The praise so lavishly bestowed upon the schools of the middle ages by Guizot, Froude, Lecky, Ranke, and others is equally merited by these institutions which are still carrying on the same work within the bosom of the Catholic Church. All the vital and productive energies of human culture are united and mingled in our Christian schools to-day as they were in the brightest of the ages that are passed; and the children who year by year come forth from these store-houses of real knowledge are not only well-equipped with what are considered the necessities of education, but are also possessed of those accomplishments which enable the pupils to fill any position in life. There is a growing demand in the Colony for these accomplishments, and it is a satisfaction and a source of legitimate pride to know, on the authority of examiners from the leading Home colleges, that our convent schools are supplying the demand. The gentleman who distributed the prizes the other day at the Girls' High School, Wellington, thought it a pity that religious schools should be established in the Colony. It is a good thing for New Zealand that Archbishop Redwood was not of that opinion when he established St. Mary's Convent, for without that convent New Zealand would not to-day enjoy the fame which she does enjoy in the great musical institutions of Great Britain. Did not the vice-president of the Royal Academy say publicly in England that the most artistic singing he had ever heard was in Wellington, New Zealand, at St. Mary's Convent? Did not our Colony, through the same convent, secure on another occasion all the honours granted in Australasia by the same Academy? And if Mr Graham Moore, on his return to England, can speak well of New Zealand, is it not because, as he said, 'St. Mary's Convent had achieved such a success as no other institution with which he had hitherto been acquainted had achieved.'

The world-renowned baritone, Mr. Santley, remarked to me some years ago that New Zealand should produce singers quite as good as the countries of southern Europe. And I am quite convinced that should Miss Kate Connell, who delighted us all at the Caledonian concert, follow the advice of Mr. Graham Moore and spend some years in Paris, she will soon rank with the Australian artists who have gained a world-wide fame, and that she will not be the least amongst them. She is a credit to the Wellington Convent, as her sister, who accompanied her, and who also secured honours at the Royal Academy examinations is a credit to the Hawera Convent. Miss Tuohill and Miss Bessie Flynn, also from the Wellington Convent, though not gifted as Miss Connell is, are nevertheless very capable singers, and can already, though very young, take a high place amongst the vocalists of New Zealand. Their items were a surprise and a treat to the large audience. We had in addition a family of ten Flynns, boys and girls, all convent school children from Wellington, Wanganui and Hawera, who, under the skilful baton of their eldest sister, contributed some very fine orchestral selections, one, and this, too, of some merit, being, I believe, a composition by Miss Flynn.

The whole concert was a treat from its intrinsic merit, and also from the fact that the items were contributed chiefly by Irish Celts to honour in a spirit of goodwill and friendship the annual gathering of their cousins the Celts of Scotland.

The new school, which Messrs Pacey and Son are building for the Rev. Father Power, will be completed in about a fortnight. It is rumoured that several vocalists from Wellington are coming to take part in the opening ceremony. The building, which is to be up to date in every respect, will cost £150, and will, with the old school, give ample and much-needed accommodation to both teachers and children. Father Power has decided to hang in the porch a framed list of all the subscribers. This, I think, is a capital idea, and deserves imitation.

DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

January 8.

By the generous donations in goods and money of tradespeople in the city and friends, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd at Mount Magdala were enabled as on former occasions to provide their large number of 'children' with a substantial Christmas treat. To all who assisted them in their praiseworthy efforts they tender their sincere thanks.

At the Pro-Cathedral, on Sunday last, his Lordship the Bishop preached at High Mass and again at Vespers, when there was a crowded congregation. Prefacing his sermon the Bishop stated his intention of resuming his labours of visiting the diocese by journeying on Wednesday next to its extreme northern limits. He would administer Confirmation in a district where the Sacrament had never heretofore been administered, and also in another place where church accommodation would soon be provided. It is his Lordship's intention to return in time for the annual retreat.

The annual retreat of the clergy, to be conducted by a Vincentian Father, will commence on January 21.

A PLOT AGAINST A MARIST PRIEST.

A FEW months ago a Marist priest, who was on his way from Fiji to Europe, was arrested at Albany, on a warrant issued at Suva charging him with several very serious offences. Although, as was subsequently proved, perfectly innocent, the poor priest was taken back a prisoner to Fiji, and there detained in gaol until the case came before the magistrate. Several witnesses were called for the prosecution, but the magistrate was so satisfied that the whole business was a conspiracy that he discharged the accused without hearing any evidence for the defence. During the court proceedings it leaked out that a certain Wesleyan chief was the prime mover of the conspiracy. The slandered and ill-used priest has now resumed the voyage to France which was so cruelly broken by his arrest at Albany. He has a good claim against the Fiji Government for compensation, and it is highly probable that some of the conspirators who plotted against him will be prosecuted. A Fiji resident, who is particularly well informed, states that the accusations against the blameless priest was made with the object of bringing the Marist missionaries into disgrace. 'Our enemies,' writes this resident, 'wanted to have a counter-blast to Cardinal Moran's exposure of the Protestant missions in the South Seas.'

By the steamer Rockton, which reached Sydney the other day, we (Sydney Freeman's Journal) received the Fiji Times, which has a brief reference to the police court proceedings. Says the Times:—

'The Government steamer Clyde, which arrived from Savu on Saturday last, brought news of the cases preferred against the Rev. Father Prin, to which we have referred in a previous issue. Mr. Humphry Berkeley appeared for the defence in all the cases. Sergeant O'Donnell appeared to prosecute the indictable offences. There were seven charges in all. The first three cases were heard and dismissed on November 30. The remaining four were heard on December 1, two of which were dismissed, and the prosecutors asked leave to withdraw the remaining two. Mr. Berkeley pointed out that warrants had been issued for the apprehension of the Reverend Father, that he had been arrested in the Australian Colonies, subjected to some months of imprisonment, brought back to Fiji and tried on seven separate charges, all of which had been immediately dismissed. He asked in the interests of justice that the whole of the papers should be forwarded to his Excellency the Governor, which his Worship the Magistrate said he would do.'

Now that the hot weather has set in people are naturally looking around for some refreshing beverage to quench their thirst. Mason's Extract of Herbs, for making a non-intoxicating beer, is highly recommended as a most palatable and refreshing drink. It is very economical, one bottle being sufficient to make eight gallons at a cost of 8d. Mason's wine essences are also very good and highly spoken of. A bottle of wine essence, which can be purchased for 9d, will, it is claimed, make a gallon of delicious, non-intoxicating wine. If the essence and extract cannot be procured from chemists and storekeepers in the district, application should be made to the sole agent, Mr. J. C. Bodham, Christchurch — *.