

Mr. Blake, of Wadestown, has donated the sum of £5 towards the erection of the residence at Titahi Bay for the use of the Sisters of Mercy.

There are 24 Catholic volunteers in the New Zealand second contingent. The squad received Holy Communion at a Mass celebrated for them at six o'clock yesterday morning.

The stall-holders and assistants at the forthcoming Easter carnival and fancy fair met in the convent schoolroom on Monday evening. The art union tickets were reported to be going off well. The beautiful oil painting of 'The visit of the three kings to Bethlehem,' which is intended for the first prize, is on view at McGregor Wright's establishment and is attracting much attention.

HASTINGS.

(From an occasional correspondent.)

On Sunday, January 14, the Very Rev. Father Smyth, S.M., held a meeting of his parishioners for the purpose of electing a school committee to assist him in the management of the schools. The meeting was a representative one, and seven members were elected. On the same evening after Vespers the choir of the Sacred Heart Church, Hastings, assembled in the presbytery to make a presentation to Mr. J. H. Loughnan, on the occasion of his departure from Hastings. Mr. Lee, on behalf of the choir, thanked Mr. Loughnan for his untiring services and courtesy to the members of the choir, and requested Father Smyth to make the presentation. Father Smyth spoke most feelingly, and thanked Mr. Loughnan not merely for his services to the choir, but for his great devotedness in furthering every good work in connection with the church. He said Mr. Loughnan's services on behalf of the Church were never to be forgotten, for they could not enter the church without seeing a souvenir of his devotedness staring them in the face. His departure made a void not easily filled, perhaps never. He thanked Mr. Loughnan therefore for the choir and congregation, and he thanked him especially as a friend, and paid a glowing tribute to his prudence and piety. Mr. Bennett, as Mayor, also made a few complimentary remarks on behalf of the parish. Mr. Loughnan, who was evidently affected, thanked one and all for their kind gift, which he would treasure as a pleasing souvenir of the choir and of the Sacred Heart Church, which was dear to him and which he could never forget. He thanked especially Father Smyth for his good opinion, and hoped that he would not be forgotten in his prayers. The presentation took the shape of a black ebony baton, which was procured from Wellington, and was beautifully and artistically mounted, and the engraving was very neatly done by Mr. Shanly. Father Smyth also presented a magnificent prayer book, beautifully illuminated. After the presentation refreshments were handed round, and some time was spent in relating pleasant memories of the past.

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND.

(From our own correspondent.)

Thursday, January 18.

St. Patrick's Day Celebration Committee is to meet to-morrow evening to take steps to ensure the success of the next national festival.

The Rev. Father Patterson is now enjoying a needed rest at Te Aroha Hot Springs, but returns at the end of this week to resume charge of Monsignor McDonald's old parish of Panmure and Howick.

A grand vocal and instrumental concert in aid of the cemetery improvement is to be given in St. Benedict's Hall on Friday evening, February 9th.

The Marist Brothers returned to Auckland yesterday from their annual retreat. There is one change made in the staff. Brother Borgia, so long and very favourably known in Auckland, has been transferred to Wellington.

Dr. Darby has been appointed by the Government to the position of gaol doctor in Auckland. The appointment was received by the genial doctor's many friends with manifestations of great pleasure, and numerous and warm congratulations were tendered to him.

At the adjourned meeting of the ladies and gentlemen which was called for the purpose of celebrating the jubilee of the Sisters of Mercy Order in New Zealand, it was decided to inaugurate a convalescent home to worthily celebrate the event. The Very Rev. Dean O'Reilly presided. Particulars will be made known later on.

Mr. Ronald McDonald, a Catholic well-known in Auckland and the Thames district, was killed accidentally at Waihi last week. His remains were brought to Auckland and during last Friday night they reposed in St. Benedict's Church. On Saturday morning at eight o'clock a *Requiem* Mass was celebrated by the Very Rev. Dean O'Reilly by whom deceased was long and intimately known. The cortege left the church at 11 a.m. for Symond street cemetery, where the Dean officiated, and spoke in feeling terms of the many good qualities of the deceased, and asked all present to pray for the repose of his soul.—*R.I.P.*

Ex-priest Slattery and his wife are holding forth in Auckland. The notices of him in the local Press can only be discovered with the aid of a microscope and search-warrant. They are reluctantly reported in an obscure corner. The Y.M.C.A. people refused them the use of their hall, and further refused to allow their Bible Depot to be defiled with his dirty books. He wrote to almost every Protestant minister in Auckland asking to announce his lectures, and several of them he begged to preside at his meetings. From ALL of them he received a curt 'No.' He publicly referred to this, and

said Auckland Protestants were a week-kneed lot. Outside the hall in which he lectures is a large portrait of himself taken in vestments. Protestants of all shades are to be heard expressing their deep disgust; whilst the Catholics look on with utter contempt upon one who could fall so low for money.

The Very Rev. Dean O'Reilly preached last Sunday evening at St. Patrick's, and the sermon was noticed by the two local papers. I give a brief outline of it. The Dean took for his text, 'Go forth and teach all nations,' etc. He referred to the ancient glories and struggles of the early Church in Christianising the great Roman Empire and peoples going to the East and West spreading the great truths of Christianity and subduing the passions of the barbarous peoples. He cited a number of martyrs who had shed their blood for the propagation of the Gospel. In every quarter of the globe they were to be found. Even in our own adjacent islands the blood of the martyrs, the seed of Christians, was freely offered to God. He spoke of the demise of the Very Rev. Monsignor McDonald, and the widespread sympathy evoked from all classes, the Governor, the Premier, and other Ministers of the Crown, and clergymen of other religious denominations. There was one discordant note, however. A reverend gentleman, from a pulpit in the city, could not express sympathy without having a fling at the Church of Rome, stating that she consigned all Protestants to perdition. This was absolutely untrue. The Church recognised all who were validly baptised, no matter by whom, as in a certain sense her members, and taught that those who in good faith observed the commandments of God, and practised Christian virtues, could be saved, although not openly recognising the authority of the Roman Pontiff. The Dean spoke of the many noble sacrifices made by the priests and nuns in the cause of suffering humanity, particularly mentioning Father Damien, and those heroic nuns who braved everything on the battle-fields in various parts of the world, and particularly to-day in South Africa. And yet there could be found those who hold up to ridicule and vilify and traduce these good messengers of peace, and who for mercenary motives tickle the ears of the prurient to rake in the dollars. He concluded by saying that he desired and prayed that the prediction of our Divine Lord would be fulfilled, quoting these words: 'Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them I also will bring in, and there shall be one fold and One Shepherd.'

DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

January 22.

By the s.s. *Lincolnshire*, on Saturday, six trained nurses and one dresser left for Capetown to give the benefit of their experience to wounded soldiers at the seat of war. This little contingent is the outcome of a fund raised by the ladies of Canterbury for the purpose.

In the Pro-Cathedral on Sunday next a collection is to be made for the Patriotic Fund, and on Tuesday, the 30th inst., a Solemn *Requiem* Mass for the faithful who have fallen in the South African war will be celebrated. As the clergy retreat will have just terminated, the whole of the priests of the diocese are expected to be present.

From the *Press* I learn that there were large congregations at the Darfield Catholic Church on the 13th, when Mass was celebrated by the Very Rev. Father Chastagnon. Sister Mary Agnes, who was on a visit from Wellington, and who is a highly gifted and accomplished vocalist, led the musical portion of the services and sang several solos.

The fine Convent of the Sacred Heart, Timaru, is being further improved by the addition of a suite of rooms at the western end to serve as a hospital for the inmates. The ground floor is 42ft by 29ft, and the exterior will be completed in keeping with the rest of the building, except that the windows will be square instead of Gothic headed. There are three ward rooms on each floor, together with other apartments.

A *Press* correspondent writes: The grounds surrounding the Darfield Catholic school, which was opened by Bishop Grimes in the presence of a very large assembly, comprising members of all denominations, are now being enclosed with a galvanised iron fence. The Very Rev. Father Chastagnon recently invited me to have a look through the building, and I am pleased to say it is, without exception, one of the best built, most cheery looking, and best appointed country schools in Canterbury. At the time of my visit there were fifty pupils, who were being thoroughly taught by the Sisters of Mercy. The building cost over £400. Mr. W. Clinton generously gave three acres of land and a six-roomed cottage, which is occupied by the Sisters. He also gave a considerable sum of money towards building the school, and erected a large stable for the horses of those children who drive from a distance.

An adjourned meeting of those interested in the Barbadoes street cemetery was held at St. Mary's on Sunday afternoon last, the Rev. Father Marnane presiding. Since the last meeting several of those having burial plots sent in subscriptions to enable much needed repairs and improvements to be effected. A permanent committee was formed to attend to the last resting place of those who in this life were the mainstay to a great extent of the Church in this city, and by whose help our holy religion was firmly established in Canterbury. Those now living at a distance, with friends interred in this cemetery, may aid very materially in keeping the graves presentable by forwarding subscriptions to either the Rev. Father Marnane (Chairman of the Committee) or Mr. E. O'Connor, who will gratefully acknowledge the same, and place it to the greatest advantage. Labourers are now engaged in the work of renovation, and a resident caretaker will be appointed.