

PHILIP IV. of Spain an edict permitting the Indian converts the use of firearms. The villages and towns were fortified, the converts drilled, every man became a soldier as well as a cultivator, the raids of Mamelucos and wild Indians soon ceased or became relatively harmless, the missions of the Chiquitos and elsewhere were saved, and the arts of peace made such rapid and solid progress that even VOLTAIRE described the Jesuit 'reductions' of Paraguay as 'the triumph of humanity.' It was there, as it is in China, the practical application of the moss-grown motto—which is, at least, as old as the days of CORNELIUS NEPOS—that the best security for peace is preparedness for war.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN.

The midsummer vacation at Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, will begin on December 15.

We understand that the tender of Messrs. Crawford and Watson has been accepted for the building of the new Convent for the Sisters of Mercy, South Dunedin. The amount is £3187, this being the lowest tender.

An adjourned meeting of the parishioners of St. Joseph's Cathedral parish was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Sunday evening for the purpose of electing a committee to carry out the repairs necessary to the Cathedral. The Right Rev. Dr. Verdon presided, and there was a representative attendance, apologies for unavoidable absence having been received from Messrs J. B. Callan and F. Meenan. His Lordship having explained the object for which the meeting had been called, it was decided that the work should be proceeded with immediately. On the motion of the Rev. Father Murphy, seconded by Mr J. Hally, the following, with power to add to their numbers, were appointed a general committee to carry out the work and to make arrangements for providing the necessary funds:—His Lordship the Bishop, the clergy of the city, Messrs J. Carroll, J. B. Callan, D. W. Woods, W. J. Hall, C. Columb, J. J. Connor, P. Hally, J. Hally, T. B. Conway, T. McCormack, F. Kilmartin, J. J. Dunne, P. Carolin, L. Pavletich, T. Hussey, E. T. O'Connell, T. Deehan, E. McKewen, J. O'Neill, H. E. McCormack, L. Clancy, W. and M. Coughlan, P. Cotter, E. O'Donnell, and N. Smith. Mr J. Hally was appointed secretary. At the conclusion of the proceedings a meeting of the General Committee was held, when the following were appointed a Works Committee:—The Right Rev. Dr. Verdon, Messrs Callan, Carroll, Woods, and McKewen.

A representative of the North Otago *Daily Times* visited the Holy Rosary Convent, Oamaru, the other day for the purpose of inspecting some of the prizes offered for the forthcoming art union which is being organised as an aid to the fund for building the new convent and boarding school. The first prize is a copy of an oil painting of a madonna by one of the old Italian masters, and it is a piece of work that will arouse the envy of even those who profess no artistic sense. The promoters of the art union guarantee to find a purchaser for the work at £50, but it would seem very much a question whether anyone, even the most sordid, would not prefer the beautiful picture to that very ordinary article known as 'siller.' The second prize, a very handsome stand screen, was a gift from the Sisters of St. Dominic's at Invercargill. The screen consists of three panels of flowers, painted in oils on velvet, and being nicely mounted it has a very handsome appearance. The third prize is a large oil painting of Loch Lomond, and the fourth one of Smith's Sound. In all over 30 prizes are offered, and should the sale of tickets warrant it others will be added. All the prizes are real works of art, of which any fortunate winner might be proud, but quite apart even from that the object should ensure a large sale of tickets before the art union closes on the 8th December.

A highly successful entertainment was given on Wednesday evening of last week in St. Patrick's School, South Dunedin, by the pupils of the Sisters of Mercy. The attendance was very good. The proceedings were opened with a pianoforte overture, nicely played by Misses Mee, Mahoney, L. Tonar, Cruise, Curran, and Dunford. An orchestra consisting of Misses Twomey and Mulholland (first violins), Misses Kennedy, Cunningham, and McGowan (second violins), Miss A. Sheridan (mandolin), Miss M. Brennan (guitar), Miss E. Scanlon (piano), contributed selections entitled 'Christmas Revels.' A couple of very acceptable choruses were given by some of the pupils, a number of whom contributed dances. A piano solo was nicely played by Miss G. Scanlon, and Misses N. Twomey, M. Brennan, L. Tonar, and A. Sheridan gave a duet on two pianos. The Masters Marlow were very successful in a humorous dialogue entitled 'The Twins.' Recitations were given by Master C. Marlow and Miss Mee, and Masters Marlow, Curran, and Hannigan took part in a negro dialogue. A comedy entitled 'Who is to inherit' was performed by Misses N. Twomey, L. Tonar, A. Sheridan, Brennan (2), O'Mahoney (2), and E. Scanlon. A couple of well-arranged tableaux illustrative of 'Wise and foolish virgins' were also given. Misses Tubman, McGowan, Frago, Dunford, and Marlow representing the wise, and Misses Sheridan, Twomey, Mee, Brennan, and O'Mahoney the foolish virgins. The entertainment as a whole was very good, and the audience showed their appreciation by frequent applause.

A novel and unique entertainment was given in St. Joseph's Hall on Wednesday evening of last week. It took the form of a Christy minstrel troupe composed entirely of lady members of the Cathedral Choir. The idea originated in the minds of Miss Rose Blaney, Miss Adelaide Heley, and Miss Mary Drumm, and the project was carried out in a strictly orthodox style: Black faces, chair business (with Miss Rose Blaney—or, rather, Miss Claire, her stage name—as interlocutor); corner 'men,' equipped with bones and tambourine; conundrums and jokes, old and new, but all distinctly good; coon

and nigger melodies of all kinds; a fling by Miss Mouat, who looked extremely well as a black 'Highlander'; and a number of variety items it would take up too much space to particularise. Mrs J. Woods acted as accompanist. The hall was filled to overflowing, dozens of the visitors having to be content with standing room. When the curtain was drawn aside the performers received a hearty greeting by way of encouragement, for no one anticipated that such an excellent programme was in store for them, and that it would be rendered so successfully by the 'colored' ladies. The whole affair went through with a fine swing from beginning to end, the general verdict being that the performers acquitted themselves most creditably, the large audience leaving with the pleasant reflection that they had had a capital evening's enjoyment. By special request there will be a repetition of the entertainment at an early date. It may be mentioned that the object of the promoters is to raise funds to assist in defraying the expenses of the members of the choir who are to take part in the musical competition at the Christchurch Exhibition. The attendance was a record one, over £20 being taken at the doors.

The Foresters' Hall, Port Chalmers, was packed on Friday evening when the pupils of the Sisters of St. Joseph gave an entertainment of a varied character. The hall was very prettily decorated, and the entertainment was greatly enjoyed by the audience. The Mayor of Port Chalmers presided. The first item was a duet on two pianos by Misses M. Hart, A. Anderson, E. Borlase and B. O'Connell. A chorus, 'I love old Ireland still,' was admirably rendered by a number of school children (boys and girls). A performance on musical bells was correctly given by several of the junior boys. That popular trio, 'The Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle' was contributed by Misses A. Rennie, M. King, and A. Borlase, and was much appreciated. Then came an action song and dance, 'Little Sailors' by a number of boys, after which several girls ranging from four to eight years of age, and attired as women, gave an action song entitled 'Little Mothers' which was very prettily done. In the cantata 'Too bad' the principal characters were represented by Misses M. Borlase, B. O'Connell, L. Salter, M. Hart, and L. Heller, about 20 others filling the minor parts. This item was particularly well done, and the audience showed their appreciation by warm applause. The duet 'The goldfinch' was artistically played by Misses E. Borlase and L. Heller, and the first portion of the programme was brought to a conclusion with a vocal duet, 'Lily and rose,' by Misses A. Anderson and L. Heller. A trio, 'Musical Sketches,' was the opening item of the second part, and was played with much skill by the Misses B. O'Connell, A. Anderson, M. Creig, L. Heller, L. Salter, and M. Hart. The action song 'Big brass drum,' by the boys was next given, for which they received an encore, as also did the boys for the club exercises. The action song 'Tinkling bells,' by the girls, the solo 'Three leaves of shamrock,' by Miss E. Heller, a comic song 'The postman,' by Master H. Alberton, L. McCann, and S. King, and the vocal duet 'Dance on the sands,' by the Misses M. Hart and L. Salter, followed. In the laughable sketch 'Mischievous Jim' the principal parts were taken by Miss S. Anderson, Masters H. Alberton, S. King, L. Griffin, J. Daly, W. Anderson, and J. Anderson, all of whom acquitted themselves well; and the entertainment was brought to a close by the girls and boys singing 'All hail Zealandia.' The proceeds amounted to about £31.

NEW ZEALAND: GENERAL.

WE have to thank the District Secretary, Mr. W. Kane, Auckland, for a copy of the half-yearly report of the H.A.C.B. Society.

MR. A. J. SULLIVAN, well known in Dunedin, has been appointed to the charge of a branch of Messrs. Barr, Leary and Co.'s business in Cromwell.

WITH a view to bringing into effect the Manual and Technical Instruction Act of last year, the Education Department has decided as a preliminary step to appoint two instructors at a salary of £350 each.

THE Napier *Telegraph* has the best authority for stating that Captain Russell does not intend to return the £40 bonus voted to the members of both houses. Captain Russell regards the vote as wrong, but as it was passed he does not propose to display singularity or affectation by handing the money back to swell the next surplus.

THE Land and Survey department will throw open for selection about the middle of January a block in Hawke's Bay, known as Nuhaka North. This block contains 8352 acres, and will be opened under the optional system in areas of from 360 to 1200 acres. About the end of January 4600 acres in Manukau County, Auckland, will be thrown open.

A CHINESE interpreter explained to a select audience at the Police Court in Wellington the other day that the blowing out of a match had not much effect in keeping a Celestial in the broad way of truth, it only meant that he will get no light. A Court official suggested that the breaking of a saucer was a more effective form oath, but the interpreter discounted that form also. 'Cut the head off a rooster,' he said; 'that is the way; it means something terrible! If that be done, either in a Court of justice or in a cemetery, a Chinaman will generally speak the truth. He considers that a lie under such circumstances will cause him ill-luck all his life, and a horrible experience after death. Cut off the rooster's head,' he concluded, 'that is the only way to get the truth!'

THE Post and Telegraph department has received from America the plates for the new 1½d stamp to be issued next month. The stamp, which was designed by Mr. J. M. Nairn, of Wellington, is emblematic of the part taken by New Zealand in the war. The design is 1½in long and ¾in deep. At the top are the words 'New