

Diocesan News.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

December 15.

Fathers Mahony and O'Reilly, of St. Patrick's College staff, have gone for a short trip up the Wanganui River.

Rev. Father George Mahony, who was here for some weeks in connection with the Stoke Orphanage cases, returned to Nelson on Thursday.

At the Technical School Drawing examination the following students from St. Mary's Convent were successful in the second grade:—Freehand—L. Meagher (excellent), E. Crombie, M. Goulter. Model—M. Goulter (good), I. Evans, C. Gray.

Prior to their departure for home the students of St. Patrick's College who took part in the production of 'The Two Orphans' were treated to a special picnic. They were conveyed in brakes to Titahi Bay, where a very pleasant day was spent. On their leaving the Bay cheers for their hosts, Rev. Fathers Clancy and Herbert, to whom the boys were deeply grateful, were lustily given.

The end of the Stoke Orphanage cases has at last been reached. The trial of Brother Wybertus, charged with indecent assault on a boy named Gucker, occupied the Supreme Court, over which Chief Justice Sir Robert Stout presided, on Monday. A verdict of 'not guilty' was returned. The results were anticipated by unprejudiced people of all denominations here and the verdicts of the jury have brought from the Press and people expressions of approval. A word of praise is here due to a local 'Defence Committee,' in which Messrs. O. McArdle, T. J. Davis, and L. Dwan were the prime movers, for the many services rendered to the Brothers during the trials. Though the Brothers have triumphed the costs of the defence are necessarily very heavy, and for the purpose of raising funds for the payment of these subscription lists are being forwarded to the principal towns in New Zealand. Already in Wellington there is, I am informed, a good sum subscribed, but as this is considered to be a colonial affair it is hoped that sympathisers from all parts of the Colony will subscribe and that the Brothers will not be put to the expense of repelling an attack on the whole Catholic body. Subscriptions may be forwarded to Rev. Father O'Shea, S.M., Boulcott street, or to Mr. O. McArdle, Botanical Road. A grand social and conversation as an expression of sympathy with the Marist Brothers are to be held in the Skating Rink on next Wednesday, when doubtless there will be a large attendance.

The midsummer entertainment and distribution of prizes at St. Mary's Convent took place before an assemblage which packed the large schoolroom on last Monday evening. Instrumental and vocal items, quite up to the excellent standard set at previous concerts by the convent pupils given by Misses Kenny, Rowe, N. Long, Macloskey, Ritling, Campion, N. Drummond, Bennett, and Reilly, and recitations by Misses Duignan and Parsons, occupied the first part of the programme. In the absence of his Grace the Archbishop, the Very Rev. Father Lewis presided. Before presenting the prizes he congratulated the Sisters and their pupils on the excellence of the entertainment. The convent now had a colonial reputation as the premier school of music. That this reputation was well merited was conclusively proved by the triumphs of pupils under the tests of the English examining institutions. Nor was it only, he said, in music that the convent was successful: it imparted a sound secular education, and, above all, it gave to pupils a solid religious knowledge—that knowledge which gave lustre to all education and was the foundation-stone of society. The Catholics of New Zealand were proud of their schools, which for more than twenty years they had maintained in spite of the monetary sacrifices which were thereby entailed. He complimented the Sisters and pupils on the progress made during the year, and wished them all a pleasant holiday. [The prize-list appears in another part of this issue.]

The annual entertainment by the pupils of the Dixon street Convent school was given at St. Patrick's Hall on Thursday and Friday evenings. The hall was altogether too small for the large audience present. 'Beauty and the Beast' was the play staged and the cast of characters was as follows:—Zimri, F. Maher; Azor; E. Murphy; Anna, T. Myers; Loloo, M. Mitten; Beauty, I. Barry; Silverstar, D. McGrath; Attendant Fairies,—A. Foster, D. Fonks, N. Maher, G. McArdle, K. Hickey, H. Flanagan, M. Edmunds, M. Tobin, A. McKenzie, W. Palmer, M. Outtrim, E. O'Brien, B. Foster, C. Tandy. The Sisters deserve every praise for the training of the youthful performers each of whom went through the allotted part in first class style. During the intervals the following items were given:—Fan Drill and recitation, infants; duet (piano), B. and R. Coleman; chorus, school children; solo (piano), G. McArdle; song, A. Segrief; chorus, children; solo (piano), M. Weavers; duet, B. and R. Coleman; song, A. Foster. A special word must be given to the infants for their performance of the Fan drill. The sympathetic singing of the Misses Segrief merited encores for their different numbers. The proceeds of the entertainment go towards the fund for prizes and school requisites.

A highly enjoyable and successful entertainment in aid of St. Bride's Convent, Masterton, was given by the pupils in the Opera House there on Thursday evening. The first part of the programme gave convincing evidence of the good work done in musical matters by the nuns, and reflected great credit on them as teachers. The presentation of a drama, entitled 'Lord Darnley' as the second part was equally successful. The programme of musical items was as follows:—Pianoforte duet and solo (three pianos), Misses Hourigan, Eccleton, Holloway, Richards, and Jones; vocal chorus, Misses Eccleton, Parsons, Daly, Holloway, O'Connell, Holmes (2), Jago, O'Malley, Collier, D'Arcy and Smythson; accompanist, Miss Elsie Richards. Pianoforte solo, Miss Elsie Richards. Vocal solo, Miss

McKenzie; accompanist, Miss Olive McKenzie. Pianoforte solo (four pianos), Misses Eccleton, Hourigan, Richards, and Jones. Vocal duet, Misses McKenzie, Holloway, and King; accompanist, Miss Eccleton. Pianoforte duet, Misses Parsons, Daly, Williamson, O'Connell, Jago, Richards, Collier, and Jones. Vocal chorus, Misses Eccleton, McKenzie (2), Holloway, King, O'Malley, and Jago; accompanist, Miss Elsie Richards. Pianoforte solo, Miss Eccleton. Vocal solo, Mr. Walter Jago; accompanist, Miss Eccleton. Pianoforte duet, Misses Collerton, Eccleton, Hourigan, Holloway, Stempa, and Jorns (2). In the drama the following took part:—Misses Holloway, E. King, Polly Mallabarr, Florence D'Arcy, Reside, Power, Eccleton, Collerton, Chapman, Murray, Parsons, Hooper, Hourigan, Chapman, Stempa, and Vida O'Connell.

REEFTON.

(From an occasional correspondent.)

December 7th.

An account of Reefton doings since last a contribution from this quarter appeared in the TABLET may not prove uninteresting to its readers. The newly-appointed parish priest at once after his arrival took in hand the more urgent parochial works. The financial position first claimed attention, and, thanks to the loyal assistance of the congregation, Father Hickson was soon able to announce that an arrangement had been come to with the Bank of New Zealand, which bade fair to prove satisfactory to all parties. A rapidly increasing outward movement of the walls in the Reefton Church made it imperative to take protective measures. Accordingly strong iron tie-rods were put in and the walls were well braced together. A new main altar was provided and the sanctuary painted and re-decorated. Attention was then turned to the boys' school, a building which in the early days did duty as a church. This has been transformed into a really fine building, well suited to the purposes to which it is turned. Just now a handsome picket fence is being erected around the grounds of the presbytery, and our parish priest hopes in the very near future to have the presbytery repainted. None of these works have added anything to the parish liabilities as appeals for the different undertakings were specially made, to which the congregation responded with their usual generosity. Over and above these improvements, the general surroundings of the church and presbytery have been attended to, so that the Catholic property in Reefton bears quite a creditable appearance.

Three socials were held during the winter months with a view to improving the financial position, and the working committees brought such unanimity and energy to bear upon their labors that a great success was scored, the net result being £60.

The Government inspector a few weeks back examined the pupils of the sixth standard, and Father Hickson himself conducted the test for the lower standards. The result was eminently creditable alike to the pupils and to their painstaking teachers, the Sisters of Mercy. The children are now earnestly bent upon giving further proof of their educational capabilities in the public entertainment which is to come off at an early date.

One of our local medicos, Doctor Whitton, recognising the excellent work done by his daughters at the Sacred Heart High School, especially at the recent examinations, gave a delightful outing to all the pupils. Queen's weather prevailed, and when in the cool of the evening the pleasure-seekers returned to town they made the welkin ring with their joyousness.

The beautiful devotion of the Quarant Ore took place in Reefton last month. The local pastors were aided by brother-priests from neighboring parishes—Rev. Father King (Ahaura), and Rev. Father Malone, S.M. (Greymouth). On the second night of the Exposition Rev. Father Malone gave a very fine discourse on some devotional aspects of the Real Presence.

It must have been very gratifying to the friends and well-wishers of the assistant priest here—the Very Rev. Dean Rolland, S.M.—to notice that on the recommendation of the Petitions Committee, the Cabinet recognised in a tangible way the services rendered by the worthy priest in the wars of the sixties. Dean Rolland was in 1865 appointed chaplain to the regular forces in Taranaki and in that capacity and with the rank of captain ministered to the 43rd, 70th and 10th regiments and the 18th Royal Irish. Subsequently he was attached to the Colonial forces, was several times under fire and was taken prisoner at Opunake. In the storming of Ngutu-o-te-Manu in 1868 where the gallant Von Tempsky was killed Dean Rolland had actually to take up the duties of officer commanding the retreat with the ambulance, those on whom the duty would otherwise have devolved having been killed or being still engaged in the storming of the pah. Mr. Gudgeon in his *Heroes of New Zealand* records that Father Rolland saved several lives. Last Christmas the Auckland *Weekly News* contained a full-page illustration of the gallant priest attending the wounded under fire. He was also present at Rewa-Rewa, and followed the militia under Lieut. Colonel McDonnell lately deceased, Major Hunter and Colonel now Sir George Whitmore. While with the Colonial forces the good priest received from the Government no remuneration whatsoever though he was still rated as a Captain with an orderly in attendance, and it was only in 1873 that he ceased his services as chaplain. Small wonder then that the Cabinet has voted a sum of £100 to be paid to the Very Reverend Father as some slight recognition of the great services he rendered to his adopted country in the Taranaki wars. He is still hale and hearty and will, it is hoped, be long spared to continue his ministrations in this district.

Death has been very busy with his sickle during the past winter in Reefton and has been particularly unsparing with the old identities. West Coasters in other parts may be anxious to hear the names of those taken from amongst us: John Patrick Harris, Thomas McKenna, Patrick McLarry, Peter O'Neill, Matthew Walker

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