

the early nineteenth century, as that of JOHN HOWARD will be with that of the eighteenth. And yet so late as September 15, 1853, the *London Times* declared that 'the prison of Birmingham was the theatre of scenes which filled the public with horror and affright. Facts which, if described by DICKENS, would be regarded as a piece of romance, actually occurred in one of the prisons in 1853.' Milder and gentler modes of prison treatment were, however, uniformly adopted in time. Catholic countries were the pioneers of the reforming and gentler system of treatment of criminals. We need only refer in passing to the labors of St. VINCENT DE PAUL among the galleys of Bayonne, Marseilles, and Bordeaux. Several congregations of religious of both sexes have been long instituted for the care of criminals: the Brothers of St. Joseph, the Lazarist Fathers, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, the Sisters of Mary and Joseph, etc. In Austria female criminals, instead of being sent to prison, are placed under the care of religious. More than two and a half centuries ago Pope INNOCENT X. laid in Rome the foundations of the first great model prison—the 'Carceri Nuove'—which HOWARD, the great British philanthropist, declared, more than a century later, to be one of the best regulated establishments of the kind that he had seen. Pope CLEMENT XI. (who reigned from 1700 to 1721) founded the famous reformatory for juvenile offenders which is the model of those that are in existence in every civilised country at the present day. Pope CLEMENT XII. (1730-1740) extended the system to female delinquents. WILLIAM SMITH, CERFBEER, and other authorities on the history of prison discipline show how the system which originated with the Popes spread to Milan, Belgium, and America.

In the same way Catholic countries led the way in the establishment of reformatory penal colonies—the Portuguese and Spaniards in their settlements in Africa, and the French in Guiana, under the care of the Jesuit Fathers and the Sisters of Charity of St. VINCENT DE PAUL. The whole history of prison systems has, perhaps, nothing which can equal in horror the cynic cruelties and nameless horrors of British transportation to Australia, Tasmania, and Norfolk Island. It endured like a long agony from 1787 till the permanent abolition of this mode of disposing of the criminal population of the British Isles in 1868. Its abolition—which was in a great measure due to the ceaseless efforts of two distinguished Catholic ecclesiastics—Dr. ULLATHORNE, Vicar-General of Sydney, and Bishop WILLIAMS, of Tasmania—terminated what was probably the most cruel and shocking penal system of the nineteenth century.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscribers are entreated to forward the amounts due by them at the earliest possible moment. The amounts due by individual subscribers are not considerable, but taken together they amount to a very large sum. The many calls that we have to meet make it imperative on us to greatly reduce the amount of indebtedness of our subscribers. We therefore ask those who have received accounts to wipe off their indebtedness to us before the close of the dying century. This will be a suitable mode of celebrating the parting of the nineteenth, and the beginning of the twentieth century.

MARIST BROTHERS' FUND.

We have received and duly forwarded to the Rev. Treasurer (Father O'Shea, Boulcott street, Wellington) the following sum in aid of the fund being organised to reimburse the Marist Brothers, late of Stoke, the heavy financial outlay which they have been compelled to undergo in their necessary defence during the recent trials—James Watterson, Oamaru, 5s.

Studies will be resumed on February 1 at St. Francis Xavier's Academy, Arlington street, Wellington. The school course comprises every branch of a high-class English education, with French, Latin, book-keeping, and all kinds of plain and art needlework, vocal and instrumental music, painting, etc.—**

The schools in connection with the Monastery of the Sacred Heart, Christchurch, and conducted by the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions will re-open on January 28. The educational course comprises, besides a careful religious and moral training, the various branches of a sound English education, together with French, shorthand, typewriting, needlework, music (vocal and instrumental), drawing, painting, etc.—**

Diocesan News.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

January 19.

The Marist Brothers' retreat concluded on Thursday morning. Rev. Father Ainsworth returned from the West Coast on Thursday.

Of the Sixth South African Contingent now in camp here 32 members paraded for Mass in St. Joseph's Church last Sunday.

Prominent on the list of New Zealanders who recently called on the Agent-General I notice the names of the Ven. Archdeacon Devoy and the Very Rev. Dean Carew.

The annual picnic given to the children of St. Joseph's Orphanage was held this year at Island Bay. The inmates were conveyed to the suburb in drags and spent a very pleasant day there.

The arrangements in connection with the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Association picnic are complete and a satisfactory gathering is anticipated. Donations of trophies for the sports have been freely made by the members.

Fathers Mahoney and O'Reilly returned from their tour in the Wanganui and New Plymouth districts on Wednesday. A considerable portion of their travels was accomplished on their bicycles. Fathers Clancy and Bowden returned from the Marlborough Sounds last night. On their tour they were accompanied by Father Fay of Blenheim.

Considerable time was lost by the pupils when the convent school was being re-built at Palmerston North last year and on that account the school was re-opened after the Christmas holidays somewhat earlier than usual. Work was resumed on Monday last and the examination by the Government Inspector postponed from last year will be held next month.

What was generally accepted as the decision of the Cathedral Committee re the site for the proposed new building was altered at a meeting held on Wednesday evening, and instead of erecting the cathedral in Buckle street the original proposal to build in Boulcott street will be adhered to. The architect, Mr. Petre, submitted plans suitable for the two sites, and after lengthy consideration the executive committee decided as stated. Necessary preliminaries for the laying of the foundation stone were begun on the following day.

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND.

(From our own correspondent.)

January 17.

The Very Rev. Father Boyle, C.M., of Sydney, is at present in Auckland, and preached an excellent and practical discourse to a large congregation last Sunday evening at St. Patrick's.

St. Benedict's parochial school is being pushed on by the contractor. The price is £320 and it is hoped it may be ready for the opening of the school term.

The local collection in aid of the Stoke Defence Fund has been successful, and the amount obtained will be forwarded this week to the Rev. Father O'Shea, Wellington. The donors in this instance gave most cheerfully.

Sub-Inspector Wilson left here for Wellington last Sunday to where he has been transferred. During his stay here he won the approbation of all classes of the community, particularly those under his charge, by his uniform kindness and consideration. In Church matters Mrs. Wilson lent invaluable assistance.

The new district president of the New Zealand district of the H.A.C.B.S. is Bro. Daniel Flynn. He was elected and duly installed at the ordinary weekly meeting of the district executive last Monday evening. The choice is a deservedly popular one, as the new president is known personally to many Hibernians throughout the Colony.

A very disastrous fire, in which £90,000 was sacrificed, occurred in the mercantile portion of this city early last Sunday morning. The great loss is attributed to the antiquated appliances with which our fire brigade is equipped. This is the third or fourth costly warning given to our civic authorities, but they cling with tenacity to the methods of our forefathers.

The committee set up by the local branch of the Hibernian Society to consider the renovations necessary for their lately-acquired hall, the Catholic Institute, met last evening, and after a long discussion one of the designs sent in by the architect, Mr. T. Mahoney, was chosen, and Bro. P. J. Nerheny was directed to consult the architect and call for tenders. The design is a fine one, and the hall, when completed, will be a credit to the Society.

St. Patrick's Day celebration committee met last Sunday afternoon in the Marist Brothers' schoolroom, the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly being in the chair. The Rev. Fathers Darby and O'Hara, from St. Benedict's, and a representative gathering were also present. Mr. J. B. Stead was elected general secretary and Mr. P. O'Kane sports secretary. The secretary announced that the Domain Cricket Ground had been secured for Saturday, March 16. The sports committee were chosen and requested to meet and consider what amount of prize money was required and to report the same to the next general meeting of the committee.

The sub-committee appointed by St. Patrick's parishioners at a meeting held last Sunday week, consisting of the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly and Messrs P. Dignan, P. J. Nerheny, W. Regan, and M. J. Sheahan, to consult with Mr. T. Mahoney, architect, concerning the completion of the Cathedral, met that gentleman last Friday afternoon at the Cathedral. His Lordship the Bishop also attended. The