

Waldegrave 87, (pass) Isabel Oliver 78. Intermediate: Piano (honors)—Annie Jack 80, (pass) Florence O'Connor 78. Junior: Piano (honors)—Eveline Rawlins 86. Preparatory: Piano (honors)—Annie Follas 100. Misses Oliver and Scanlon were recommended for the higher examination of Diploma of Associate in music by the examiner.

DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND.

(From our own correspondent.)

February 7.

The Sisters of Mercy, Auckland, have contributed £1 1s and the Sisters of St. Joseph £1 to the Stoke Defence Fund.

The Auckland section of the Hibernian Society's delegates to the Dunedin meeting leaves next week. The party will muster fully fifteen.

Rev. Father O'Connor, of Gisborne, celebrated Mass at the cathedral last Sunday. He left for Rotorua on Tuesday, where he stays for some time for the benefit of his health.

The Catholic schools under the Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of St. Joseph, and the Marist Brothers opened, after the long vacation, last Monday. The day was miserably wet, which no doubt materially affected the attendance.

The local branch of the Irish National Federation, by yesterday's outgoing San Francisco mail, sent through Mr. John Dillon, M.P., to the treasurers of the Irish Parliamentary Fund, the sum of £30. It is intended by the branch to organise during the coming winter months an entertainment in aid of the Irish Parliamentary Fund.

Mr. Michael Davitt, writing to your Auckland correspondent from Dalkey under date December 27, *inter alia* says: 'We are commencing the new century a united people, with a national organisation and a compact party, and for this most hopeful change and the promising prospect which it holds out to the country we have to thank William O'Brien more than any other living man. John Dillon has worked nobly for this end too, in resigning his position so as to promote union, and he has his reward in knowing that there could have been no such unity as now exists were it not for his spirit of self-sacrifice. The Convention was a great success, and its influence for good and for the promotion of national discipline was seen in the fortunate ending of the promised trouble in North Monaghan. I hope soon to begin the publication of my book, *The Boer Story of the War*. The story about my alleged denunciation of the Boers has had a world-wide circulation, but the truth catches up with fabrication in the end. It was all a piece of very dishonest Unionist propaganda, and the author has recently exhibited his true character to the public.'

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN.

A very fine programme of sports has been prepared for the annual picnic of the children of the Catholic schools, which takes place at Outram to-day. The committee, who have had the affair in hand, have left nothing undone to secure the success of the outing.

A retreat for the women of the parish will be opened in St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday evening. The retreat will be conducted by the Very Rev. Father Boyle, and the opening sermon will be preached by his Grace the Archbishop of Wellington.

On Sunday next, February 17, the foundation stone of the new Convent of Mercy, South Dunedin, will be laid to the accompaniment of solemn and appropriate ceremonies. The Pontifical High Mass will be celebrated at 10.30 by the Right Rev. Dr. Grimes, S.M., Bishop of Christchurch, after which the foundation stone will be laid by his Grace the Archbishop of Wellington. The preacher for the occasion will be his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne, and we trust that Dunedin Catholics will avail themselves fully of the opportunity of seeing and hearing this learned and distinguished orator. Other arrangements in connection with the celebration are notified in our advertising columns. The old weather-board cottage which has done service for a convent has long been painfully inadequate for the needs of the growing community, and the erection of a new and commodious building is imperatively necessary in the interests both of the health and reasonable comfort of the Sisters.

The Most Rev. Dr. Carr (Archbishop of Melbourne), the Most Rev. Dr. Redwood (Archbishop of Wellington), the Right Rev. Dr. Grimes (Bishop of Christchurch), the Right Rev. Dr. Verdon (Bishop of Dunedin), the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly (Auckland), accompanied by a number of clergy, arrived in Dunedin from Christchurch on Wednesday evening. They were met at the railway station by the Rev. Father Murphy, Adm. St. Joseph's Cathedral, the local clergy, and a large gathering of the Catholic laity. A procession, composed of the various confraternities of the cathedral parish, pupils of the Christian Brothers' school, a band, the Hibernian Society, the Catholic laity, with the prelates and clergy in carriages, then proceeded by the way of Princes street and Stuart street to the Cathedral. Here addresses of welcome were presented to his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne, his Grace the Archbishop of Wellington, his Lordship the Bishop of Christchurch, and the Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly (representing the Bishop of Auckland). The addresses were read by Mr. J. B. Callan. A full report of the reception will appear in our next issue.

TIMARU.

(From our own correspondent.)

Harvesting has commenced throughout the district and will be in full swing in another week from now.

The Rev. Fathers Tubman and Aubry have been absent during the week at Christchurch, attending the retreat held for the clergy of the diocese.

Madame McShane, recently arrived from Sydney, is assisting Madame Cooke in the Girls' Parochial School. Madame McShane is a native of Geraldine.

Brother George of the Marist Brothers is to be complimented on two of his pupils securing a St. Patrick's College Scholarship each in the recent competitive examination held throughout the Catholic schools of the Colony.

At the usual fortnightly meeting of the Hibernian Society, held on Thursday last, it was decided to send two delegates, Messrs. M. F. Dennehy and P. Kane to represent the branch at the annual meeting to be held at Dunedin. The proximity of the place of meeting and the concession in fares enable the branch to send its full complement of delegates.

The St. Patrick's Day Sports' Association held their annual meeting on Wednesday last when the balance sheet and report for the past year were presented and adopted. The balance sheet showed that £30 was handed over to the Patriotic funds, as a result of last year's meeting and a small balance brought forward to this year. The following officers were elected:—President, Mr. H. Geaney; vice-presidents, Rev. Father Tubman, his Worship the Mayor, Messrs. Mahoney, Mullin, Burns, J. J. Grandi, E. Hall, P. Reilly, W. Annetts, I. Reilly, M. O'Meehan; treasurer, Mr. John O'Rourke; secretary, Mr. M. F. Dennehy. At an adjourned meeting a programme was submitted comprising running, jumping, cycling events, etc., the prizes for which total about £70. The necessary committees, judges, etc., were appointed, and judging from enthusiasm of those present there is little doubt but that St. Patrick's Day will be fittingly celebrated in Timaru.

MARIST BROTHERS' FUND.

We have received and duly forwarded to the hon. secretary, the Rev. Father O'Shea, Wellington, the sum of £1 1s on behalf of the Marist Brothers' Indemnity Fund, from Mrs. W. A. Shain, Dunedin.

PROPOSED SCRIPTURE LESSONS IN THE VICTORIAN STATE SCHOOLS.

INTERVIEW WITH THE ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE.

(By telegraph, from our Christchurch correspondent.)

The following report of an interview with his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne appears in Christchurch *Truth* of Wednesday:—

Some time ago a Royal Commission on religious instruction in the State schools was appointed in Victoria. This Commission, it appears, compiled a book consisting of passages of Scripture, supplied them with headings, and very brief explanatory notes, and submitted them as lessons for the various grades in the State schools. So much our cables informed us. They further stated that the whole proposal was objected to by Archbishop Carr and all his Suffragan Bishops and the Roman Catholic clergy, but gave no further details or reasons for their attitude. It was to obtain these latter that a representative of *Truth* called at the Catholic presbytery and was courteously granted an interview by Archbishop Carr, who is now visiting Christchurch.

The Commission in question, his Grace stated, was to consist of the heads of all the different denominations, and its object was to draw up a course of Scripture lessons, hymns, and prayers, which might be read or sung in the State schools of Victoria daily.

'The Roman Catholic Bishops of Victoria were asked to join the Commission,' continued the Archbishop, 'but they refused to do so because they do not believe that it is possible to draw up any suitable scheme for combined religious instruction. Whatever could be proposed towards that end would be acceptable to all only by eliminating what would be valuable in such course of instruction. If genuine religious instruction is aimed at it must be based on a doctrinal foundation and there is no doctrinal foundation held in common by the various religious denominations, and therefore it is little better than a farce to speak of such a scheme as one supplying religious instructions for the children of the State schools. Some person had bluntly described such a scheme as "one that would only represent the residuum of all the heresies," therefore even from a non-Catholic point of view such a course of instruction would be without any real value, but at the same time it could easily be made offensive and dangerous by the teachers of the various denominations, who, if eager for the spread of the tenets of their own faith, would not fail to impress those tenets on the minds of the children, or who, if themselves unbelievers, could scarcely conceal from the children their own want of faith in the truth of Scriptural lessons given by them to the children.'

'In Victoria it was proposed that the teachers should read the lessons and say the prayers and have the hymns sung by the children. Moreover, it was proposed to allow the teacher to deduce from the Scriptural lesson any moral precept which he thought it contained. The distinction between moral lessons and doctrinal lessons is often so fine that it would be impossible to keep the two separate. Yet here an opportunity would be afforded to an over zealous school teacher of impressing on the plastic minds of the children both the doctrinal and moral lessons which, in his judgment, were deducible from the sacred text. The Catholics had over and above the general objections a special dislike to the proposed scheme, because it was founded on a non-Catholic principle. It