

Concert at Alexandra.

Few and far between come the musical treats such as the people of Alexandra had the opportunity of listening to on Thursday evening last (says the local *Herald*), on the occasion of the concert given in aid of the building fund of the Clyde Catholic Church. Taking advantage of the visit to the district of Miss Rose Blaney, the celebrated Dunedin soprano, the promoters of the concert sought that lady's assistance, and, in response to the appeal, Dunedin's talented vocalist unhesitatingly offered her services, as also did her accomplished sister, Mrs Costelloe, albeit both ladies did so at some personal inconvenience, as they were both suffering from rather severe colds. The announcement that these renowned singers were to take part in the evening's entertainment had the effect of attracting an unusually large audience, the Town Hall being literally packed to suffocation when the curtain rose, and judging by the repeated and enthusiastic demonstrations of approval one and all were intensely delighted with the efforts of the performers. The first item on the programme was a selection, 'The Bohemian girl,' by the Alexandra Orchestral Society, which was excellently rendered. By special request, Mr A. G. Murphy then gave the patriotic song, 'Motherland,' in which he scored a decided hit at the concert held a week previously, and he was again highly successful in the rendering of the song, his effort being greeted with prolonged applause. Miss Rose Blaney, who was very warmly received, then appeared and gave an exquisite rendering of 'At my window,' for which she was vociferously applauded, and in response to an undeniable encore she sang 'Comin' thro' the Rye' in a manner that was highly pleasing to the audience. Mr James Austin, who was in good voice, followed with a capital rendering of 'Anchored,' for which he was deservedly applauded. The trio, 'Queen of the night,' given by Mrs Costelloe, Miss Blaney, and Miss Drumm, was an excellent item, and the sinners were demonstratively applauded. Mrs J. Miller was very successful in her rendering of 'Good-bye, Mavourneen,' and in response to an encore she sang 'The dear little shamrock.' Mrs Costelloe gave a very fine rendering of that pathetic song 'Daddy,' and in response to the demands of the audience for an encore, the same lady contributed 'Arrah go on,' in a most charming manner. This item simply 'brought down the house,' and the audience again demanded an encore, but, as she was suffering from a cold, Mrs Costelloe contented herself by bowing her acknowledgments.

The chairman, Mr James Kelman, in an appropriate speech, thanked the performers for their kind assistance, and also the audience for their attendance. He expressed his great pleasure at being able to welcome, at an Alexandra concert, such talented vocalists as Miss Blaney and Mrs Costelloe, and he felt sure that everyone was highly delighted with the singing they had listened to that evening.

After a short interval, the Alexandra Orchestral Society contributed a selection, 'The daughter of the regiment,' in first-class style, after which Miss Blaney again appeared and gave an excellent rendering of 'Embarrassment,' repeating the last verse in response to an encore. Misses Richards and Murphy sang 'The fisherman,' for which they were loudly applauded and were obliged to repeat the last verse to satisfy the audience's demand. Mrs Costelloe again won the hearty appreciation of her auditors by her singing of 'Anchored,' and she had to reappear and repeat the last verse before the audience could be quieted. Mrs Miller's singing of 'Flora Macdonald's lament' was an excellent item, and then followed a duet, 'Sainted Mother,' which was exquisitely sung by Mrs Costelloe and Miss Blaney. The item was perhaps the gem—a gem among many gems—of the evening's programme, and the singers had to reappear and repeat the last stanza. Another selection by the orchestra was well received and the singing of 'God save the King' concluded one of the most enjoyable entertainments of the kind ever held in Alexandra. The Alexandra Brass Band contributed a number of selections in good style, prior to the opening of the concert.

Misses Drumm (of Dunedin) and Miss Reany acted as accompanists during the evening.

The gross proceeds of the entertainment amount to about £40. We think this is about the record for a local concert, and Miss Reany (who organised the entertainment) is to be congratulated on the success of her efforts in not only providing a first-class entertainment, but also in materially assisting the worthy cause for which the concert was promoted.

A memorial to the late Right Rev. Dr. Crane, O.S.A., is to be erected in Bendigo cemetery. The memorial will take the form of a monument, consisting of a Celtic Cross in grey and red Scottish granite on a pedestal of similar material, and will cost not less than £300.

Mr Denis O'Donovan, whose resignation of the post of Parliamentary Librarian was recently chronicled, is spending a week or two in Sydney (says the *Freeman's Journal*), prior to his leaving for the old country. Of his three daughters, two have been dedicated to the service of the Church in Australia—one in the French Order of Sacre Cœur at Malvern (Victoria) another in the Tasmanian community of the Presentation Order. The third daughter is at present staying at New York, where she will be joined by her father on his way to Europe. There are two sons—one in New Guinea, the other in West Australia. Mr O'Donovan has been appointed to represent the Queensland Government at the Tonquin Exhibition in November next. Meanwhile he will have opportunities of direct personal touch with congenial worlds which would be denied him in Australia.

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The Cork Exhibition.

THE Cork Exhibition, which was opened on May 1, has been a great success. At a meeting of the committee held in the early part of June the Lord Mayor announced that during the month of May 200,000 persons had passed the turnstiles. So far, the season for American visitors had not properly set in, and it was therefore expected that June and July would be the best months.

Early this year Lord O'Brien, Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, presented a cup valued at £250 to the committee of the Exhibition for an eight-oared boat race. Invitations for this contest were sent to the principal rowing clubs in Great Britain, the United States, and the Continent. The trophy was to become the property of the winning crew. This contest came off last week on the river Lee, and the cable informs us that there were 50,000 persons present. The Leander crew won in 11min 11½sec. A length and a-quarter behind came the crew representing the Berlin Rowing Club, who were the best exponents of the Continental quick stroke. The event attracted numerous visitors from all parts of the world. The cable states that the Exhibition will benefit to the extent of at least £100,000 by the event. There is evidently a mistake in the amount; perhaps it should be £10,000.

His Majesty the King has given a cup for an international yacht race to take place in connection with the Exhibition, at which it is expected the Meteor, Columbia, and Shamrock II. will compete.

An American visitor to the Exhibition gives the following interesting particulars:—

'There are 40 acres in the grounds. These contain 10 acres of buildings, and there has been an expenditure of over £40,000. The exhibits number 550, of which 80 per cent. are Irish. Of these nearly half belong to merchants and manufacturers of Cork city and county. Exhibits from the City and County of Dublin number 60, and from Belfast and Antrim 50.

'We have been long accustomed to hear in America that there is no real progress in Ireland outside of Ulster. It will, therefore, be news to most people to hear that the population of this most southern city has increased by over 10,000 since 1883. It is calculated by Mr R. A. Atkins, honorary secretary to the present Exhibition, that the shipping trade of the port of Cork has improved by at least 40 per cent, and that the volume of business has improved by over 50 per cent.

'The manufacturing and other enterprises in the City and County of Cork since 1883 have absorbed capital to the amount of nearly £1,000,000. Among the most important manufactures are woollens, linens, shoes, chemicals, soap, felt and straw hats, starch, and bacon.

'The citizens of Cork have smartly equipped electric street cars that convey passengers within the city and to the extreme suburban points for a penny fare. The capital of the company is £20,000, and upon this the shareholders have been receiving a 5 per cent dividend. Over 2000 houses for private occupation have been built in Cork since 1883 at a cost of over £1,000,000.

'In addition to the marks of progress named, I find that the Cork City government, during the same period, has erected 1000 model cottages for laborers, which are rented at an average of 48 cents a week. Since 1883 the business houses in Cork have been much improved in appearance, inside and out, many having been remodelled and greatly enlarged. Most of the merchant companies have taken advantage of the law of limited liability in trading to secure increased capital. There are twice as many good hotels as in 1883, and the accommodation for freight and passengers at the terminals of the principal railway lines has been improved beyond recognition.

'Finding Cork thus advanced, it became still more interesting to look into the condition of things in the rest of Ireland. The deposits and cash balances in the joint stock banks of Ireland in 1883 amounted to £30,000,000. At the close of the year 1901 this total had been increased to £43,000,000. There are nine such banks, having between them branch offices and agencies throughout Ireland to the number of 520—an increase of 70 since 1880.

'Looking at industrial Ireland from the point of view of a decreasing population, the showing is more remarkable. In 1883 the post office and trustee savings banks had on deposit £4,000,000. Last year the amount aggregated £11,000,000. The number of depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank alone has increased over 200 per cent.

'The extension of Irish railways, in the face of a steady drain by emigration, is yet more of a puzzle. In 1871 there were 1988 miles open for traffic. The population of the whole country then was 5,412,377. This had been reduced to 4,556,546 in 1901, and the number of miles of railway had increased to 3183. The number of passengers carried in 1871 was 15,441,934. This was increased in 1900 to 27,649,815. The total receipts for passengers and freight in 1871 was a little over £2,000,000. In 1900 it was nearly £4,000,000. Of the total receipts in 1871 there was expended 52 per cent. for working and maintenance. For similar purposes in 1900 the expenditure was 60 per cent.

'It is, further, interesting to note that of the stock guaranteed by the British Government for the purchase of Irish land by the occupying farmers, the Irish people are holders to the extent of £11,000,000. Upon this a dividend of 2½ per cent. is paid. To the various loans issued by the British Government the Irish have subscribed £32,000,000.

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