

## ENTERTAINMENT AT INVERCARGILL

The entertainment given by the pupils of the Dominican Nuns in aid of the Belgian Relief Fund (writes our Invercargill correspondent) was a great success, as will be seen from the following report, which I take from the *Southland Times*:

The entertainment given in the Municipal Theatre last evening by the pupils of the Dominican Nuns, Invercargill, in aid of the Belgian Relief Fund, was one which in every respect can be classed as a complete success. Long before the curtain rose the theatre was crowded in every part, many having to be content with standing room only, and, much to the regret of those in authority, many more had to be turned away. The result will be that a substantial amount will be contributed towards the laudable object of which the fixture was in aid. With regard to the entertainment itself, on it nothing but praise can be bestowed. The Dominican Nuns in Invercargill earned an enviable reputation for the manner in which their pupils acquitted themselves at functions such as the one that was held last night, and let it at once be said that their latest effort has enhanced that reputation. The piece that was chosen for last night's showing was Lewis' cantata, 'Little Nell's Surprise Party.' It is one that gives ample opportunity to children to display their ability, and last night that was fully availed of. In every department the youthful performers were good, and not a hitch occurred to spoil the action of the piece, which was creditable to teachers and pupils alike. The grouping was pretty and effective, the singing was tuneful, the principals were letter perfect in their lines, and the enunciation and pronunciation of the children was far above what is generally noted on such occasions. Another pleasant feature was that none of the juveniles showed the slightest symptoms of stage fright, and none was afraid to use her voice to the full extent of her lung capacity. In short, the children were admirably trained, and they were a distinct credit to those who were responsible for their training. Those who have had any experience in such matters know full well what a task it is to train seventy children to stage a difficult cantata satisfactorily, and when this is done as successfully as was the case last night, those who are responsible are entitled to a great deal more than an ordinary share of credit, and it is indeed a pleasant task when this can be conceded ungrudgingly and unhesitatingly, as indubitably is the case in connection with the performance under review.

The story contained in the cantata has previously been told, and it is one that appeals to young and old alike. It is a somewhat hackneyed theme, but it is one that will always bear a retelling, especially when it is served up so daintily as it is in 'Little Nell's Surprise Party.' It would be perhaps invidious to single out any of the performers for special mention, when all did so well, but, nevertheless, little Miss Finnerty, who took the part of 'Little Nell,' deserves more than the usual medium of praise. For one so young she is wonderfully at home on the stage, exhibits no self-consciousness whatever, and she possesses a remarkably tuneful and flexible voice, her singing being note perfect. Her numbers were 'Mamma, I cannot play to-night,' 'Let me sing my joy and pleasure,' and 'Please give me a penny.' Her last contribution was the cause of a generous shower of coins of all descriptions falling on the stage, the fund in consequence being augmented to the tune of over £5. As 'Mrs. Grant' Miss Morris achieved a distinct success, her pleasant voice being heard to advantage in 'O, friends of other days,' and with Miss Shepherd, who took the part of 'Mr. Grant,' she had to respond to a double encore in her singing of the duet 'With grateful hearts.' They were also successful in 'Back to the dear old home again.' Miss Shepherd was well placed as 'Mr. Grant,' and, in addition to the concerted numbers she took part in, she stored well in 'Is this a dream' and 'I see again the day.' The villain of the piece is 'Mr. Gried,' and in this difficult part—for a girl particularly Miss McGrath was quite at home. She gave a presentation of a cheerful sort of villain, and her singing was distinctly

good, the humorous touches being nicely done. 'I'm a landlord' was a capital effort of hers, and in the solo and chorus, 'Let us join and sing' she created much merriment with a humorously doleful lament. As 'Emma' Miss Timpany was really good, and made quite a hit in 'I will hide it.' Miss Freed, as 'Mistress of the flowers,' and Misses Vondersloot and Furlong as flower fairies were also allotted parts to which they did full justice. Under the baton of Mr. A. R. Wills, the company were heard to great advantage in the various choruses, amongst them being 'Here we are a merry band,' 'Come choose our Queen,' 'Now we'll find it,' 'How surprising,' and 'Beautiful Ireland,' an introduced item. Another introduced contribution which was received with marked approval was 'The waking of the flowers,' which was arranged by the Dominican Nuns, and which contained solos, recitations, dialogues, marches, dances, and choruses, all of which were splendidly done, and collectively they furnished in themselves quite a nice little play, the pretty dresses of the children and the judiciously applied limelight effects adding greatly to its attractiveness. Two items that provided a pleasant spice of variety and which were vigorously applauded were an Irish jig and a clog dance, little Miss Mavora Cavanagh being the performer. Other items were an overture on the piano (eight hands), 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' by Misses Macdonald, Tregonning, Wells and Shepherd, a piano-forte solo, 'Forest murmurs,' by Miss Macdonald, L.A.B., and a piano duet, Liszt's 'Rhapsodie No. 2,' by Misses Macdonald and Wells. The only adult performer was that popular vocalist Mrs. E. Stuart Dallas, who contributed 'There's a land,' and for an undeniable encore 'Mother Machree.' Miss Searell accompanied Mrs. Dallas, and the remainder of the items were accompanied by Mrs. J. J. Finnerty.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

IMPORTUNATE.—Though by no means without merit, the lines 'To the Sacred Heart' are not up to publication standard. The general idea is good, but the style is ambitious, and the necessary high level is not sustained.

PATRIOTIC IRISHMAN. As it is now several weeks since the cable about the 300 Irishmen appeared, and as no one has taken it at all seriously, it is perhaps hardly necessary to open a discussion on the matter. With your concluding sentence every reader will agree: 'Our earth is of large dimensions and Ireland is only a small spot on the great planet, so let Ireland's traducers vary things a little, and turn their attention to some other country; and if they go into the thing in earnest they will surely find elsewhere plenty of scope for their energies.'

F. W. B., Christchurch.—You are quite mistaken. We have never 'advocated' conscription or compulsory service; we have never so much as expressed an opinion on the subject.

J. J. M. The Waikato editor was not specially responsible for the publication of the item to which you refer, as it was sent out as part of the official news, and has been widely published in Australian and New Zealand papers. The paragraph is certainly open to exception in point of taste and tone, but it was not meant offensively.

## POLISH RELIEF FUND

Already acknowledged	£83	4	0
'D. A. C.'	2	0	0
'Forlorn'	1	0	0
T. Bourke, Wanganui	1	0	0
'A Trooper going to the War'	1	0	0
'St. Anthony's Bread'	1	0	0
'A Widow's Mite'	1	0	0
Margaret and Moya, East Chatton (10/- each)	1	0	0
Lucy Krakosky, Hōkitika	0	10	0
'Anonyms,' Auckland	0	10	0