

POPULAR PRIESTS HONORED

A very pleasant and successful function was held in the Riversdale Drill Hall on Wednesday night, May 14, when Fathers D. P. Buckley and P. J. O'Neill were entertained to a banquet (says the *Mataura Ensign*). Some three years ago Father O'Neill joined the New Zealand Forces as a chaplain, and he saw some two and a-half years' active service. During his absence Father Buckley took charge of the Riversdale parish. The popularity of both priests was fully demonstrated by the large number that attended the banquet, visitors being present from Gore, Mandeville, Waikaia, Balfour, and Lumsden.

Mr. M. Roche (Mandeville) presided. Some 250 people sat down to the tables, and proceedings commenced with a verse of the National Anthem and the loyal toast. "The Army and Navy" was proposed by Mr. I. Lee, and responded to by Captain John Reid and Private Malone.

The chairman proposed "The Guests." In doing so he said they had met to bid farewell to Father Buckley and to welcome home Father O'Neill. The former had been a "live wire" in the district, in fact he had not confined his work to the parish alone, but had gone further afield at times. The speaker referred to the services Father O'Neill had rendered to his country, and extended a hearty welcome back to his old parish.

Rev. A. C. H. Button (Anglican) said he was pleased to be present to honor Fathers Buckley and O'Neill. The best of good feeling had always existed between Father Buckley and himself. They frequently met throughout the district and worked amicably together. The speaker made special reference to the splendid work accomplished by Father Buckley during the influenza epidemic, when he (Father Buckley) helped everybody, irrespective of creed. (Applause.) The speaker had not the pleasure of an intimate acquaintance with Father O'Neill, but hoped that the good feeling would still continue. It meant a lot when pastors worked together, especially in outlying districts.

Very Rev. Father O'Donnell (Gore) was pleased to be present to honor Fathers O'Neill and Buckley. He was pleased to see Rev. Button present, as it showed the broadmindedness of the visitor and his people.

Mr. Len Gee said he had an intimate acquaintance with Father Buckley and admired him as a man. He wished the guest success in his new sphere. If Father Buckley continued on the same lines as he had done at Riversdale he would make friends not only in the Church but outside too.

Messrs. W. J. Kelly, Joseph Crosbie, and T. Robertson also spoke.

The chairman then made presentations to the guests. He handed a marble clock to Father O'Neill, and to Father Buckley he presented a substantially filled wallet of cash.

Father O'Neill first of all apologised to the Patriotic Committee for not being able to be present at the social it had invited him to attend upon his return. He explained that he had been detained in Wellington on military matters. He received their medal, for which he sincerely thanked them. The speaker gave a short account of his experiences in the Army. Referring to the New Zealand Division, he said that one thing they could do was to talk, but they had something to talk about. Special tributes had been paid to the New Zealanders by Marshal Joffre. Father O'Neill was pleased to see Rev. Button present, and assured him that the present good feeling would continue to exist as far as he (the speaker) was concerned.

Father Buckley, in returning thanks, said he had been used to the city life before coming to Riversdale three years ago, and he did not take to it kindly at first. He was treated with hospitality and kindness, and he regretted leaving the district. The speaker referred to Rev. Button's good work during the epidemic. Rev. Button not only represented the Anglican Church, but he was also a kind and courteous gentleman. He

concluded by saying that he would be pleased to renew the acquaintance of any friend in any parish he happened to be situated in in the future.

During the evening songs were contributed by Mesdames Robert Butler, F. and J. Crosbie, Misses May Inder, Mary Mulqueen, and Mr. A. Rasmussen, and an item was given by the choir. Miss Sylvia Inder and Rev. Button contributed recitations. Misses Smaill, Inder, and Mulqueen played the accompaniments.

An excellent spread was provided, and for this the ladies of Riversdale, assisted by friends from Mandeville and Waikaia, are to be specially complimented.

Gisborne

(From our own correspondent.)

May 15.

The second of the series of winter socials was held in the Assembly Hall last evening, and proved very successful. There was a large attendance, and the euchre tournament and other attractions provided evidently met with the appreciation of the gathering and afforded much enjoyment. The euchre prizes, donated by Messrs. H. Alley and T. R. Gordon, were won by Mrs. T. O'Connell and Mr. Dunstone. Music was supplied by Miss L. White, and Messrs. J. H. Reidy and P. Liddell were efficient M.C.'s. Supper was arranged by Mesdames Chambers and Arnold.

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M. COUGHLAN,

Hon. Secretary.

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