

The Camorra

The trial of the Camorristi still figures prominently in our cables; and according to one Press Association message 'a priest of Sangennareillo' is alleged to have 'led the raids in lay attire.' As to that, the following note from the Boston Pilot throws some light on the situation:—'A Boston paper, speaking of the Camorra trial in Italy, asserted: "The defendants are members of the Catholic faith," and they attended Mass, and asked for Holy Communion. If they did so, it only proves that they are not Camorristi, for that society is a secret society of such nature that one becomes excommunicated from the very fact of membership in it. Such people cannot receive the Sacraments, and therefore the slurs of the secular papers in this matter are the result of their ignorance. Besides, the whole proceedings of the trial are to prove that these men are Camorristi; hence they are not so proven yet. It is certainly rather rash in any paper to condemn an accused man before the court has so decided. If these men are Camorristi, they are not Catholics. If they are Camorristi they cannot enter into communication with the Church except by a well-attested abjuration of the society.' The full facts regarding the alleged participation of priests will doubtless come to hand in due time. In the meantime, the following information regarding the history and objects of this remarkable society will be found interesting. We take the particulars from an article in the Sydney Catholic Press. 'The Camorra of Naples and the Mafia of Sicily, and then their overgrown child, the Black Hand, are all most powerful and dangerous secret organisations. The Camorra is a wonderfully organised politico-criminal society dominating a large area of Central Italy; the Mafia is a freemasonry, loosely organised except in its lower strata which rivals the Camorra, and it dominates Sicily and influences all Italy; the Black Hand is a freemasonry between hundreds of separate gangs.'

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'The Camorra is very different from and a much more despicable thing than the Mafia. Its name is derived from the Neapolitan dialect word *camuriari*, which means "clever stealing." As an institution it is, perhaps, one hundred years older than the Mafia, and it has earned Naples the name of the City of Thieves. Its organisation is complete, its discipline of the severest, and its processes of the cleverest. The powerful chief, Enrico Alfano, went to New York some time ago with a court of 15 men to organise the Camorra affiliations of the Black Hand into a compact society, but he was caught by chance in a raid. Was such an insignificant little man that he was held merely on the charge of carrying concealed weapons, and it was only when his real standing was discovered that he was turned over to the Italian Government. The life of the Camorra is largely blackmail and robbery, and it only enters into politics to secure immunity from molestation. It has robbed Naples till the city became actually bankrupt some time since. Every workman in Naples pays his pizzo to the Camorra. If the stores, hotels, theatres, etc., do not contribute the Camorristi go around, start rows, cause police raids, and ruin business. They call this process of collection "making noise." It is estimated that the trial in connection with the Camorra crimes will last a year.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

To-morrow (Friday) evening an entertainment in aid of the funds of the Christian Brothers' Athletic Clubs will be given in St. Joseph's Hall. An excellent programme has been prepared for the occasion.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday from the last Mass until Vespers, after which there was the usual procession.

The annual meeting of St. Joseph's Ladies' Club was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Wednesday evening of last week. Rev. Father Corcoran presided, and there was a good attendance of members. The election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Mrs. Jackson; secretary and treasurer, Miss B. Laffey; committee, Misses Thomas, H. Bourke, Duhig, and W. Johnstone. The members will be entertained at a social gathering to be given by the president (Mrs. Jackson) in St. Joseph's Hall on Wednesday evening.

On Sunday, the Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, there was High Mass in St. Joseph's Cathedral at eleven o'clock. Rev. Father Liston (Holy Cross College) was

celebrant, Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., deacon, and Rev. Father Scanlan subdeacon. In the evening the sermon on St. Joseph was preached by the Rev. Father Coffey.

St. Joseph's Harriers ran from St. Clair Baths on Saturday, 17 members turning out. Messrs. O. Dillon and C. Collins laid a good trail round the second beach and up past Cargill's Castle, continuing on till in the vicinity of Green Island, eventually coming out on the Main South Road, which was followed for some distance. Branching off at Corstorphine road, the trail struck along Great Queen street, and down past Sidey's, coming out at the Golf-house, striking the road, which was followed to the baths. In the sprint home R. Metcalf succeeded in getting in first, with L. O'Sullivan second.

DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH

(From our own correspondent.)

The May devotions in the Cathedral and St. Mary's Church, Christchurch North, are being largely attended each evening.

His Lordship Bishop Grimes left Te Aroha on last Saturday for Auckland, and expects to reach Christchurch on Thursday of this week. On Saturday next the Bishop leaves for Fairlie, and commences an episcopal visitation of that parochial district on the following Sunday.

The ladies' branch of the arch-Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament was represented to about its full strength at the ordinary fortnightly meeting in the Cathedral on last Tuesday evening, and upwards of 400 members approached the Holy Table for the monthly Communion on Sunday morning.

The Rev. Father Bouzaid, B.S. (Melchite rite), of Beyrout, and latterly of Auckland, is at present visiting the members of his denomination in Christchurch. In the Cathedral on Sunday morning last he celebrated Mass for his co-religionists, which was attended by a number of Syrian inhabitants and others. Father Bouzaid intends remaining in this city another week.

The balance sheet of the recent national entertainment in celebration of St. Patrick's Day, prepared by the secretary (Mr. E. O'Connor), shows that the funds of Nazareth House will profit thereby to the extent of £77 2s 6d. This is the lowest net result yet realised since the present executive committee of the annual celebration in aid of the above object commenced operations, and as the gross returns amounted to £114 14s 6d, the comparative smallness of the result to credit is attributed to increased expenditure.

The Rev. Father Tyler, M.S.H., late of Darfield, is now at Leonora in the diocese of Geraldton, Western Australia, of which parish the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart have recently taken charge at the request of his Lordship Bishop Kelly. Attached to the same community is the Rev. Father Goodman, M.S.H., who, after ordination in the Christchurch Cathedral by his Lordship Bishop Grimes some years ago, together with Father Tyler and two others of the same Order, was for a time stationed at Randwick, N.S.W.

The ordinary meeting of St. Patrick's branch H.A.C.B. Society was held in the Hibernian Hall on last Monday evening. Bro. E. L. McKeon, V.P., presided. Six members were declared on the sick fund and two declared off. Sick pay to the amount of £13 2s 6d was passed for payment. Copies of the district annual report were received, and discussion was held over till next meeting. Three candidates were nominated for membership. Bro. R. O'Brien was elected a trustee of the branch. It was decided to summon a special meeting of the branch for the following Monday evening to arrange for a welcome to the Irish Parliamentary delegates.

The Marist Brothers' Old Boys' team in the president's cup match on last Saturday played a drawn game against Merivale B, each side scoring 6 points. Dobbs and Barnett for the Marist Brothers' team scored tries. In the seniors contest Merivale defeated the Marist Brothers' team. Mr. W. Mahoney, who had been playing well for the Marists team, had to retire, having twisted his ankle, an accident that will probably handicap the team in the next few matches. In the fourth grade match the Marist Brothers' team, playing against Kaiapoi, won by 17 points to nil.

There was Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral from the 11 o'clock Mass until after Vespers on Sunday last. In the evening the Very Rev. Father Price, Adm., preached to a large congregation in explanation of the sacred ceremonies and ritual of the Catholic Church. The subject of his discourse, lucidly expounded, was of a particularly informative nature, especially to the numbers of non-Catholics who attend the Cathedral, notably on each first Sunday evening of the month. In the procession of the Blessed Sacrament the members of St. Joseph's section of the arch-Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament participated for the first time, it being the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph.

A representative meeting of parishioners, including a number of ladies, was held on last Sunday afternoon in the boys' schoolroom to devise means of paying off the liabilities incurred last year in renovating and refurbishing the parish schools and improving their approaches. The Very Rev. Father Price, Adm., presided. Various projects were advanced, and it was finally decided to make a house-to-house canvass among the parishioners as a first means in the desired direction. So as not to interfere with the operations of the Irish Parliamentary delegates, the meeting was adjourned to the last Sunday of May, when collec-

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