

The *Oamaru Mail* of the same date is equally outspoken. 'We are at a loss,' it says, 'to describe last night's production, *'The Monk and the Woman.'* It is not melodrama—though mellow enough in parts—nor is it farce; it is an injudicious combination of these two—injudicious because there is the desire to be mirthful where the author intended to impress. The writing itself is all well enough, in fact there are many glimpses of literary merit in the work discounted by surprising lapses into banality. The drama purports to be historical, dealing with the French court, and ventures upon religious topics in such a manner as cannot but be unpalatable to a numerous body in the community. There is little justification for the work, and, despite capable handling last night, it failed to convince; it gained no grip. . . . The acting on the whole is good, several of the principals showing more than usual ability, and it is a pity that they are asked to struggle against such odds as the drama presents.' The *Mail* gave no report at all of the second night performance; and in discussing the different members of the cast both the *Oamaru* papers completely ignored the existence of the 'funny' character, the impersonator of the gluttonous monk.

The *Dunedin Evening Star*, which deservedly ranks as an expert in the matter of theatrical criticism, has the following in the course of a conspicuously just and impartial estimate of the production: 'An objection presents itself at the very outset. The first act deals largely with life in a monastery. Such a scene is inherently difficult for a playwright—difficult in that he can scarcely hope to get the religious atmosphere on a stage, difficult also because a mixed audience does not understand monastic routine, and specially difficult when, as in this case, a comic monk who paraphrases Captain Marryat's joke about "such a little one" shares with the devout principal the duty of disciplining Brother John for having looked at a woman. Even a non-Catholic must admit that there is a risk of offending the laws of good taste and fairness in parading on a stage the contentious subject of monkish celibacy, and the act of Divine adoration in private as distinguished from public worship is not a proper topic for any drama. It jars on sensitive feelings. . . . Our point is that there is really no need to drag on the sacred element at all. As much of the monastery life as is really necessary to the play could be shown without giving offence except on general grounds. The scene of Liane taking refuge there, and falling in love with Brother Paul, and the intrusion of the guard, and the wedding before the altar—these are excusable, even if of doubtful propriety. The quarrellings of the monks, the devotional exercises, the high-pitched exclamations of horror at the mere mention of "woman," and the gibes about gluttony, could be very well dispensed with.' Even the much boomed earthquake scene seems to be something of a fiasco—at least as it was given on the *Dunedin* first night appearance. Our *Dunedin* evening contemporary thus makes merry over this part of the performance: 'The idea of the earthquake may be worth considering, but as carried out it was ridiculous. The audience heard the stage hands summoned to quarters, and got a glimpse of the operations in the rear, and the pillars broke from their tops instead of being shaken at the base. The climax to the play would have been no more absurd if instead of an earthquake the *corps dramatique* had been simultaneously disabled by appendicitis.'

It is, of course, the duty of the press to be perfectly candid in their notices of theatrical entertainments, but it is a duty which is, as a rule, more honored in the breach than in the observance, and the journals we have quoted certainly deserve thanks and credit for their straight and honest speaking on this occasion.

HELD OVER

Owing to extreme pressure on our space late reports from Timaru and Palmerston North and a quantity of other matter are unavoidably held over.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

Rev. Father Buckley celebrated Mass at the Territorial Camp at Sutton on Sunday.

The *Southland Daily News* reports that his Lordship Bishop Verdon administered the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday afternoon in St. Mary's Church, Invercargill, to about 200 candidates. His Lordship was assisted by Very Rev. Dean Burke, V.F., and Rev. Father Woods.

On Sunday, the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, there was Solemn High Mass at eleven o'clock in St. Joseph's Cathedral. Rev. Father Collins (Holy Cross College) was celebrant, Rev. Father Liston (Rector Holy Cross College) deacon, Rev. Mr. Kaveney (Holy Cross College) subdeacon, and Rev. Father Corcoran master of ceremonies. A sermon on 'St. Joseph' was preached by the Rev. Father Corcoran.

On Sunday evening after Vespers the members of St. Joseph's Cathedral Choir presented Mr. R. Devaney, a prominent member of the choir, with a set of carvers, in connection with his recent marriage. Mr. J. Flynn, in making the presentation, referred to the excellent services given by the recipient in the rendering of the music of the Church. Mr. Devaney briefly thanked the members for their very handsome present, and said he hoped to be with them for many years to come.

ST. JOSEPH'S LADIES' CLUB.

The annual report and balance sheet of St. Joseph's Ladies' Club for the year ended March 31 were read and adopted at the meeting held in St. Joseph's Hall on Wednesday evening of last week. The committee in their report said:—It was to be regretted that there was such a considerable falling out in the membership, and the committee hope that the members will do all they can this year to increase the membership and also to further the usefulness of the club. Early last year the president (Mrs. Jackson) left for a trip to the Old Country, and we are glad to welcome her once more amongst us. During her absence the work in connection with the club was carried out by the vice-president, Mrs. Stone. During the year, owing to the resignation of the secretary, Miss Salmon was elected to the position. The best thanks of the club are due to Mr. Spain (debating instructor) and Mr. C. Tarleton (gymnastic instructor) for the valuable assistance given by them during the season.

The election of officers for the current year resulted as follows:—President, Mrs. Jackson (re-elected); secretary and treasurer, Miss E. Salmon; committee—Misses Duhig, Curran, Johnson, Fogarty (re-elected), Mrs. Salmon and Miss O'Rourke.

Hamilton

(By telegraph, from our own correspondent.)

April 15.

A branch of the Catholic Federation has been formed at Hamilton. The following were elected to the parish committee:—President, Very Rev. Dean Darby; vice-presidents, Messrs. Andrew Casey and Edward Jones; secretary, Mr. Joseph Duffy; treasurer, Mr. J. B. Hooper; members of committee—Messrs Charles Lafferty, John Hair, Leo O'Malley, Michael O'Leary, Michael McCarthy, Patrick Sweeney, Misses Madeline Swan, Theresa McCarthy.

RONALD STEWART TESTIMONIAL FUND

We have received a postal note for 5s from 'Sympathiser' for the 'Ronald Stewart Testimonial Fund.'



J. T. COOPER

DENTAL SURGEON,

CNR. MANSE & PRINCES STS., DUNEDIN.

Advice Free. No charge for Extraction when Teeth Supplied.