

The Young Men's Club will hold a picture entertainment (Irish scenes, etc.) in aid of the club funds on Friday night, October 31. It is expected that the new clubrooms will be erected by Christmas.

The Catholic social, which was held on Friday night in the Miners' Union Hall, proved most enjoyable, though the hall was much too small for the large number that attended. The refreshments supplied by the ladies' committee were much appreciated. Three socials have now been held in aid of the schools, and have shown a credit balance of £16 each, thanks to the great work of the ladies.

Kaikoura

(From an occasional correspondent.)

The two pupils presented by the Sisters of the local convent for the theory examination, held in June under the auspices of Trinity College, were successful. In the advanced intermediate grade Marjorie Hopkins took honors with 88 points, and in the intermediate grade, Mary McSwigan secured honors with 86 marks.

NURSING SISTERS OF THE LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY

A BRANCH OF THE ORDER FOR CHRISTCHURCH

(From our own correspondent.)

As previously announced, the Nursing Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, or, as they are familiarly known, 'Blue Nuns,' will shortly establish a branch of their Order in Christchurch. Messrs. Luttrell Bros. are arranging plans for the erection of an up-to-date hospital for the Sisters on Bealey avenue, and it is hoped that a commencement of the work will be undertaken next month. In view of this important addition to the many fine institutions with which the diocese is so well equipped, the following particulars, kindly supplied by the Very Rev. Chancellor Price, Adm., will undoubtedly prove of interest:—

This Order of Nursing Sisters was founded by Mother Mary Potter, who died in Rome only seven months ago. She was a very remarkable woman, and her influence extended to the principal cities of the world, where her hospitals minister to the poor. She was a woman of indomitable courage, to whom difficulties were merely a stimulus to renewed effort. Endowed with a splendid mental equipment and a wonderful power of initiative and organisation, she was also a notable disciplinarian, but she possessed all the lovable qualities which made her a tender mother to her spiritual daughters and an ideal ministrant to the sick. It was these qualities that led her to undertake the humanitarian project of founding an institution for the benefit of the sick poor.

Small Beginnings.

Thirty-six years ago, when the project first took shape, she was in the prime of life and vigor. It was in England that she, with five earnest and skilful companions, received their first habits from Dr. Bagshawe, Bishop of Nottingham, under whose sanction the Order was founded, and it was from that small beginning that the great results now seen in the nursing world developed. A few years later—in 1882—Mother Mary and two companions left England for Rome. There they had an audience with Pope Leo XIII., who gave his blessing to the project and expressed his appreciation of Mother Mary's exertions and the rules of her community by inviting her to remain and carry on her admirable work in Rome. The hospital she opened on Caelian Hill became the mother-house of the Sisters and the refuge of Romans and visitors overtaken by sickness in Italy. The thoughts of many travellers of every nationality and rank nursed back to health by the Blue Nuns linger round the Caelian Hill. In 1886, with the approval of the Archbishop of Florence, a

house was founded in his city. Another has been established near Fiesole, in the same neighborhood. On the hillside which rises sharply behind the famous Villa Medici, built on a small platform overlooking the house and garden, stands this interesting Convent of San Girolamo, where the Blue Nuns receive convalescents. It is on the old road to Fiesole, the venerable Etruscan city, and from the terrace on the extreme left of the convent there is one of the most beautiful views of Florence.

Development in Australia.

As recently as 1885, six Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, now growing in numerical strength, with each member trained scientifically for the arduous work of nursing in all its branches, embarked for Australia, under the fatherly protection of the late Cardinal Moran, their splendid work having won his admiration and sympathy; and at Lewisham soon afterwards a hospital and convent suitable for their needs were erected. Ryde was the next place to which their energies were extended. There, by the intervention of the Cardinal and the munificence of the late Hon. Thomas Dalton, they were able to institute a hospital for the insane. A third Australian branch of the Order was opened in Adelaide in 1890.

That Mother Mary's foundation has been appreciated in Australia is evidenced by the strides these three hospitals have made. Lewisham alone (which will supply the staff for the Christchurch Home) amply justifies the hopes of the eminent woman in whom the work originated. It is recognised by the medical faculty as one of the finest and best equipped hospitals in the world. Thousands of patients have passed through Lewisham Hospital; most of them have been cured, and those who have not been restored to health have had their end softened by the kindly attention of the Sisters.

Further Afield.

Meantime, the influence of the Order stretched out embracing arms to other countries. With the permission of Bishop O'Dwyer, St. John's Hospital was opened in Limerick, Ireland, the generosity of the late Count Moore smoothing out financial difficulties. Two other hospitals have been established in County Cork. Chicago was the next centre to which attention was turned. The Archbishop of that city gladly consented to their foundation there, but insufficient funds were a difficulty hard to overcome. The sympathies of Mr. Mair, a wealthy gentleman of Chicago, however, were enlisted. He generously provided the means, and the hospital there rapidly became a flourishing and widely popular institution, the skill of the nursing staff, all of whom were members of the Order, their tenderness to the sick and the self-abnegation apparent in their lives, filling their hospitals with patients from all parts of the States and from all denominational bodies.

The little island of Malta received attention in 1894. The inhabitants there enthusiastically welcomed a suggestion that a hospital conducted by the Little Company of Mary should be erected in memory of the jubilee of Pope Leo XIII., and established a home of the Order in the island.

Mother Xavier Lynch, the present Superior in Lewisham, who will be Superior of the Order in Christchurch, was a member of the staff in the hospital at Malta. There, as well as in Sydney, many of their patients belong to the British Admiralty.

Further Extension.

In 1896 the Order turned its attention once more to England, and through the kindness and generosity of Miss Monteith, Gunnersbury House was established in Isleworth. Since then two other institutions have been founded in England, one through Lady Encombe and one in Commercial road, in the East End of London. The latter is not for the reception of patients, but to provide Sisters for visiting and nursing the sick poor, who in that quarter form a large proportion of the community. In 1895 the Sisters were established in South Africa. The latest house accepted to the credit of the Little Company of Mary is in Buenos

S. F. ABURN

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