

Strachan's Breweries were to contest for £10 a-side, and which has been on the *tapis* for some weeks past, was pulled on Tuesday afternoon. As on the last Burke's men were victorious.

A sad case of drowning occurred at Port Chalmers a few days ago, James Murphy, who fell off a lighter, drowning just as assistance came to hand. He caught hold of an oar reached to him but being too weak let it go, sank, and was drowned.

OUR Auckland correspondent telegraphs, on the 18th instant, as follows:—Business done—Bank New Zealand, £17 2s 6d; National Bank, £3 4s 6d; Alburnia (second issue), 5s 6d; Caledonian, £9 2s 6d; Sons of Freedom, £5; Union Beach, 23s to 25s; Caliban, 4s; Windsor Castle, 1s. Between one and two thousand Catholic children gathered yesterday in Mr Dignan's paddock, near the Cathedral, and marched through the city to the Domain, to celebrate the usual St. Patrick's Day Fête, under the management of the members of the Christian Doctrine Society. Three bands (Hobson, Otahuhu, and Temperance) attended. The weather was beautifully fine. A most enjoyable day was spent.

THE IRISH AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BENEFIT SOCIETY.

ST. JOSEPH'S BRANCH, No. 73.

THE members of the above Society took occasion, while celebrating the festival of Ireland's Patron Saint, of also holding the first anniversary of the formation of the Society in Dunedin. This took the shape of a supper, which was given with the twofold object on the evening of Tuesday last in the schoolroom attached to St. Joseph's Church. It is but twelve months since the Dunedin branch was instituted, and the number of members already on its roll is somewhat considerable; while, judging from the muster and interest displayed in its welfare by those attending its celebration, there is every prospect of its being largely increased. Bro. Carroll, the President, occupied the chair, on his right and left being the Vice-President and Secretary; while the vice-chair was filled by Mr Perrin, of St. Joseph's school. The attendance was far more numerous than had been expected, between 150 and 200 persons being present; but owing to the excellent arrangements, which were made by the indefatigable Secretary (Bro. Bunny), the temporary crowding was soon remedied. The supper room was tastefully decorated with ferns and evergreens, the walls of the building being artistically draped with flags of the different nations, which, beside relieving the otherwise bare appearance, had a most pleasing effect. Conspicuous at the back of the Chairman hung the banner of the Society—which we may say had been unfurled for the first time—to which every eye was attracted on entering the room. It is, as may have been expected, of green silk, having a fringe of orange—a most judicious blending, beside being a most pleasing contrast—with clusters of shamrocks at each corner. In the centre is an ancient Irish cross, with the inscription, "In hoc signo vincis," an angel being immediately above, with the appropriate motto, "Cede mille fealtie." To the right and left of the centre piece are the coats of arms of Australia and Ireland respectively, the latter being composed of the Hibernian harp, round tower, and Irish wolf-dog; while the representation at the foot of the banner is easily recognised as the arms of New Zealand, its towering mountains and rugged grandeur being most faithfully executed. The banner, though not a large one, is most tasteful in design, and reflects the greatest credit on Mr Power, of this city, by whom the work was executed. That a Society which has been such a short time in existence could unfurl on its first anniversary a banner such as graced the supper-room, speaks volumes for the past energy of its members, and augurs well for the future. That the present flourishing position of the Society, both financially and numerically, is due in a great measure to the unabated zeal of Bro. Bunny, all are prepared to admit; and as a mark of the high appreciation in which he is held by the members, he was presented by the Chairman with a suitably engraved watch and chain on their behalf. In fact, he may justly be termed the father of the movement in Otago, for not only was he the originator of the branch, but since its institution he has had to contend with difficulties of no ordinary nature, and has now the proud satisfaction of celebrating its first anniversary under such happy auspices. St. Joseph's, though itself comparatively so young, is now looked upon as the parent in Otago, as well as in other Provinces, the Society having extended itself to Naseby and other inland towns of the Province. The catering on the occasion was done by Mr Gollar, of Albany street, and considering that the number of tickets disposed of was much in excess of what had been expected, and that neither edibles nor liquors were by any means limited, he is deserving of commendation. Mr Sykes presided at the Piano, and Mr O'Connell contributed to the harmony of the evening, not only instrumentally, but also sang the "Picture on the Wall," in a manner that was most deservedly applauded. Mrs Frazer sang "The Jear Little Shamrock," in such style as enthusiastically to command an *encore*. While Bro. Connor's rendering of "Oh, Erin my Country," was given with great feeling and effect. The worthy Chairman (Bro. Carroll) also contributed his quota to the harmony and conviviality of the evening, and though somewhat nervous, gave the pretty ballad of "Good bye, Sweetheart; good bye," in such a manner as to leave no doubt of what he could do. In fact, one and all, officers and brethren seemed to vie with each other in their efforts to make the occasion what it has been, an unequalled success. Ample justice having been done the good things provided—those who were late having made up for lost time—the tables were cleared, and the Chairman called upon.

The SECRETARY, who read an apology from His Worship the Mayor, expressing regret that illness prevented his attendance, but expressing his hearty and sincere wishes for the welfare and prosperity of the Society. The Secretary also took occasion to apologise for his brother, who was also unavoidably absent.

The PRESIDENT said he would then give the first toast of the evening; and as he was not an advocate for long speeches on occasions like the present, he would call upon all present to drink "The Health of His Holiness."

Bro. J. CONNOR said the honor had devolved upon him to respond to the health of His Holiness, and, as a member of the Hibernian and Australian Catholic Benefit Society, which was not only a benefit but pre-eminently a religious society, he had great pleasure in doing so. The Holy Father was the head of the Church, of which the Society was an off-shoot, and he therefore considered the toast a most fitting one on an occasion like the present. At the present time His Holiness was surrounded with troubles, and threatened with dangers of such a nature, as not only to command the good wishes but also the succour and aid of all true Catholics. Although the calamities by which His Holiness was surrounded were almost unparalleled in the annals of the Church, yet the manner in which they were met had called forth the admiration and sympathy of even his enemies. Though the trials and afflictions to which he had been subjected were both manifold and grievous, and the iron rod which was depressing the Catholic Church was a bitter one, yet he would look forward with courage and confidence to the defeat of her enemies, fully believing that the barque of Peter would ride triumphantly through the storm. (Applause.)

The toast of "The Queen and Royal Family" was then given by the President, and being briefly responded to by the Vice-chairman, the toast was drunk with all the honors, the band playing and the audience joining in the "National Anthem."

The "Army and Navy" was next on the list, with which the name of Bro. Toal was coupled.

Bro TOAL in responding said that he considered himself a fitting person to speak to the toast, inasmuch as that he was an Irishman. Whatever had been the faults of Irishmen, no one could deny that they had a great deal to do with the successes on sea and land, which had made the name of England feared abroad and respected at home. Everyone was aware of the blood that was spilt, and there were but few families in Ireland who had not saddened hearts and empty fire-sides in the cause of England's greatness. Mothers had freely given up their sons; aye, and sweethearts their lovers to make the Army and Navy the bulwarks of British liberty (applause).

The PRESIDENT next proposed "His Honor the Superintendent, coupled with the name of Mr Reeves." He considered that His Honor was entitled to the special thanks of Irishmen, as it was mainly through his efforts that St. Patrick's Day had been gazetted a Government holiday.

Mr REEVES, in responding, said that he considered a high honor had been paid him in coupling his name with that of His Honor, and begged to express his extreme pleasure at being present that evening. Being the youngest member of the Provincial Council, he did not wish to speak politics, but with regard to His Honor he might say that there was no man in the province who had done more and had his interests more at heart than the present Superintendent; and it was through his untiring efforts that the city possessed an estate of greater value than any in the southern hemisphere. It would be deemed presumptuous on his part to say much with reference to the Provincial Council, yet he was sure that the coming session would be one of great importance; and he hoped to see the lands of the colony in the hands of permanent proprietors in the shape of small landlords. Before resuming his seat, he wished to express his gratification at the introduction that evening of a fashion, which he would be glad to see more generally indulged in. He alluded to having the fair sex to grace occasions of the present kind. Gallantry was one of the characteristics of the Irish race, and he did not see why the sterner sex should monopolise all the enjoyment, as had hitherto been the case. He thanked the Society and those present for the enthusiastic manner in which the toast had been received, and trusted that it would not be the last occasion of a like nature at which he would be present.

"The Mayor and Corporation, coupled with the name of Mr Barnes" was then proposed.

Mr BARNES was rather taken aback at being called on to speak, as he considered his friend and colleague Mr Reeves had handled the Provincial Council so well, the City Council might also have been left in his charge. But he supposed he (Mr Barnes) should have to do, as he had always done in a good cause, never shrink back in its defence. He perfectly endorsed all Councillor Reeves had said with reference to the presence of the ladies, and believed if they were present at meetings of another kind, they might have had less stormy ones than of late. However, in his opinion, those jars which some objected to had a healthy sign about them, for as sure as the City Council were quarreling among themselves, the citizens might rest satisfied, it was for some specific end, and their rights were not neglected. He would much prefer to see each individual member stand up for the ward he represented, for when everything went smooth and quietly they were like a parcel of old ladies at a tea-party—all scandal and no work. Mr Reeves was somewhat after his own style, and did not believe in letting matters go easy, and that was the principal reason why he had given that gentleman what assistance he could towards entering the Provincial Council (laughter).

The next toast, proposed by the Vice-president, was "The Day we Celebrate." Bro. PERRIN in speaking to the toast, referred to the God-like conduct of St. Patrick, who returning good for evil, returned to the land in which he had been held in bondage, and kindled a flame which never was, and never would be extinguished. The success which attended the introduction of Christianity into Ireland was like the radiance of a northern summer; but its duration was not that of a short summer; and the learning and piety which overshadowed the land caused it to be justly termed "The Island of Saints." All this and the glories of that faith which millions of Ireland's sons and daughters have carried with them into exile, has been the work of Ireland's Apostle, and calls upon all present to do honor to "The Day we celebrate."

The PRESIDENT, before proposing the next toast, said he had a most pleasing duty to perform—that of presenting to Bro. Bunny,—who, he was sorry to say, was about to leave the district—a watch and chain on behalf of the Society. He then made a formal presentation of the watch and chain, the former having the following inscription: "Presented to Bro. F. Bunny, by the members of the H.A.C.B. Sq."