

# Correspondence.

[We are not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents.]

## A NIGHT IN INVERCARGILL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE N.Z. TABLET.

SIR,—Only those who have been rusticated for years and removed from the humanizing and civilizing influence of Catholic society could appreciate my feelings of happiness and joy in attending a concert in the Catholic School of Invercargill a few nights back. What pleasant recollections of sinless youth and of Catholic associations formed in that dear old land of faith, where the blood of martyrs became the seed of Catholicity (*sanguis martyrum est semen Christianorum*), rose up in my mind! The weather, although not the most inviting, did not prevent the hall from being well filled with a highly respectable audience. The scenic decorations by Mr. Nash were admirably executed. The entertainment from beginning to the end, *ab ovo ad malum*, passed off most successfully,—every one of the performers being quite at home in their respective rôles, and discharging their parts in the most faultless manner. The programme presented a most judicious selection of sentimental and comic songs, the latter being given in character. As I have been publicly informed, great credit is due to Mr. M. Rooney for his untiring zeal and strenuous efforts to make the concert a success from every point. The pupils of the Convent led the way with a vocal chorus entitled the "Mermaid's Song," which was rendered with great precision and bespoke careful training. In the comic department, Mr. Wm. Cavanagh could not be surpassed in the song "The hat my father wore." The same can be truthfully said of Mr. Anthony in two songs, "There never was a coward where the Shamrock grows," and "Jack's come home to-day." Good things, and done in the very best style, are always expected from Mrs. M. Rooney, and the audience were not disappointed, but their highest expectations were fully realized by her exquisite rendering of two charming songs, "The Last Rose of Summer," and "Flow on, thou shining river." Mr. M. Rooney detracted nothing from the merits of his better half in two songs, one of which, "The Cottage by the Sea" was sung in capital style and deserves honorable mention. To say one word too complimentary of Mr. Dunn's concertina playing would be impossible.—It would be only painting the lily to attempt a description. Shakespeare's "King John" was well enacted by two of the Convent pupils, both of whom displayed great elocutionary merit and careful training. Songs from Mrs. Gavin and Mr. Wend were most creditably rendered and well received. Miss Thompson discharged her duties at the piano in most artistic style and rendered in valuable assistance to the singers. I cannot omit to state that this entertainment for variety and success has far surpassed anything of the kind previously held here, which should at least be highly gratifying to Mr. Rooney and the other projectors. Everyone was delighted, and the words, "*Bonum est nobis hic esse*"—"It is good for us to be here"—were legible in the faces of the audience. This should be both an encouragement and guarantee for the success of future entertainments, of which there cannot be too many, as they will serve the double purpose of providing a healthy entertainment for Catholic youth and keeping them in the right path, and at the same time aid Catholic education which should be the aim of every sincere well-wisher of Catholicity in this age of rank infidelity.

It is many years since I have been in Invercargill, and the changes which I experience are truly marvellous. Well, indeed, may it be said, "*Digitus Dei est hic*"—"The hand of God is here." The distinguished and saintly pastor who has charge of the mission, the good nuns and the Catholic flock are engaged in the work of God and his right hand sustains them. "*Nisi Dominus edificaverit domum vanum laboraverunt qui edificaverunt eam*."—I am, etc.,  
Invercargill, July 2.

J.M.

## INVERCARGILL CATHOLIC LITERARY SOCIETY.

At the ordinary weekly meeting of the above Society held on Tuesday evening, July 1, in the absence of the president the chair was occupied by the vice-president (Mr. B. Bradley). One candidate was balloted for and duly elected. The programme for the evening was a lecture on the "Chemistry of Air, Fire and Water," which was delivered by Mr. P. F. Daniel, with experiments. The attendance was encouraging. Mr. Daniel, in opening, explained that the Society, which had hitherto carried out its objects privately, being in a good financial position, had decided to supply a course of lectures open to the public during the winter months. It had fallen to him to deliver the first of the series, and, while disclaiming any special qualification as a lecturer, he would endeavour to put before the audience some information that would be useful to them in every-day life. Mr. Daniel was hampered in some of his experiments, always the most instructive and entertaining part of a lecture on chemistry, by defective apparatus and substitutes therefor. He struggled along good-humouredly, however, and as he had said gave his audience some useful hints, especially on the subject of pure *versus* foul air in their domiciles. He dwelt for a considerable length of time on carbonic acid gas and oxygen gas, explaining how the former is emitted from the human body—which adds considerably to the growth of trees; the latter being absorbed from the trees and inhaled by humanity. The lecture throughout was very instructive, amusing, and was highly appreciated by the audience, who were very liberal in their applause.

On the motion of Mr. Cusack, seconded by Mr. Crowley, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Daniel for the able manner in which he had delivered his lecture, and was carried by acclamation.

The subject to be discussed at the next meeting is "Should the Franchise be extended to Women?" The mover, Mr. D. Bradley, will open the debate for the affirmative, and Mr. T. Crowley for the negative. The meeting closed in the usual form.

## ENTERTAINMENT IN QUEENSTOWN.

(Lake Wakatipu Mail, July 4.)

A MUSICAL and dramatic entertainment was given at the Town Hall on Wednesday evening by the pupils attending the Dominican Convent Schools, Queenstown—the special occasion being the breaking-up of the schools for the midwinter holidays. The body of the hall was full from front to back, besides the gallery—and the entertainment, although a very long one, was attentively listened to throughout. The proceedings were admirably presided over by the Rev. Father Mackay, and the programme carried out without a hitch. The limited space at our disposal prevents our giving a detailed notice of the performances, and it would be invidious to single out any one where nearly all acquitted themselves so well. The marked progress which the pupils have made was very perceptible in the faithful renderings of the instrumental as well as concerted pieces presented, as also in the rather difficult parts which some enacted in the dramatic productions—facts which reflect the highest praise on the care and unwearied attention that must have been paid and exercised by those ladies who had the training of the youthful minds. Before concluding this notice, however, we must mention the name of one young lady—Miss Malaghan—who rendered valuable assistance by the able manner in which she fulfilled the rather difficult duty of accompanist in the vocal pieces.

Besides the entertainment proper, Sergt. J. McDonald, of Tapanui, late of the 78th Highlanders, and champion piper of New Zealand, very kindly volunteered his services, and delighted the audience by a series of selections on his favourite pipes. The Queenstown Band also kindly played some selections at the opening and during the brief interval, and on each occasion evinced great improvement in their execution. At the conclusion of the entertainment—which lasted about three and a half hours—the Rev. Father Mackay came forward, and, on behalf of those who had taken part in the entertainment, returned sincere thanks for the attendance; he also returned thanks for himself, and said their efforts had been so well appreciated by such a bumper house, that they would be tempted to again appear before the public.

Below is the programme:—

### CONVENT HIGH SCHOOL.

Vocal chorus, "Away to fields of green." Pupils; Pianoforte duet, "Norma," (two pianos simultaneously) Misses J. and L. Worthington, E. and K. Robertson; song and recitation, "The spider and the fly," Misses K. Robertson, L. Worthington, I. and B. Boulton; pianoforte duet (two pianos simultaneously), "The harp that once," Misses M'Ewen, L. Worthington and M. M'Bride; pianoforte trio, "Orpheus," Misses Firth, A. Boulton and L. Boulton; vocal chorus, "Forresters sound the cheerful horn," Pupils; vocal duet, "What are the wild waves saying," Misses A. and J. Worthington; pianoforte duet, "Il Corricolo," Misses L. and J. Worthington; song, "I saw from the beach," Misses A. and J. Worthington, A. and L. Boulton, C. Daniel, Firth and K. Robertson; pianoforte solo (two pianos simultaneously), "Whispers from Erin," Misses Malaghan and J. Worthington; vocal duet, "A B C," Misses A. and J. Worthington; chorus, "Hark! Apollo strikes the lyre," Pupils; pianoforte duo, "Marche aux Flambeaux" (two pianos), Misses Malaghan, A. and J. Worthington and M. M'Ewen; accompanist, Miss Malaghan.

### ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL.

Chorus, "Away to the Village Green." "The Violet Sellers; or kindness costs little and is worth much," a drama in three acts—for children. Cesara (a boy of about 10 years), C. Robertson; Nanna and Bice (his foster-sisters), J. M'Ewen and M. Betts; Nita (mother of Nanna and Bice), M. M'Ewen; Old Lady, A. Keay; Young Ladies, D. and M. M'Bride; Old Woman, M. Robertson; Princess Margherita, M. Fraser; Nurse, E. Casper; Little Princesses, K. M'Neal and M. Keay; Bagged Children, M. and N. M'Bride; Chorus Children, N. and K. Luckie, M. M'ullin, M. Robinson, A. and A. Curno, M. Welsh, K. M'Bride and M. Butler.—Songs, "Birdie's Ball," "Hundred Pipers" (in character).—"The Man with the Carpet Bag"; a farce. Pluckwell (a magistrate), A. St. Omer; Wrangle (a junior barrister), T. M'Ewen; Grab (an attorney), P. Malaghan; Grimes (the man with the carpet bag), J. Robertson; John (a waiter at a London inn), R. Williams; Mr. Stokes (landlord), J. Powell; Fred (waiter), C. Powell; Boots, D. Simmers; Coachman, A. Robertson; Barman, W. Williams.

A correspondent writing to the *St. James's Gazette* about the recent fatal fire in old Bailey, London, says: "I recommend that on retiring to rest you should place a pocket handkerchief under your pillow. Should you be aroused by an alarm of fire, steep the handkerchief in water and tie it round your head covering the mouth and nostrils. This will enable the wearer to withstand the suffocating influence of smoke and give him or her a valuable chance of escape. For years I was an amateur fireman, and so proved the efficacy of this plan."

A notable conversion recently took place in this city. Colonel R. H. Savage, of the United States army, and his wife, were baptized on Sunday last by Archbishop Riordan, in the private chapel of St. Mary's Cathedral. The Colonel is a highly-educated man and a vigorous thinker. He made a gallant soldier, but resigned early from the army on account of failing health. He is still a young man in the full maturity of his powers, and his conversion, as well as that of his accomplished wife, has made quite a stir in church circles. The Colonel's sponsor was the Rev. Father Nugent, and Mrs. General Bingham, wife of General Bingham, U.S.A., now at the Presidio, was sponsor for Mrs. Savage.—*San Franciscoan*.