

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' SCHOOLS, DUNEDIN.

THE boys' annual speech night of the Christian Brothers' school, St Joseph's, Dunedin, took place at the city Hall, on Tuesday night. There were present the Most Rev Dr Moran, the Very Rev Father Mackay, the Rev Fathers Lyach, Adm, and Murphy; his Worship the Mayor and Mrs Chapman; Messrs J. B. Callan, F. W. Petre, O. E. Haughton, J. P. Armstrong, Dr Stenhouse, and very many others. The hall, in fact, was filled as full as it could hold by a highly appreciative audience. The programme began by a hymn—"Our Lady of Perpetual Succour," sung by the Young Cecilians. This choir has made notable progress, and their singing is very much improved. Throughout the night they gave an admirable account of themselves—holding their own well, even in harmonies of considerable difficulty. Their performance, besides the opening hymn, embraced the part songs "Fairy Land," "The meeting of the waters," "The merry mill wheel," and a chorus, sung at the end of the night, "We must part, Farewell." Some of the former pupils of the school sustained the bass and tenor parts with excellent effect. The second item on the programme was the prologue, which was bravely spoken by Master John Callan, who with intelligent expression and emphasis, a good voice, and a clear enunciation, made himself audible throughout the assembly. Master Stephen Bernech came fourth with the recitation "O' Brazil," which was admirably given by him. "The Bells," a simultaneous recitation by the elocution class followed. The distinctness with which the words were heard gave the best proof of the perfection of this performance. A quartette of the Young Cecilians with Master William Clarke as solo singer, then sang "Home and Mother" and "Stars of the summer night," both of which were much admired, and very deservedly so: Master William Clarke afterwards took part in a duet "Oh ever thus" with Master John McLean, in which the boys sang sweetly and correctly. Master McLean also sang as a solo, "She is far from the land," gaining an encore, for which he was excused on the plea of a cold. One of the chief events of the evening was an elocutionary contest, divided into two parts, and in which Masters Patrick O'Neill, Alfred Quelch, Daniel Buckley, John Fraser, Gabriel East, Richard Cotter and Edward Wilkins competed. The Rev Brother Hughes explained that in the school they had found it impossible to judge between the boys. They had, therefore, told them each to choose his own piece, and to have the matter decided on this occasion by judges chosen from among the audience for the purpose. The recitations were given by the boys with great intelligence—all of them without exception showing striking proof of high elocutionary talent. Mr Callan, who, with Mr Haughton, had acted as judge in giving the decision arrived at was easily understood when he said that he and his colleague had found the task extremely difficult. They had, however, decided that the first prize should go to Master Wilkins, and the second to Master Quelch, basing their judgment on the natural manner in which these lads had spoken. Master Edward Petre led off the second part of the programme with the recitation "He never smiled again," of which he gave a very refined and feeling interpretation. The gymnastic class gave a couple of displays of their prowess, to music played on the piano by the Brother (Brother M'Gee), who acts as their instructor. These were club and wand exercises respectively, in which the boys showed a very fine development of strength and agility. Other quartettes, sung by picked members of the Young Cecilians were "Where art thou?" and "Laugh and grow fat." The perfection of the latter, however, worked its ruin, for its example proved so infectious that it set the audience roaring, and consequently it became almost inaudible. In the interval between the first and second parts of the programme, Brother Hughes, as he said, took an opportunity of blowing his own trumpet. The blast, however, was not very loud or alarming. He explained why the exhibition had been postponed to winter, owing first to the Redemptorist mission at St Joseph's last summer, and, secondly, because the time was more convenient than that on former occasions, when preparations had to be carried on while the examination of the school was proceeding. The Rev Brother exhorted parents to send their boys regularly and punctually to school, and to be particular in seeing that they prepared their home lessons, being very chary about listening to excuses in this respect. He also appealed to his hearers to discourage too great a devotion to football and cricket, which was now so general. These things, he said, were very good in moderation, but by no means worth the devotion of a boy's whole time and attention. The Rev Brother thanked those benefactors who in any way had given assistance to the school, namely, his Lordship Most Rev Dr Moran for all his kindness to the school, but especially for his providing a scholarship of the value of ten guineas for a deserving boy; the local clergy for the interest they ever took in the school, and their attention to the spiritual wants of the children; Rev Father Donnelly for a valuable prize and a donation of £2; his Worship the Mayor (Mr C. B. Chapman); Messrs Hugh Gourley, J. Liston, P. McArdle, J. J. Connor, for one guinea each; a rev. friend, Messrs P. Cotter, F. W. Petre, N. Smith, J. B. Callan, Sergeant O'Neill, and a former pupil, £1 each; Mr D. W.

Woods and Mrs Mills, 10s; Captain Bernech, the D.I.O., the Phoenix Confectionary Company and other ladies and gentlemen who gave prizes. Special thanks were due, he said, to Messrs P. McArdle and J. Liston for keeping the school in coal during last winter, as also to Mrs Liston, Criterion Hotel, for so generously supplying the young performers with tea, cake, and sandwiches. The first prize for elocution, a beautifully framed crucifix, value 30s, was the gift of Mr F. W. Petre, architect, the second prize the gift of Mr P. McArdle. At another interval Dr Stenhouse came on the platform. He said that, especially as a member of the Otago Board of Education, he took interest in educational matters. What he had seen to-night pleased him very much. Although the attendance was very large—an attendance, he believed, which hardly any other entertainment in Dunedin could attract—he could wish that it was still larger by the presence of the Minister for Education, the members of a few of our education boards, and of our national school teachers, because he was quite sure that if they were there that night they would learn something which would be of immense service to the children of New Zealand. He thought, like many others, that the education system of the day was faulty in being too dry, and too much given to mere cramming. He saw that the Christian Brothers in their teaching avoided this. They aimed at something better than barely cramming their boys with dry details, at developing their higher qualities. He had learned that Catholics were willing to have their schools examined by Government inspectors and to maintain the required standard of proficiency. He thought they had, therefore, a right to State aid for their schools. There was neither law nor justice in making them step-bairns. He had one fault to find with what he had heard this evening, he continued, he protested against what Brother Hughes had said about cricket and football. If these sports were checked he should find a great difference at the end of the year in his income. Dr Stenhouse concluded by a generous promise to give the school a silver medal—with a line inscribed on the rim in memory of his mother, who had been a daughter of the Emerald Isle. Throughout his speech the speaker was warmly applauded. In every respect the performance was an exceptionally good one. The recitations of the boys gained an *encore* in several instances, and the audience were most agreeably entertained. The Christian Brothers are to be congratulated on the success attained by their pupils, and the striking marks of progress shown by them. The parents of the boys are also to be congratulated. A finer, brighter, more talented, or better behaved lot of boys, or more highly qualified or more devoted teachers, it would be difficult to find. The piano used on the occasion had been kindly lent by the manager of the Dredgen Company. Mr Vallis, organist of St Joseph's Cathedral, acted as accompanist. The platform and its surroundings had been nicely decorated, and the motto, "Cead mille failthe" occupied a prominent place above it. The medal so kindly promised by Dr Stenhouse will be presented to the dux of the school at Xmas, to which occasion also the annual speech of the Most Rev Dr Moran has been postponed.

MANIFESTATIONS OF STIGMATA.

(From the *Irish World*.)

THE word stigmata, taken in a literal sense, means a mark tattooed or branded upon the person, but the term is specially applied to manifestations which appear upon the human body resembling the five wounds inflicted upon the body of our divine Saviour.

The idea that miraculous wounds on the hands, feet, and side, like those borne by our Lord, were a mark of divine favour, certainly existed previous to the time of St Francis of Assisi, whose stigmatization is the first of which we have authentic record, because at a council in Oxford in 1222 an imposter, who claimed to have stigmata, confessed his guilt and was punished.

In 1224 St Francis of Assisi was on Mount Alverno to keep his annual retreat of forty days in honour of St Michael. One morning, says St Bonaventure, about the 14th of September, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, St Francis saw a seraph flying towards him. After the vision had passed away the hands and feet of the saint were marked with nails, and there was a wound in his side. The wounds were seen by some of the friars and by Pope Alexander IV. during the lifetime of the saint, and after his death by about fifty friars and a multitude of others.

The Church keeps a feast of the Stigmata of St Francis, instituted by Pope Benedict XII.

Doctor Imbert-Gourbeyre in a work upon stigmatization, issued in 1873, enumerates 145 persons, of whom all but twenty were women, who are believed to have received the stigmata. Some are canonized, others beatified, while others are known simply as persons of great piety.

The following account of Mrs Mary Stuckenborg, of Louisville, has relation to the foregoing. It is taken from the *Louisville Courier-Journal* :—

After eleven months of careful watching, the remarkable manifestations of Mrs Mary Stuckenborg continue as when they first appeared. Those who have seen both declare that the case of Mrs