

Tenders have been received for the erection of a new church at Naseby.

His Lordship Bishop Verdon, assisted by the Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., and the Rev. Fathers O'Malley and D. O'Neill, administered the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday afternoon to 199 candidates—85 boys and 114 girls. At the conclusion of the ceremony his Lordship explained to the newly-confirmed the nature of the graces they had just received, and counselled them to avoid bad company, the occasions of sin, and not to read bad literature, after which he administered the pledge of the League of the Cross—total abstinence pledge—to all the children. His Lordship confirmed five more candidates on Tuesday morning.

**DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND**

(From our own correspondent.)

December 8.

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated with due solemnity. At the early Masses large numbers approached the Holy Table.

The Very Rev. Dean Lighthouse, Superior of the Maori Mission, has taken up his headquarters at Rotoua.

The members of St. Ibar's branch of the I.A.C.B. Society (Newton) are to approach the Holy Table at St. Benedict's next Sunday morning at 7.30 o'clock.

His Lordship the Bishop left on Wednesday for Ohaupo and surrounding district, where Rev. Father McGrath has been conducting a mission, assisted by the parish priest, Rev. Father Tormey.

Rev. Father Donovan, of Gundagai, diocese of Goulburn, arrived here last Sunday via the south. He thoroughly enjoyed his sojourn in New Zealand, where he came for the benefit of his health, which is much improved.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament took place at St. Patrick's last Sunday, commencing after last Mass and continuing until Vespers. Solemn Benediction, preceded by a procession of the Blessed Sacrament, took place afterwards.

Very Rev. Father Murray, C.S.S.R., arrives in Auckland to-day to conduct the retreat of the clergy and religious. This evening he commences the retreat to the Little Sisters of the Poor at their Home in Ponsonby.

The annual meeting of the Children of Mary of St. Patrick's parish was held in the convent school, Hobson street, on Monday evening, Rev. Father Cahill (chaplain) presiding. The election of officers resulted as follows—President, Miss Julia Rist, vice-president, Miss L. Thorne, treasurer, Miss N. Donovan; secretary, Miss B. Rist. The foregoing all filled the offices last year, being re-elected. Father Cahill said a better selection could not have been made.

General Election day passed over very quietly, the new Act being responsible for this. Voters were not haggard when nearing the polling booths. While opposing parties fought strenuously, the utmost good feeling prevailed. The Government locally was thought to be weakening in its hold of the people, but, though the Opposition fought well and consistently, matters turned out otherwise. The Stoke Orphanage inquiry was brought up and endangered the seat of one candidate.

**WANGANUI**

(From our own correspondent.)

December 9

The elections have come and gone and Wanganui has returned to Parliament Mr. J. T. Hogan, in place of Mr. A. D. Willis, who has represented the town for ten years. Mr. Hogan conducted his electoral campaign with conspicuous ability and untiring energy, and his return by a majority of over 900 votes must be recorded as a remarkable achievement for a young man of no previous political experience. The successful candidate is only 31 years of age and a Wanganui boy born and bred. He is the eldest son of the late David Hogan, who came to this district in the early days with his regiment, the 57th Foot. Mr. Hogan was a pupil at old St. Mary's School under Mr. T. Lloyd, B.A. Leaving school at fifteen years of age, he began life in the capacity of a baker's assistant. At the age of nineteen he entered the Railway Workshops at Eastown, and remained there until he announced his intention of contesting the Wanganui seat.

That the annual entertainment given by the pupils of the Marist Brothers' School has become a popular fixture needs no saying, as the Opera House last even-

ing, despite the very unfavorable weather, was almost filled, and the programme for 1905 was equal to, if not better than previous ones. The Brothers of the school must be complimented on the success of their efforts in training the boys, whose performances in dumb-bell and wand drill were excellent, and their acting in the drama 'The Cross of St. John's' was splendid. The programme opened with an overture by O'Hara's orchestra, which during the evening played several selections. The pupils gave two choruses, which received hearty applause, as also did their dumb-bell and wand drills, which were gone through with the regularity of clockwork. Recitations were given by Master J. Welsh (who received an encore), little Miss and Master Kiely, and Master H. Burke, while Masters G. Cronin and C. Jensen scored great successes in songs, and M. Grogan gave 'The jovial auctioneer.' The Irish jig, to the accompaniment of bagpipes, was gracefully danced by Masters O. Hobson, A. Conroy, E. Perrett, and W. Roche, and called for an encore, whilst a humorous quartette was prettily rendered by Masters H. Burke, O. Grogan, S. Smithies, and F. Jefferson. Three pretty tableaux were prettily staged. The drama 'The Cross of St. John's' was excellently staged, the dresses of the pupils being most exquisite and attractive, and the boys, of whom there were sixteen, took their parts splendidly. Last on the programme, but certainly not the least, was a farce entitled 'The Doctor's Holiday,' which caused great amusement. The accompaniments were played by Mrs. Lloyd.

**SOUTHBRIDGE**

St. Joseph's Church, Southbridge (says the 'Ellesmere Guardian,' December 2) was crowded in all parts on Sunday evening, when his Lordship Bishop Grimes occupied the pulpit. The occasion was the blessing and erecting of the Stations of the Cross. In his address his Lordship said the last time he addressed a gathering in that sacred edifice was when the building had been enlarged, due to the efforts of their devoted pastor (Rev. Father Goggan). He (the speaker) had then congratulated them on the addition to God's House, and now he would further congratulate them on the consummation of the impressive ceremony which was about to take place. His Lordship then briefly reviewed the Way of the Cross, and having done this, explained the ceremony which was about to take place.

The impressive ceremony being completed, his Lordship made an appeal to the congregation regarding funds for paying off the existing debt on the Christchurch Cathedral. £32,000 had already been liquidated, and another £20,000 remained. This seemed a large amount on the face of it, but they should remember that it was a debt of the whole diocese, and if each church contributed its quota, the liability would soon be worked off. His idea was that each parish should hold a concert or bazaar, the proceeds to be devoted towards this deserving object. He would like to see the debt wiped off before he died. The Cathedral would be a lasting monument to Catholicity long after he was dead. A meeting of ladies had been held at Leeston that morning, and about 100 had attended. These had decided to have a bazaar. He trusted that the Southbridge parishioners would also do something in that way. With Leeston and Southbridge holding this bazaar, the other parishes would very likely follow suit and a considerable nucleus would be formed towards paying off the existing debt.

Rev. Father Goggan also made an earnest appeal. At present his Lordship was paying £20 per week as interest. This was like throwing money away. He (the speaker) had never yet made a similar appeal to those Catholics in that district, but that it had been spontaneously responded to, and he could assure his Lordship that this occasion would be no exception to the rule. He reminded the parishioners of the worry this debt was to their Bishop, and of his recent trip to the West Coast, where he underwent severe hardships, on a quest similar to the present one.

His Lordship thanked the Rev. Father Goggan for his appeal, and he had no doubt in his mind that as a result of this, a substantial sum would be forthcoming.

**TIMARU**

(From our own correspondent.)

December 11.

His Lordship Bishop Grimes is expected here tomorrow (Tuesday), in connection with the annual break-up function of the Sacred Heart Convent.

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