

The Marist Brothers of the South Island, and those of Wellington, numbering eighteen in all, went into retreat on last Thursday, which is being conducted by the Very Rev. Father Le Menant des Chesnais, S.M., V.G. The Rev. Brother Stanislaus (Provincial) is also in attendance.

There was a meeting on Monday evening, January 15, of St. Patrick's branch (No. 82) H.A.C.B. Society, when the following officers were elected and installed by the retiring president, Bro. P. Pearce:—President, Bro. G. J. Sellars; vice-president, Bro. Jas. Nelson; treasurer, Bro. L. Haughey; secretary, Bro. F. J. Doolan; assistant secretary, Bro. E. J. Walls; warden, Bro. M. Dineen; guardian, Bro. McAloon; sick visitors, Bros. T. Pender and T. O'Connell; auditors, Bros. M. Garty and R. P. O'Shaughnessy; delegates to United Friendly Society's Dispensary, Bros. Dobbs and O'Brien; do. to Benevolent Association, Bros. Evans and McCormick; do. to Medical Benefit Interchange, Bro. J. R. Courtney.

On last Tuesday the Month's Mind of the late Very Rev. Dean Foley took place in the Cathedral. His Lordship the Bishop presided, and nearly all the clergy attending the annual retreat were present in the sanctuary. Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated by his Lordship the Bishop; the Very Rev. Father Le Menant des Chesnais, S.M., V.G., was assistant priest, the Very Rev. Deans Ginaty and Bowers deacons at the throne, the Rev. Father Aubry and Very Rev. Dean Regnault deacon and subdeacon respectively of the Mass, and the Rev. Father O'Connell master of ceremonies. The Rev. Fathers Mahony, Richards, and Cooney were cantors, the choir and clergy assisting in the Gregorian music of the Mass. The ceremony was most impressive, and was attended by a numerous congregation.

Greymouth

(From our own correspondent.)

January 26.

The committees of the united schools and Friendly Societies met on Wednesday night, and decided to hold the annual picnic at Lake Mahinapua on Wednesday, January 31.

The members of the St. Columba Club met last Tuesday evening, when the programme consisted of humorous readings and impromptu speeches. All the members present spoke on the various subjects.

The following shows the excellence of the education imparted in our local convent school. At the recent Civil Service examinations, eight pupils from Greymouth were successful, and of these seven were taught by the Sisters of Mercy. At the Matriculation and Solicitors' General Knowledge seven of the convent pupils succeeded in passing. The above is a record which any school in the Colony may well feel proud of, and the Sisters are to be congratulated on the success of their pupils.

Quite a gloom was cast over the town last Friday afternoon when it became known that Mr. Walter Cocks, one of the most popular young men in Greymouth, had been killed by an explosion of dynamite in Messrs. Forsyth and McKay's ironmongery premises. The deceased was an enthusiastic musician, being a prominent member of St. Patrick's choir, of the Orchestral Society, and also captain of the Grey Battalion Band. The funeral took place on Sunday afternoon, and was without exception the largest ever seen in the town. At St. Patrick's Church at both Masses on Sunday, Rev. Father Gondringer feelingly referred to the death of the late Mr. Cocks. Out of respect to their late fellow-choir member, the usual music was dispensed with at 10 o'clock Mass, and the 'Dead March' was impressively played by the organist (Miss Kempie) as the people left the church.

A very pretty and interesting wedding took place at the Catholic church, Ahaura, on January 15, when Miss Sarah Kennedy, daughter of Mr. John Kennedy, an old and respected resident of Ahaura, was united in the bonds of Matrimony to Mr. Michael Malone, school teacher of Nelson Creek, and son of Mr. Michael Malone, of No Town. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Father Leen. The bride, who was given away by her father, was attired in a lovely dress of silk crepe-de-chene, and also wore the usual wreath and veil. The bridesmaids were Misses Julia and C. Kennedy (sisters of the bride). After the ceremony the wedding party drove to the residence of the bride's parents, where the wedding breakfast was partaken of, and the customary toasts honored. The presents were numerous, costly, and useful. The happy couple left in the afternoon for Christchurch, where the honeymoon is to be spent.

The Mother of Athletes

Drained of the best of her population, as she is week after week, Ireland is still the mother of the greatest and brawniest of the world's athletes (says the Newry 'Frontier Sentinel'). The best of them, somehow, always hail from the southern half of the island. Ulster has never wanted for excellent men in the running path, or as jumpers or weight-throwers; but all the 'record-makers' whose fame has become world-wide have hailed from Munster and Leinster in our time. The advent of the Gaelic Athletic Association gave the southern giants and men of speed a grand opportunity of distinguishing themselves. It 'brought them out,' and for twenty years the wide world all over has not produced jumpers or weight-throwers fit to stand in the field with the 'champions' of Munster.

What a Glorious Band

those Gaels were:—John Purcell, the great brothers Davin, Shanahan and Looney, McCarthy, of Macroom; O'Reagan, of Mourne Abbey; the swift O'Sullivans of Cork and Kerry; fleet Tommy Conneff, from Kildare; poor Willie Real, Drs. Barry and Daly; Kiely, ever-green and yet invincible after nearly twenty years of invincibility as an 'all-round athlete; Mitchell, who was once unequalled at the heavy weights; Denis Horgan, the working farmer of Banteer, whose weight-throwing has been the wonder of the world for nearly a quarter of a century; the Mangans; John Flanagan, king of weight-throwers and the greatest wielder of the 'ponderous hammer' since the days of Cuculain; Tim O'Connor and Morty O'Brien; Frank Dineen, prince of sprinters and still to the fore as Gaelic handicapper; the brothers Phibbs, Sheehan and Dan O'Neill, long-distance runners who never seem to tire—these were but a few of the mighty band whom Finn himself might be proud to lead to the battle or the chase, or to the heroic contests on the field of the Tailtean.

Some are still to the fore in Ireland. Some, like the peerless Flanagan, who has never been beaten, have emigrated to the Western Republic. It may be remarked that while Irish-born men in the States are the greatest athletes who uphold the fame of America in almost every department, we cannot remember one of the first-class springing from amongst the Irish exiles of the second or third generation.

The Old Motherland

is still the true nursery of bone and muscle and endurance—and ever it will. The Gael may attain to physical and intellectual eminence away from the hills of Ireland; but the extent of his development abroad can never be more than a poor earnest of the height to which he might reach under favoring conditions at home. The conditions have ever been as unfavorable as they well could be; yet the pre-eminence of the old race's mind and muscle has asserted itself despite of all.

At Gaelic sports held in Westport not long ago, despite the most noble Browne, who is Marquis of Sligo, and who ordered the Gaels off his lands when he discovered they were Gaels—a youth named Con Leahy—one of a wonderful pair of brothers—jumped a bar placed 6ft 4in from the level ground. We have seen the first prize taken in Ulster by a competitor who succeeded in clearing 4ft 3in. Leahy comes from Charleville, on the borders of Cork and Limerick.

If any reader wishes to realise what the feat meant, he need only place a lath across posts 6ft 4in high and contemplate the possibility of flying over it. And it was a fair square jump from the grass, and not a leap from a carefully prepared 'take off.' We do not believe there is another man living in the world who would have followed Con Leahy, of Charleville, over the bar that day in the West, just as no man on earth can come within fathoms of Flanagan, of Kilmallock, with a 16lb hammer.

In Prosaic Ulster

we pay little heed to these things: in the South they are as proud of the Leahys, Kielys, Flanagans, and Sullivans as they are of the poets and orators and political leaders that spring up amongst the people. And it is right and good that this is so. Finn and Oscar and Cuculain and Ferdiah—giants of the olden days—live in the minds and hearts of the people still after all the centuries: they are far more real than the primal bard, Oisín, whose songs gave immortality to their deeds. These young men of the South whose feats challenge the wonder and admiration of the world are all of the native Gaelic race, and to the native Gaelic Association their success is directly due.

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