

Without doubt (writes an occasional correspondent) the most enjoyable and best attended social ever held in Cromwell took place on Saturday evening, in the Athenaeum Hall. Over 160 persons were present. A number of the competing volunteers for the Goldfields' Challenge Shield, which was fired for during the day, were present as guests of the local corps. Several songs were rendered during the evening, Mrs. Dr. Morris, who sang 'Kate Kearney' in splendid style, being vociferously applauded. An excellent supper was provided by the ladies. The sum of £13 was taken at the door.

As is usually the case, and as was generally expected, the concert in connection with the Irish national festival was a success from every point of view. His Majesty's Theatre was packed in every part with a sympathetic audience, and nearly all the items were encored, which showed that the efforts of the performers were thoroughly appreciated. The opening selection, 'The beauties of Ireland,' by the Kaiorai Band, was really a splendid item, and, including as it did some of the best and most popular national melodies, appealed in a special manner to the majority of those present. In the opening of the second part of the programme the band was again most successful in 'The smithy in the wood,' in which the descriptive work was given with fine effect. That pathetic ballad, 'Rory Darlin,' was sung in a most sympathetic and finished manner by Miss Violet Kraser, who had to respond to a well deserved recall. The only other lady soloist was Mrs. W. Connor, concerning whose singing the audience had formed high expectations, and in this they were not disappointed, as she sang both the programme and encore items, 'The last rose of summer,' 'The dear little shamrock,' etc., with great taste and feeling, and with a thorough appreciation of their requirements. A clever little maiden, Miss Patricia Higgins, gave an exhibition of step-dancing which was described on the programme as an 'Irish jig,' but most of its movements were not familiar to exponents of Irish dancing. A feature of the entertainment was the recitation, 'Napoleon's tomb,' by Mr. A. C. Hanlon, which was given in his best style, and naturally the audience wanted more, to which he responded with Bracken's 'Not understood.' The Christian Brothers' singing class, assisted by Messrs. Hussey and Carolin, gave two very acceptable harmonised items, 'The Coulin,' and 'Rich and rare.' Mr. T. J. Hussey sang in his usually finished style 'Come back to Erin,' 'Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,' and 'Eileen Alannah.' Mr. B. Stevens got a well merited recall for his sweetly sung item. The remaining soloist was Mr. P. Carolin, who was also recalled for his singing of 'Eun, my country.' The balance of the programme was made up of a quartet, 'The harp that once,' by Misses Drumm, Hebernan, and Messrs. Hussey and Carolin, a trio, 'The minstrel boy,' by Messrs. Hussey, Carolin, and Lemon, and humorous songs by Mr. Percy James. The last-mentioned vocalist is a clever and versatile humorist, but the greater part of his audience rightly took a strong exception to his final selection, a rough piece with the sort of coarse humor that might be at home upon the variety stage, but ought never to have been presented before such a gathering as faced the performer on last Friday night. Mr. James mistook his audience. The accompanists during the evening were Misses M. Drumm and C. Hughes. The success of the entertainment was in a great measure due to the committee entrusted with the arrangements, and especially to the energetic hon. secretary, Mr. W. Rodgers.

Oamaru

(From an occasional correspondent.)

March 19.

A very edifying sight was witnessed at St. Patrick's Basilica here last Sunday, when the members of the local Hibernian Society to the number of about 40 approached the Holy Table in a body in honor of the feast of their patron, St. Patrick.

A very successful concert was held in St. Joseph's Hall here on Saturday evening last (St. Patrick's night). The hall was comfortably filled by an enthusiastic audience, and the items by the different performers were highly appreciated. The following programme was gone through:—Songs, Misses J. Sweeney, K. Cagney, M. Rodgers, and Mrs. Lynch (Timaru); Messrs. Curran and Halpin; Irish dances by Misses H. Sweeney, Mulloy and Cagney; duet (violin and piano), Miss Cartwright and Mr. McBride; recitations, Mrs. Donovan and Messrs. Mulvihill and Moriarty. One of the most pleasing items of the evening was the sing-

ing of the school children in 'The shamrock.' Besides this item the children contributed others in the shape of club swinging and dumb-bell exercises, both of which were much admired.

Invercargill

(From an occasional correspondent.)

On last Sunday his Lordship Bishop Verdon administered the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Mary's Church, Invercargill, to a number of children of the town and suburbs. The allotted ground-floor and the galleries were closely filled by the parents and friends of the large number of candidates. The ceremony took place at 2.30 p.m. The Bishop confirmed 235 candidates—112 males and 123 females. His Lordship expressed himself as much pleased and gratified with the careful preparation and the knowledge of their religion shown by the young people. He exhorted them to keep up their religious knowledge and to go on in the good dispositions which now filled their minds. All this they might do by avoiding bad conversations, bad literature and dangerous company, and by cultivating with persistence a spirit of piety, through daily prayer, reading good books and papers, frequenting the sacraments, and by that self-denial which should characterise every good Christian. An act of self-denial which he particularly recommended to those confirmed that day, was the keeping of the pledge of the League of the Cross. The Bishop recited the words of the pledge and asked the children to take and keep it. He was much gratified with the unmistakable progress religion was making in the capital of Southland. Already the Catholic congregation was the largest in this flourishing town, and the vast number, intelligence, and truly Catholic demeanor of those confirmed that day, were evidence of what the future of religion in Invercargill was going to be. On Monday afternoon 29 children were confirmed at the Bluff.

Milton

The annual concert in Milton in honor of the patron saint of Ireland (says the 'Bruce Herald') never fails to draw a large audience, and that given in St. George's Hall on Friday evening proved no exception to the rule. The Milton Brass Band rendered selections outside the hall prior to the concert. The committee which had the arrangements in hand had spared neither pains nor expense in providing a first-rate programme, and the audience was enthusiastic and appreciative, encores being demanded with such frequency that the programme was extended to about twice its original length. The proceedings opened with the singing of 'National airs' by the school children, after which a pianoforte duet was skilfully executed by convent pupils (Misses E. Ward, E. Coleman, M. Walls, and N. Angus). Miss Carter (Dunedin) was next heard to advantage in the song, 'The Irish reel,' while as an encore number she sang 'Idle words.' Mr. J. B. McClymont's rendition of 'Jack's the boy' earned for him an encore. Miss Jean Dunsmuir (Dunedin) sang 'Angus McDonald,' earning a well deserved encore, in response to which she sweetly sang 'I may or I may not.' Miss Angus then played a pianoforte solo, 'Irish airs,' after which Miss Brady (Dunedin) sang 'Eileen Alannah,' and as an encore number 'The meeting of the waters.' A shamrock song and dance by the little tots met with due appreciation. Miss H. Sweeney, A.T.C.L. (Gore) delighted the audience with her singing of 'Rory darlin,' and was enthusiastically encored. The first part of the programme was brought to a close by Mr. A. Bryce, singing 'The low-backed car,' with an encore number.

After a brief interval the second portion of the programme was proceeded with, as follows. Chorus, school children; pianoforte solo, Misses E. Coleman and M. Walls, Irish jig, Mr. J. Powley (encored); song, 'Kil-larney,' Miss Dunsmuir (encored); song, 'Vanity,' Mr. J. B. McClymont (encored); chorus, 'Dear little shamrock,' six convent pupils; song, 'Avourneen,' Miss Sweeney (encored); recitation, Mr. J. Parlane (encored); song, 'The wearing of the green,' Miss Richmond (Dunedin); song, 'The march of the Cameron men,' Mr. A. Bryce. The duties of accompanist were discharged by Miss Scanlan, to whom a special word of praise is due.

During an interval the Very Rev. Father O'Neill said he was extremely pleased to see such a splendid house. He expressed his thanks to the performers, who had given their services willingly; to Messrs. Coombe Bros. for the use of the hall, and to the members of the Milton Brass Band for their services.

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