

The audience that assembled in His Majesty's Theatre on Friday evening at the entertainment in aid of the Christian Brothers' School, was treated to a first-class evening's amusement, and it was a pity, considering the object and the excellence of the programme, that the attendance was not much larger. The Christian Brothers have a world-wide reputation as successful teachers, and their pupils have always reflected credit on them. Our local school has at all times maintained a high standard, and its reputation was further enhanced on this occasion, when eight out of the fourteen items on the programme stood to the credit of the pupils—very much indeed to their credit. These included two class songs, 'Let Erin remember' and 'The Angelus,' both admirably rendered; a gymnastic display by junior pupils under the direction of Mr. J. Drumm; club swinging by the senior class, Mr. J. Bryant being leader; rifle and firing exercise by the school cadets, under Lieutenant W. Coughlan and Col-Sergeant Salmon; a farce which created great amusement, and in which the characters were sustained by Masters W. Coughlan, Thomas Laffey, and R. Burke; scenes from 'King Richard III.,' the part of Gloucester being taken by Master Thomas Laffey, Duke of Clarence by Master R. Burke, Brakenbury by Master C. Marlow, first and second murderers by Masters W. Coughlan and Timothy Laffey respectively; and humorous recitations by Master Cooney. The Shakespearean piece was played with more than ordinary—in fact marked—ability, great credit being due to Masters Laffey, Burke, and Coughlan for their conception of the principal characters. The humorous recitation by Master Cooney was a distinct feature of the entertainment. The balance of the programme consisted of an instrumental duet by Miss Gerlie Meenan (violin) and Miss Nellie Hall (piano), played in a very artistic manner; a vocal solo, 'Sunshine and rain,' by Mrs. Power; and songs by Messrs. T. J. Hussey, E. H. Eagar, and A. Murphy, and a vocal duet by Messrs. Hussey and Eagar. All the vocal items, which were admirably rendered, were deservedly encored. Misses M. Drumm and C. Hughes acted as accompanists during the evening, and the arrangements were in the capable hands of Mr. W. P. Rodgers as secretary.

Bishop Grimes in San Francisco

The Very Rev. Father Le Menant des Chesnais, V.G. (writes our Christchurch correspondent), has just received a letter from his Lordship Bishop Grimes, who at the time of writing was at San Francisco. After leaving Auckland (writes his Lordship), we had two Saturdays in one week. On the Sunday we celebrated our first Mass at sea in the social hail of the mail steamer, assisted by two fellow-passengers, the Rev. Father Gaynor, O.S.F. (who was at the opening of the Christchurch Cathedral), and Father Heffernan, a Passionist of Sydney. On the following Monday we touched at Pago Pago, where Father Bellwald, whom I ordained when last in Europe, met us with his mission boat, and got his principal natives to give us a reception, with a friendly kova. This good Father's life must be a very trying one, with his twelve stations to attend to, and the sight of a colleague barely once a month. The heat was extreme on leaving Pago Pago.

We spent a day at Honolulu, where, unknowingly, we took up a smallpox passenger, his state being discovered the next day. We all had to be vaccinated, and it was the general opinion, from the captain down, that we would be quarantined on arrival at San Francisco. When we reached there on April 28 eight health officers boarded us, and it was only on consulting the chief on land that we were told the next day we should be allowed to disembark. Three Fathers (Guibert, Thiery, and Nort) met us at the wharf and informed us that their church and presbytery were in ruins, but they had thoughtfully secured us a residence in one of the spared quarters of the city. The residence of one of the principal Catholics, a noble mansion, had been placed at the disposal of a community of Sisters ('Helpers of the Holy Souls in Purgatory'). Their own fine convent had suffered the fate of many another religious institute, which had been levelled to the ground by the earthquake and subsequent fire and dynamite.

Several times during my three days' stay in San Francisco, the Fathers accompanied me through the ruined city. The sight was one of the most awful ever witnessed, the memory was most vividly impressed upon my mind; and I am sure it can never be effaced therefrom. I do not think any similar catastrophe ever befel a city in modern or ancient times, save the destruction of Jerusalem of old and perhaps the great earthquake of Lisbon.

The earthquake of San Francisco on the morning of April 18 lasted 47 seconds, but there were repeated

shocks for several days after the great one. Every chimney in the city was thrown down and many of the modern buildings, and nearly all on the made up ground were tumbled to the ground. Those built on hard rock sites, like the one where I am staying, escaped with scarcely a crack. One of the worst effects of the earthquake was to break all the water pipes of the city, causing the fusing of the electric wires, the gas to explode in various parts and fires to become almost universal. For days it was impossible to control the fires. Public buildings, churches, schools, convents, hospitals, and residences were dynamited to arrest the progress of the flames; but all in vain. The work of destruction went on, and to-day seven and a half square miles, or 350 blocks of the once fair Golden City are but so many heaps of ruins. Thousands and thousands have been rendered homeless, and they are now dwelling in the parks, which the Government have, with praiseworthy speed, provided for them. Clothes and provisions are doled out to them under the supervision of the military, who pitilessly shot down looters and all who refused to help the distressed. It is a sad and sorrowful sight to go amongst the ruins, but sadder still to meet so many who have lost the savings of a lifetime extending over a period of half a century.

Sixteen Catholic churches have been destroyed or badly injured by the earthquake or fires, convents, colleges, seminaries, and many hospitals and charitable institutions laid low. Outside the city and in other parts of California, the greatest grief of the Archbishop is the destruction of the ecclesiastical seminary, which had only recently been completed, and which was one of the show sights of San Francisco and the pride of the Archbishop, who assured me that he had spent on it more than he could say. Some have asserted that he had spent well nigh a million dollars on it. He had, indeed, done much to build up his archdiocese, and make it one of the grandest in the United States, and in a few hours all was reduced to atoms. But in the midst of so much desolation it is a subject of wonder to find so much peace and resignation reigning throughout all classes, high and low, rich and poor, young and old.

Archbishop Riordan, who has suffered so much in mind and body and material cares, gave me the keynote of the otherwise startling situation of the stricken people when he said to me in a quivering though strong voice: "Tell the Holy Father, when you see him, that though we have lost all, we have not lost confidence, faith and courage. We are far from yielding to despair. We have a whole-souled, generous people to deal with, and, please God, they will willingly help us to repair this havoc, and in a year or two we will be right again." Noble, and prompted by a noble spirit of faith and trust in a noble-minded flock. Another great consolation is that not a priest nor religious, nor inmate of the many Catholic charitable institutions of the city was lost in the midst of the disaster.

No one will ever know how many lives were lost. The general estimate is that they did not reach more than six or seven hundred, though it is believed that some hundreds were buried alive beneath the crumbling ruins of many a low or poor boarding-house. I am informed that over six hundred persons lost their reason on the occasion of the great calamity. The churches and institutions that suffered, not from the earthquake, but from the subsequent fires, will have fared better than those demolished by the earthquake.

Our Fathers are daily expecting to receive the insurance, one third of the total value of the buildings, to enable them to start rebuilding. They were barely able to save the sacred vessels and a few vestments; their library, household and other church furniture were wholly destroyed.

It is resolved to build up another and more beautiful San Francisco on the ruins of the afflicted city. On May 30 I expect to start for our college at Salt Lake City, and, after a few days, proceed further east, leaving New York some time in June. The berths on several of the vessels going to Europe from New York have been secured months ago.

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The Carlton Cafe, Dowling street, Dunedin, has just been reopened by Mr. and Mrs. Todd, as a first-class dining and tea rooms. The building has been recently thoroughly renovated and refurbished....

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