

The Rev. Father Delaney who has been officiating in this district for the past two years or more (says the *Tuapaha Times*), left Lawrence for South Dunedin on Tuesday, where he is now stationed. Father Delaney's duties as a clergyman while in Lawrence were largely confined to the outside districts, and he had, in consequence, a good deal of travelling in all kinds of weather to do, and generally this work was of a very arduous nature. The suddenness of his departure prevented the Catholic people of Lawrence and of the outside districts from giving practical testimony of the esteem in which he was held and of showing their appreciation of his labors on their behalf. We understand, however, it is intended to take an early opportunity of doing so when the rev. gentleman will be invited to Lawrence to meet his friends and former parishioners.

The weekly meeting of the Dunedin Catholic Literary Society was held in St. Joseph's Hall on Monday evening, the 11th inst. A very large number of lady visitors responded to the Committee's invitation and Rev. Father Murphy presided. The debate on the question 'that the Irish soldiers are the best in the world' was opened in the affirmative by Mr. John Hally supported by Messrs. H. McCormack and Patrick Hally. The negative side was represented by Messrs. T. Hussey, T. Drumm, H. Miles, and Edgar Bush. Although the merits of English, French, German and Russian soldiers came in for much commendation yet the discussion was eventually narrowed to a choice between the Scotch and the Irish and an amendment to substitute 'Celtic' for 'Irish' in the motion was lost and the original motion carried by a small majority. The resignation of the Secretary was accepted and Mr. Harry McCormack appointed to the position. The Society's journal will be read at next meeting.

Our Queenstown correspondent writes:—A few lines regarding Catholic matters in this district might be of interest to your readers. Mr. Patrick McNamee has donated two acres of land as a site for a Catholic church at Garston, and £20 towards its erection. Other subscriptions received bring up the amount on hand to £100. Plans and specifications for the building are being prepared by Mr. Petre, architect, Dunedin, and it is expected operations will begin early in spring.—At Cardrona the hall which had hitherto been used for church purposes has been sold, and a new church is to be built similar in design to that about to be erected at Garston. Building operations will commence immediately after the winter.—At present workmen are engaged in erecting a new porch and finishing off the interior of the church at Arrowtown. When these improvements have been effected the church will present a very attractive appearance, and will be one of the most complete for its size of any in the diocese.

The Catholics of Port Chalmers held a social gathering in the parish schoolroom on Wednesday evening of last week for the purpose of bidding farewell to the Rev. Father McMullan, who had been their pastor for the past three years. There was a very good attendance. Mr. A. Smith, on behalf of the congregation, expressed their regret at the departure of Father McMullan, who had endeared himself to all. The Catholics of the Port, said Mr. Smith, could not allow their pastor to leave without some tangible expression of their esteem, and he had much pleasure in presenting a purse of sovereigns and an illuminated address. Father McMullan, in returning thanks for the address and gift, briefly reviewed the work that he had done during his three years' residence amongst them—a work which was due in a great measure to the loyal assistance rendered by the congregation. He assured them that Port Chalmers occupied a warm place in his heart, and that he would ever remember the kindness of the people. During the evening several songs were excellently rendered, and the gathering broke up with the singing of 'Auld lang syne.'

The Very Rev. Father O'Neill, of Milton, provided the members of the South Dunedin Literary Institute with an intellectual treat at the lecture given by him on 'The Defence of Limerick by Patrick Sarsfield.' The rev. lecturer traced the various events of those stirring times from the Boyne and Aughrim to the siege of Limerick in such a graphic and masterly manner as to show his hearers that Irish history was a subject that received careful study at his hands. Being a native of the City of the Violated Treaty, Father O'Neill was enabled to thoroughly enlighten his audience as to the various places of interest where Sarsfield and his brave comrades time after time repelled the well-disciplined Williamite army in their attacks on the city. The rev. lecturer also mentioned that Sarsfield was assisted by Brigadier Wauchope during the siege. General Wauchope, lately killed in the Transvaal War, was a descendant of the latter, and while stationed in Limerick a few years ago took a great interest in tracing out the old landmarks where the defenders most heroically held the invaders in check. Several amusing stories were told during the course of the lecture in Father O'Neill's well-known racy style. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded the lecturer on the motion of Mr. W. Carr. The Rev. Father Coffey presided.

INVERCARGILL.

(From our own correspondent).

The young ladies and young men of the congregation have organised a musical and dramatic club in connection with the Literary Society.

The conversazione held on the 30th ult. in aid of the young men's gymnasium was a great success, and the substantial net profits show how this club is appreciated by the public. The gymnasium is proving of immense use to the schoolboys and to the young men of the congregation.

A Catholic bazaar will be held at the Bluff about the end of June for the purpose of paying off the debt on the local church. Numerous, valuable, and handsome articles have been procured for the stalls, and everything indicates that this bazaar will be a great success.

The usual meeting of the Invercargill Catholic Literary Society was held on Tuesday evening, 5th inst. The president (Very Rev. Dean Burke) occupied the chair. A large number of members were present, and a considerable amount of useful work was done.

The Very Rev. Dean Burke, in speaking last Sunday of the proposed new church, gave details of the means whereby the necessary funds can be raised. He expressed the hope that the generosity of the people would guarantee the completion of a creditable portion of the building.

THE STOKE CATHOLIC ORPHANAGE.

AN OFFICIOUS VISIT AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

THE hubbub raised within the past few days over the punishment of two absconders from the Catholic Orphanage at Stoke (Nelson) has set the newspapers talking, sometimes very much at random, on the matter. On the appearance of statements on the subject in the Dunedin Press, we at once requested our Nelson correspondent to forward us a detailed and reliable statement of the true facts of the case. We are, therefore, enabled to publish the following, which disposes of, or seriously qualifies, many of the statements that have been made and the rumors that have been set afloat with regard to the management of that charitable institute which has cost some £12,000, and which has been of inestimable benefit to the Catholic orphan boys of New Zealand:—

THE ACCUSATION.

The situation is briefly as follows: Two boys (Maher and James) had absconded from the Orphanage. After some time they were discovered, arrested, and brought before Judge Robinson, who ordered them to be returned to the school, and to be there punished in accordance with the rules of the school. The usual resort of flogging is repugnant to the methods of the Marist Brothers who conduct the Orphanage, and their method in such cases is to keep the boys in rooms apart, but adjoining those occupied by the Brothers. Rumors circulated that the punishment inflicted on the young runaways was too severe. Three members of the local Charitable Aid Board—Messrs. G. M. Rout, C. J. Harley, and Piper—paid a surprise visit to the Orphanage. After their visit they stated to an Opposition paper, the *Nelson Evening Mail*, that they 'had reason for believing that boys were kept in solitary confinement' in cells; that they had to 'exercise considerable firmness before their demands for admission to the cells were complied with'; and that the absconders thus punished 'said they were fed on bread and water night and morning, with Irish stew for dinner.' Such is the substance of their statements to the *Nelson Evening Mail*.

BROTHER LÆTUS REPLIES.

A very different complexion is put upon the whole affair by the following reply of Brother Lætus (superintendent of the school), which appeared in the *Evening Mail* of June 2:—

'I beg to call your attention to the paragraph in yesterday's *Mail* re the "surprise visit" of the Charitable Aid Board to the Stoke Orphanage, as the report is somewhat misleading, unintentionally, I presume.

'In the first place, the visit can scarcely be called a "surprise visit," as visits to this institution are of daily occurrence. It is well known that we are always happy to receive visitors.

'The other statements in your report might have been given in more lightsome colors.

'The two boys in question, James Maher and Albert James, are two absconders who, about a week ago, were brought before the Police Court and ordered to be returned to St. Mary's Industrial School, there to be punished according to the rules of the institution. Now the rule (and no secret has ever been made of it) is that a boy absconding be kept in solitude a number of days equal to the number of days he has been absent from the institution; flogging being opposed to the Brothers' rules. Besides, it can scarcely be called solitary confinement, as one of the cells is separated from the Brother Superior's room by a single wooden partition, and the other from the Brothers' dormitory by a similar partition. Both cells are lightsome, clean, and airy, and in them the boys study the school lessons assigned them. When the weather permits it, the boy is taken by one of the staff to do outdoor work for a portion of each day. The members of the Charitable Aid Board were informed of this.

'I give an absolute denial to the assertion that a deal of firmness was necessary on the part of the visiting members of the Board to gain admission to the two boys in question. The only delay, I must admit, was during the few seconds it took me to unbutton my waterproof overcoat, on my return from Nelson, just as the visitors were about to leave the orphanage after their visit. As for the cells, the Brother in charge, not having the pleasure of knowing the visitors and doubting the legality of their visit, admitted that he had not the key, though he might, on inquiry, have discovered that the Brother in charge of the boys on the occasion of the visit had a key for each. The moment I was asked to show both boys and cells, I made no demur—beyond the brief delay above mentioned.

'The members of the Board do not find fault with the cells, but with the principle of solitary (?) confinement, and they advocated a good flogging instead. They were informed that this was opposed to our methods, and that a boy would not be deterred from absconding by any afflictive punishment; that if the members of the Board could suggest some sort of punishment that would be both effective and unobjectionable, we would be most happy to adopt it. No suggestion except that of flogging was offered by the members of the Board.