

stand erect upon their horses and use their spears and clubs. The kangaroo is able to jump clear over a horse.'

The Coming Festival.

Here we are in December, only three weeks away from Christmas. Christmas, I am able to inform you on good authority, 'comes but once a year.' At this expectant season children will tear themselves away from their lessons to dwell a little on the vision of almonds and raisins, plum-cake (they used to call it more appropriately, plumb-cake), gooseberry wine, goose, pudding, stomach-ache, and a variety of other blessings more or less in disguise which the thought of Christmas conjures up before their minds. And the 'grown-ups,' too, will have their day-dreams. Some will call to mind the Christmases of their childhood, when they gathered around the parental knee full of happiness and goose. Others, discarding the pleasures of memory, will give themselves over to devise the most miserable way of 'enjoying' themselves during the coming holidays. To those who cannot think of anything worse, I beg to suggest camping out. It is perfectly amazing to me, looking back upon my last escapade in this line, to recall the infinite variety of discomforts that may be associated with camping out, and in spite of them all, an otherwise sane man can succeed in convincing himself all the same that he is enjoying the thing. I spent a few days under canvas with a friend of mine last Easter. At home every Friday he gets 'the blues' because the wife of his bosom won't let him stuff his inards with roast beef. He would raise Cain of a morning if there happened to be a lump in the porridge, and I've seen him make his home resemble a Cheviot cob-house after the earthquake, simply because there were no frills on his pillow. Well, the week we were together in the tent it was really marvellous to witness the vim and energy of his attack upon tinned fish. Under a corrugated iron roof it would have set him crazy. Under a roof of canvas it was as nectar and ambrosia—food for the gods. And I couldn't for the life of me determine which was the more wonderful thing: to see him enjoying the porridge, which in color and consistency resembled Oamaru stone, or to hear him declare, with every appearance of sincerity, that he liked nothing better under his head at night than a rolled-up overcoat with a broken fence-post inside it. At home he would no more sleep on the ground floor than he would upon the damp floor of Lyttelton Harbour. Under canvas he was as happy as a sandboy because the tent had no cellar—but if it had, he would have gone to sleep in the coldest corner of it.

Camping Out.

I used to wonder, with the majority of men, how it was that a woman could keep herself occupied with only one home to look after. Yet it took us, two 'lords of creation,' all our time to keep our one small tent respectable. And we didn't make the beds or do any washing-up. We made the beds the first day, it is true, but the operation did not by any means improve their appearance, and we did not repeat it. We also washed up on the first day, but as it was less inconvenient to leave the wet sugar in the bottom of the cups than to have it smeared all over them, we therefore discontinued that also, as a useless and unprofitable labor. On two or three days we essayed the luxury of chops for breakfast, but they seemed to be different, somehow, from the chops we used to have at home. We put them over the fire while we went down to the beach for a swim. When we came back and extinguished them we found that they presented the color and appearance of a clinker, and had shrivelled to the size of a sick Stewart Island oyster. The bull-terrier turned up his lordly nose at them in quite a superior way, and walked off as if his feelings had been grievously outraged by our well-meant attempts to make use of him as a *corpus vile* for our experiments in the art and craft of housewifery. And the moral of it all is this: the best way to camp out is to sleep at home, and to eat your 'wittles' where you are accustomed to eat them.

Quips

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN.

The opening of the Dominican Convent, Oamaru, will take place on Sunday 15th inst., not on the 8th as reported by our Oamaru correspondent in last week's issue.

The Vincentian Fathers are still engaged in conducting missions in Oamaru and Invercargill with gratifying success. The various exercises, especially the evening devotion, are attended by crowded congregations, and the respective pastors and earnest missionaries must be highly pleased at the earnestness and piety of the Catholic people.

The annual spiritual retreat for ladies at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Timaru, will begin on the evening of January 6. Applications should be made immediately by those desiring to attend to the Rev. Mother.

PALMERSTON NORTH.

(From our own correspondent.)

December 1.

The postponed concert and social, in aid of the Altar Society's Funds, were held in the Theatre Royal on Wednesday, November 20, and were in every way a great success. A particularly attractive programme had been arranged for the concert and was highly appreciated by the large audience. An additional pleasure to the night's enjoyment was the presence of Sir J. G. Ward, Mr. Pirani, M.H.R., and the Rev. Father Ainsworth, of Wellington. The latter gentleman gave a short account of his recent trip to Europe particularly dwelling on his first impressions of Ireland, which greatly delighted the audience. The rev. gentleman also contributed a song, and had to respond to a well-merited encore. The following was the programme:—Piano overture, Mr. Percy Tombs; song, Mr. Arthur Bennett (encored); song, 'Goodbye,' Miss R. Oakley; song, 'Take a pair of sparkling eyes,' Mr. Rogers; song, 'The harp that once,' Mrs. W. Kendall; song, 'The Toilers,' Rev. Father Ainsworth (encored); song, 'Queen of the night,' Miss Sheen; song, 'The last muster,' Mr. W. Kendall; song, 'The four-leafed shamrock,' Mrs. W. Kendall. Included in the programme was a Highland fling danced in character by Misses Scanlon, Hodgins, Campion, Mullins, and Greaney (2), in their best style. A delightful supper was prepared. The Rev. Father Tymons and his indefatigable committee went to every pains to ensure a pleasant evening, and are to be congratulated on the success attending their efforts.

On Thursday, 21st ult., a pleasing wedding took place in St. Patrick's Church, Mr. John Prendergast, of Stratford, being joined in holy wedlock to Miss Mary O'Reilly, daughter of the late Mr. P. O'Reilly, of College street in this town. The Rev. Father Tymons performed the ceremony in the presence of a large number of relatives and well-wishers of the happy couple who are both well known here. I am also pleased to chronicle the marriage of Mr. George Barns, of New Plymouth, to Miss Mary Greaney, of Palmerston North, which took place in St. Patrick's Church on Wednesday last, 27th ult. The Rev. Father Tymons united the happy pair, who left later in the day for their home at New Plymouth.

Kerrytown.

The annual musical and dramatic entertainment by the pupils of St. Joseph's School, Kerrytown, was held in the schoolroom recently. The proceeds were devoted to the funds of the school, and the crowded attendance showed that residents in the neighbourhood appreciate the persistent and painstaking efforts of the Sisters who conduct the school, and are glad to do all they can to assist them. Among those present were Rev. Fathers Le Petit, of Timaru, and Father Kerley, of Temuka. The following was the programme—Operetta, 'The Discontented One,' in which the characters were taken by Misses L. O'Driscoll, K. Cogan, A. Cogan, H. Stack, M. K. Brosnan, N. Brosnan, M. Brosnan, L. Stack, L. Cogan, B. Lizer, K. Lynch, K. Breen, M. Scannell, N. Dore, M. Moore, M. Fitzgerald, L. Stack, N. and A. Leonard, A. Breen, and H. Brennan, Masters J. Day, D. Scannell, J. O'Connell, R. Naughton, and T. Brosnan; song, Miss J. Cogan; trio (piano), Misses O'Driscoll and Scannell; club exercises, senior boys, drama, 'Aunt Maxwell's Return,' in which the characters were sustained by Misses N. O'Driscoll, H. Stack, E. Dore, L. O'Driscoll, N. Dore, M. Scannell, E. and M. O'Connell; song, schoolboys; song, junior girls; song, Miss M. Brosnan, duet (piano), Misses E. and N. Dore, N. O'Driscoll (organ); song, senior girls; dance (sailor's hornpipe), Master Lynch, charade—characters, Masters Alastair Gosling, M. Fitzgerald, J. Fitzgerald, W. Lynch, Misses L. O'Driscoll, L. Stack, K. Cogan, Maggie O'Connell, E. O'Connell, H. Stack, N. O'Driscoll, Masters J. Brosnan, P. Sullivan, J. O'Connell, N. Fitzgerald, J. Day, D. J. Scannell, A. Gosling, J. Fitzgerald, W. Lynch, F. O'Connell, T. Sullivan, T. Brosnan, Timothy Brosnan, and T. Fitzgerald; song, 'Isle of beauty,' Miss M. Brosnan; duet (piano), Miss E. Dore and K. Fitzgerald; action song, girls; song, Master Frank O'Connell; negro dialogue, 'The Quack Doctor,' Masters A. Gosling, M. and J. Fitzgerald; song, Miss S. O'Driscoll; song, Miss J. Cogan; chorus, 'Zalantia,' pupils. Mr. M. O'Driscoll, junr., made a capable stage manager.

In addition to the above Miss M. Stevenson, of the Levels Plains, a great favorite, gave two songs, Miss Cogan, who gave 'Silver bells' and 'Shells of the ocean,' and Miss M. Brosnan who sang 'Jessie's dream,' were formerly pupils of the Sisters. Their songs were very pleasing ones, and the warmth of their welcome must have been very gratifying. The sailor's hornpipe by Master Lynch was of more than average excellence. Another item that was encored, and for which the audience would take no denial was 'The member for Donegal,' by Master Frank O'Connell. The tableau in the second act of the charade was a pretty one. On the whole the children acquitted themselves remarkably well. The items on the piano and organ were given in fine style, and gave much pleasure, reflecting no little credit on the Sisters, who had taught the children, and on the children themselves, who showed that they were profiting by their lessons. The club exercises by the boys were first rate, the movements to musical accompaniment being given with precision. The action songs by the younger pupils were also well worthy of commendation. The accompaniments were played by Misses Dore, O'Driscoll, Cogan, and Stevenson, and contributed much to the success of the entertainment.

The railway authorities notify that holiday excursion tickets will be issued from any station to any station on the Hurunui-Bluff Section from 18th inst. to 2nd prox., and will be available for return up to January 19....