

The Marist Brothers and the pupils of the Pitt street schools will go on Thursday next by special steamer to Matutapu Island for a picnic.

One of the Jesuit Fathers will conduct the annual retreat of the diocesan clergy in January next, after the arrival of his Lordship the Bishop.

A grand moonlight carnival in aid of the Mater Misericordiae Hospital funds will be given on the hospital grounds to-morrow evening. A splendid programme will be presented.

A specially convened meeting is called by circular for next Wednesday night at the Marist Brothers' School to make arrangements to take up a street collection on Christmas Eve in the principal thoroughfares in Auckland in aid of Rev. Mother Mary Aubert's Home.

A complimentary gathering will be tendered next Saturday night by the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Club to Messrs. Dwyer, Carroll, and Casey, in commemoration of their success in the debating competition lately carried out under the auspices of the Auckland Competition Society.

It is with regret I have to announce the death of Sister Mary Ambrose, of St. Mary's Convent of Mercy, Ponsonby. The deceased religious had been ill for the past eighteen months, and died at the Mater Misericordiae Hospital last Saturday afternoon. She was greatly esteemed by all, and her loss is keenly felt by the community and by her numerous friends. In consequence of the sad event the public distribution of prizes and annual entertainment by St. Mary's Convent pupils, announced for to-morrow evening, have been abandoned, and the prizes were distributed to the pupils privately this afternoon.—R.I.P.

A second meeting of the St. Patrick's Day celebration committee met yesterday afternoon in the Marist Brothers' School. Right Rev. Mgr. Gillan, V.G., and Rev. Fathers Patterson, Edge, Holbrook, and Brennan, and a good representation of the laity from the various parishes were present. The executive officers chosen were Messrs. P. J. Nerheny (president), J. J. O'Brien (treasurer), M. J. Sheahan (secretary). The committee appointed to choose a site for the celebration reported in favor of the Domain Cricket Ground, and the meeting adopted the suggestion. The committee chosen to report on the children's display on the day and the national entertainment in the evening submitted its report, and suggested that the whole arrangements be left in the hands of the Marist Brothers and the nuns. That something novel and interesting will be the result is certain. The question of the rendezvous and route of the procession was delegated to a committee to report at the next meeting.

A meeting of the Newman Society was held at the Sacred Heart Convent, Remuera, on Sunday last. The society during the course of the year holds meetings at each of the Catholic secondary schools to bring them and their activities before its members, and the work of the society before teachers and pupils, from whose number its future ranks will be recruited. About fifty members were present at the meeting, which was held in the open air in a corner of one of the lawns which grace the magnificent grounds that surround the new convent. Rev. Brother Fergus read a paper on 'The Church and Primary Education,' in which he clearly and ably traced the history of early educational institutions which were indissolubly connected with the growth and progress of the Catholic Church from the earliest times. He also gave an account of the leading Catholic educators, and drew attention to the many defective and even anti-Catholic text books in use at the training colleges—books founded on the works of educational writers who are specially engaged in France to turn into anti-clerical channels the minds of young teachers, mainly by misrepresentation and wilful suppression of the Catholic position in matters of education, pedagogy, and history. Brother Fergus was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for his excellent paper. A resolution was passed appreciative of the interest Miss F. V. J. Jacobsen, M.A., had taken in the work of the society since its formation, and wishing her a pleasant voyage and safe return after her year's holiday in the Old World. The society passed by acclamation a motion instructing the secretary to convey to the Rector of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, its congratulations and good wishes on the attainment of the college's silver jubilee. At the conclusion of the meeting Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given in the convent chapel by Rev. Father Ormond. The members adjourned to partake of afternoon tea, kindly provided by the Sisters. The president, in moving a vote of thanks to the Sisters for their kind reception of members, congratulated them on the acquisition of such a beautiful property, remarking that he felt sure when the large new building, now in course of erection, was completed, the Convent of the Sacred Heart would rank as the finest and best situated educational building in New Zealand. A very pleasant afternoon was brought to a close by the members inspecting the new building and enjoying a magnificent view of the harbor obtainable from the balcony, and by a tour of the extensive and beautiful grounds.

The annual spiritual retreat for ladies at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Timaru, begins on January 2, and will be preached by the Rev. Father Kimbell, S.M....

Akaroa

(From our Christchurch correspondent.)

In continuation of his episcopal visitation of the Canterbury portion of the diocese, his Lordship Bishop Grimes, arriving at Akaroa from Christchurch on the previous evening, and welcomed by a large gathering at the church, made his pastoral visitation of the parish of Akaroa at St. Patrick's Church on last Sunday week. The Bishop celebrated Mass at 8 a.m., at which there was a large number of communicants, including children, who on the occasion made their First Communion. These he addressed impressively on the great privilege they were enjoying on that day, and expressed the hope that in after life they would often look back on that, the happiest, day of their lives. At the 11 o'clock Mass, celebrated by the pastor, the Rev. Father Bonetto, the impressive ceremony of Episcopal Visitation was carried out, his Lordship explaining to the congregation the significance of every detail. After the Gospel, his Lordship the Bishop preached, taking as his text the words of the Precursor, "Art Thou He that is to come, or look we for another?" In an eloquent sermon he exhorted the people to prepare for a worthy celebration of the Christmas season. At 4 p.m. his Lordship, assisted by the Rev. Dr. Kennedy, who had just arrived from Little River, where he had celebrated Mass and preached at 10 a.m., administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to eleven children and one adult, after first examining them in Christian doctrine. After Confirmation there was renewal of Baptismal vows. His Lordship then gave the total abstinence pledge to the children to bind until the completion of their twenty-first year. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament followed, and brought to a termination the day's celebrations, which were attended by crowded congregations. The Bishop took leave of the congregation at Mass, which he celebrated at 8 o'clock on last Monday morning, and at 3 p.m. journeyed to Little River, accompanied by the Rev. Father Bonetto. He was met by the Catholics on arrival, and an address of welcome was read to him in the church by Mr. Quealy on behalf of the congregation, who expressed delight to have his Lordship among them. The ceremonies of the visitation followed; the Bishop preached, and gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. After the devotions a great number of the congregation availed themselves of the opportunity to prepare themselves to receive Holy Communion at the Bishop's Mass on Tuesday morning. The Rev. Dr. Kennedy remained in Akaroa until the end of the week, making a tour of the bays and visiting many friends and members of his old congregation. It is the aspiration of the Catholics of the diocese and well-wishers of the Bishop's monumental work (states the local *Mail*) that the debt on the Cathedral may be cleared, and the building solemnly consecrated on the occasion of his Lordship's episcopal silver jubilee some eighteen months hence. The Rev. Dr. Kennedy will therefore solicit contributions towards this much-desired object. The Rev. Dr. Kennedy returned to Christchurch on Saturday, his mission in aid of the Cathedral fund proving eminently satisfactory.

The following was the text of the address presented to his Lordship by the Catholics of Little River:—

'May it please your Lordship,—We, the Catholics of Little River, both European and Native, most heartily bid you welcome amongst us, and we rejoice that, notwithstanding your manifold cares and duties, your health is good, and we sincerely pray that you may be spared very many years to carry out the work of your high and holy office to the greater glory of God and the benefit of your people. We are, as you are aware, a small community, and not endowed with a great share of the riches of the world, and though we applaud your almost superhuman efforts to erect a Cathedral Church to the greater glory of God and worthy of the diocese you govern, yet it has been our misfortune that we have been of so little assistance to the great cause, which we know has cost you years of anxiety and worry, and it is the source of the greatest joy to us to learn that, with the blessing of God, your great works will soon be accomplished. We have much to thank you for, as we have always experienced your solicitude for our spiritual welfare, insignificant though we are, and we fervently pray that you may be long spared to rule over this diocese with that paternal care and wisdom which has been so remarkable since your advent.

'We beg to remain, your Lordship's faithful servants in Christ. Signed on behalf of the Catholics of Little River—Hannah M. Wakefield, Grace W. Ferguson, Mary Teaney, Maria Hawkins, J. Londrigan, jun., J. Londrigan, sen., John Wakefield, Felix McManus, James Hogan, Joseph Doherty, H. Londrigan, E. Keenan, H. Londrigan, P. Fahey, T. Quealy, C. Londrigan, W. Londrigan, L. Fahey, Mrs. P. Fahey, L. Londrigan, Mrs. J. Londrigan, Mrs. Clough, E. and B. Clough, J. Brady, B. Clough, Mrs. J. Archer, M. Hayes, Mrs. Keenan, jun., Mrs. Keenan.'

The annual gathering of the Caledonian Society of Otago will take place on the Society's grounds, Kensington, on January 2 and 3. Prizes to the amount of £365 will be given, of which £105 is allocated to running and walking; £52 10s to dancing; £54 to cycling; and £41 to wrestling. Entries for running, walking, and cycling close at the secretary's office, Rattray street, on Saturday next....