

After Vespers the District President (Bro. Kelly), who had just arrived from Auckland, was welcomed in the Hibernian Hall by the president (Bro. O'Rourke), in the presence of a large gathering of members.

On St. Patrick's Day there was Solemn High Mass at the Cathedral. Rev. Father W. O'Sullivan was celebrant, Father Andersen deacon, and Father Long sub-deacon. There was a large congregation, and, as at the earlier Masses, many approached the Holy Table. In the afternoon the Convent School pupils were taken by their teachers (the Sisters of the Missions) for an outing to the various seaside resorts, and Rev. Brother Phelan, with a large party of altar boys, made an excursion to Mt. Pleasant, and home via Lyttelton.

#### IRISH NATIONAL CONCERT.

The day set apart for celebrating the festival of Ireland's patron saint was marked in Christchurch by a national concert. What the occasion lacked in the way of multitudinous recognition was amply compensated for by the enthusiasm with which the programme presented in the Theatre Royal was received, by an audience that packed the building. Those responsible for the organisation had prepared a series of items truly national in character and presented by performers who knew their business. The Mayor, accompanied by Mrs. Thacker, and his Lordship Bishop Brodie arrived punctually at eight o'clock and, after the Tramways Brass Band had played a selection of Irish airs, the programme proper was entered upon. Every item was doubly encored. Miss Mary O'Connor is a soprano who sings simple songs in a simple way, and, after all, that is how such songs should be sung. Her voice is of pleasing quality and her intonation is perfect. Miss Kathleen Garven was well received, and her rich contralto was heard to advantage in the five numbers which comprised her contribution to the programme. Other well-known performers in the persons of Messrs. Farquhar Young, J. H. Coeks, and J. W. Trewern contributed to the general success of the evening. Variety was lent by a recitation by Miss Kathleen O'Connor, a piano solo by Miss Mina Ward, and an exhibition of physical drill by boys from Nazareth House. Mr. P. Jones was successful in several entertaining items. During the interval Mr. W. E. Simes conducted an auction of a basket of sham-rocks from Ireland, the proceeds of which (£137) will be devoted to the furnishing of the new Nazareth Home for boys at Middleton. The net proceeds of the concert, also, will be applied to the same object.

#### LEESTON.

The annual picnic of the Leeston Catholic day school took place on St. Patrick's Day at the Ellesmere Domain. A warm summer's day favored the gathering, and a most enjoyable time was spent (says the *Ellesmere Guardian*). The children were accompanied by a large number of parents and other friends from the different parts of the parish. The picnickers went out to the domain during the morning and the greater part of the day was spent in going through a lengthy programme of sports events, in which a great deal of interest was centred. Liberal prizes were given, and the events were all contested very keenly. A strong committee supervised the events, which were got off briskly, thanks largely to the work of Mr. W. O'Boyle, who acted as bell steward. The parish priest, the Rev. Father Creed, was also a prominent member of the sports committee and evinced a lively interest in the day's programme. The other officials were:—Starter: Mr. Martin Slattery; judges: Messrs. R. Twiss, M. Twiss and V. A. Bendall; handicappers: Rev. Father Creed and Messrs. J. McCartin and R. G. Power. Mr. Bendall made a first-rate secretary. Liberal provision in the matter of refreshments was made by the ladies, who extended great kindness to visitors. The Ellesmere Pipe Band attended the picnic and contributed in a very large measure to the enjoyment of the outing. Favorable comments upon the progress made by the band were heard on all sides, and the leader (Mr. F. Marshall) was complimented by many of those who attended the picnic. Amongst the visitors was the Rev. Father Leen, of Lincoln. An interesting event of the day was the tug of war, married v. single, 13 men aside. The single men won the first pull, the married men the second, and the single men the third. There was very little to choose between the teams, the final pull being a very hard battle.

The celebrations were continued at night, when a concert was held in the Leeston Town Hall. The interior of the hall had been tastefully and suitably decorated, and a full house greeted the concert party from Christchurch, the members of which received an excellent hearing. The programme was lengthy and varied, and a good number of encores were given. Mrs. Baxter opened with a pianoforte solo and Mr. Woodham followed with the

songs "River Shannon" and "Colleen Bawn." The same performer contributed two other songs later in the evening. Miss N. Baxter, a clever girl dancer, gave an Irish jig, sailor's hornpipe, and Highland fling in good style. Mrs. Ford sang "Come Back to Erin," "I Know a Lovely Garden," and "The Last Rose of Summer." Mr. McFarlane was very entertaining with his humorous items, and his clog dancing was decidedly good. Mrs. Baxter sang with good effect "Mickey," "Killarney," and "Old Erin, the Shamrock and You." Miss M. Baxter, a youthful performer, sang "Little Drop of Irish Blood" and Mr. S. Jameson gave humorous songs in character. Mr. Fisher's contributions to the programme included "Mother Machree" and "A Nation Once Again." Mr. Williams-Wood proved himself to be a ventriloquist above the average, and his turn created much amusement. Welcome additions to the programme were two recitations given by Mr. P. J. Eccleton. At the conclusion the performers were thanked by Mr. J. P. McEvedy, who also conveyed the thanks of the sports committee and concert committee to the Ellesmere Pipe Band for its services both during the day and again before the concert. The ladies dispensed supper at a social which followed, Mrs. Baxter, Mr. Mercer, and others providing the music. Altogether the St. Patrick's Day holiday passed very pleasantly.

#### HAMILTON.

That the holding of an Irish national concert appealed to many as a fitting conclusion to St. Patrick's Day was evidenced on March 17, when the Town Hall, Hamilton, was crowded, and many people had to be turned away owing to the lack of accommodation. A very enjoyable programme was presented, and the songs and dances of Erin aroused the audience to enthusiasm. The convent pupils in their drill-dance, "Hoops," went through a number of evolutions with grace and precision, and also sang the chorus "Oh, Erin, My Country," with much success. Miss Cora Melvin's sweet and cultured soprano was heard to the fullest advantage in "Killarney" and "The Last Rose of Summer," and she was warmly recalled. Mr. J. Lonergan quickly became a favorite with the audience, the effectiveness of his fine voice being fully displayed in "The Wearin' o' the Green," "Off to Philadelphia," and other numbers. Mrs. E. Kync sang "Come Back to Erin" and "Where the River Shannon Flows," and Miss L. Murphy, "A Cottage in God's Garden," both being encored. Mr. R. Blackie was heard in a humorous number, Mr. R. P. Donnelly in "An Irishman's Dream," Mr. J. de Silva in a recitation, and Mr. M. Brunette in two well-played clarinet selections. The national dances were a popular feature of the programme, Miss Gladys Denz giving an Irish jig, the Misses Peebles an Irish dance, Mr. M. Halerow a jig, and Mr. J. Budge a clog dance and the sailor's hornpipe. The latter proved himself an exceptionally talented performer. Messrs. J. H. Gittos and Wynyard played the pianoforte accompaniments very sympathetically, and Mr. A. Dickson acted as piper for the dances. An enjoyable concert closed with the singing of "God Save Ireland."

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