

CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

THE IRISH SELF-DETERMINATION FUND.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—In your latest issue there is an editorial on the above subject, which, to many, appears to have an unnecessarily pessimistic ring about it. It may be that your reminder was opportune, for we cannot forget that you saved Dunedin Irishmen from the disgrace of ignoring the historic Convention of the Irish Race at Melbourne in November last. But you undervalue the sterling and practical patriotism of New Zealand's Irish as a whole by your jeremiad last week.

No doubt it is intended to get a move on after Easter and start the fund, wherever it is not yet initiated. What more appropriate day could be selected for the purpose? Easter Monday will live long in the memories of the Irish race as the day of Ireland's resurrection. In America and Australia, as well as at Home, it is commemorated by memorial services for the eternal welfare of the men who died for Ireland. I know of at least one genuine patriot priest in the North Island who every day makes commemoration at the altar for the Easter martyrs.

New Zealand will not allow the well-earned reputation for generosity to Ireland, which she earned in the past, to be frittered away by any paltry considerations or misunderstandings. You, sir, were not here in the past, when New Zealand Irishmen were showing the mettle of which they were made. Had you, for example, been in Dunedin when the centenary of 'Ninety-Eight was being celebrated, you would have been thrilled by the enthusiasm put into that movement by the late Father John O'Donnell and the present revered Bishop of Auckland. The celebration necessitated opening up old sores as well as reviving glorious recollections. It was sad to reflect on Wexford's *scavin* bishop of that time, whose contribution to Ireland's struggle consisted of firing impotent suspensions after the patriotic Wexford priests, who were leading their down-trodden people to victory or death.

No one hesitated in the work of the centenary. The same spirit is still in New Zealand, and priests and people will combine to make a success—and an immense success—of the effort to help Ireland. Undoubtedly it will be the last call on the children of St. Patrick, for the end of the long struggle for justice and freedom is in sight. It would, no doubt, be very desirable to have the funds ready to hand to Archbishop Mannix when he calls at Auckland in a month's time on his way to America and Ireland. But hurry is not essential; it is of importance to make a complete success of it. If I were a betting man I would not mind giving you odds that New Zealand's contribution to Ireland's last appeal will easily top the score.—I am, etc.,

JAMES O'NEILL.

Waikiwi, March 28.

Akaroa

(From our travelling reporter.)

March 24.

A meeting was held in St. Patrick's Schoolroom on Sunday evening, March 14, with the object of forming a Catholic Social Club. Rev. Father Seward presided, and there was a good attendance of senior and junior intending members. Much enthusiasm was shown in the proceedings, and eventually a set of rules and regulations for the conduct of the projected club was framed. With Father Seward as chaplain, it was decided to appoint an executive committee of five. Miss Madge Kerridge was elected hon. secretary and Mrs. Currie treasurer, the other office-bearers to be elected at the next meeting.

It is intended to extend the privileges of the club to all Catholics visiting the district, nominating them as free members during their stay. The formation of such an institution is recognised as supplying a long-felt want, and good results are anticipated.

The members of the Catholic congregation, together with the children attending the convent day school, celebrated St. Patrick's Day by holding their annual picnic. They crossed the harbor in launches, and landed at French Farm, where the day was spent in Mr. Brocherie's grounds. Sports, games, and other amusements, with a bountiful supply of refreshments at suitable intervals, enabled the party, old and young, to put in a very pleasant time. Before leaving, hearty cheers were given for Mr. Brocherie for his hospitality.

The ladies of the parish are industriously preparing for a sale of work, the proceeds of which are intended to augment the fund for the renovation of the presbytery. An art union for the same purpose will be held at a later date.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Father Seward for his kind assistance during my stay in his parish.

Oamaru

(From our own correspondent.)

March 28.

A most successful concert was held in the Opera House on the eve of St. Patrick's Day. This concert is now recognised as one of the musical treats of the year here, and this time it was well up to its usual high standard. Father O'Connell, the sole organiser, has every reason to be highly pleased with this year's performance, which was a huge success from both the artistic and monetary points of view.

On the Sunday prior to St. Patrick's Day the members of the Hibernian Society approached the Holy Table in a body. Their numbers have been greatly augmented since the mission, and a fine body of men was present on this occasion.

The boys of St. Thomas's Academy had their usual outing to Teschemakers on March 17. This has become an annual treat with the boys, and is eagerly looked forward to by them. This year the day was a glorious one, and the boys had a most enjoyable time.

Gisborne

(From our own correspondent.)

March 24.

The Gisborne celebrations of St. Patrick's Day were most enjoyable. A school children's picnic was held at Mr. Con Neenan's beautiful place at Ormond, where the children had a glorious time. The members of the school committee, and a parochial committee, presided over by Rev. Father Brady, had control of the picnic arrangements.

At a meeting on Sunday to make arrangements for the school social on Easter Monday, Rev. Father Lano thanked those who had, under Father Brady's direction, made the St. Patrick's Day celebration so successful.

On St. Patrick's Night an enjoyable concert was given in H.M. Theatre. The Irish songs and dances, also the instrumental items, were greatly appreciated by a large audience.

Hokitika

(From our own correspondent.)

March 29.

On St. Patrick's eve, the annual Irish national concert was held in the Princess Theatre, which was packed by an enthusiastic audience who fully appreciated every item. The Very Rev. Dean Tubman thanked the audience for their attendance, and spoke on the beauties of Irish song and poetry. The promoters have every reason to be proud of the result of their efforts, and are to be congratulated on the general high standard of excellence.

On the evening of the 22nd the parishioners met in the club rooms to elect a committee for the coming bazaar, and also to decide upon the dates on which it should be held. Mr. Jeffries was voted to the chair, and the business of the evening was quickly dispatched. Mesdames McCarthy and Heenan were elected joint secretaries, and strong committees were also appointed to ensure the success of the bazaar. It was decided to hold the bazaar on the evenings of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of June.

An ordinary meeting of the local branch of the Hibernian Society was held in the club rooms on the 26th. Bro. W. Jones (president) presided over a good attendance. The Very Rev. Dean Tubman was also present. After the business of the meeting had been disposed of five new members were initiated into the society by the president. During the evening the secretary (Mr. J. P. Ward) welcomed the new members and also the Very Rev. Dean Tubman, the new patron and spiritual adviser of the branch. Bros. Daly and Brennan, of the Greymouth branch, gave some useful advice and strongly advocated that all the young men of the parish should join the society.

Word was received during the week by one of the parishioners that Father Clancy had arrived safely in Australia. We wish him a very pleasant sojourn in that land.