

would pray that the Colony would be blessed with holy, learned, and perfect priests. It is a rule, like priests like people. Learned, holy, and zealous priests will hand down to remote posterity that faith which leads to the salvation and the establishment and preservation of true Christian civilisation.

Vespers.

His Lordship Bishop Verdon presided at Vespers, and his Grace the Archbishop of Wellington gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The sermon was preached by the Very Rev. Dean Burke, on the Transfiguration of Our Lord as related in the Gospel of St. Matthew xvii., 1-9. In the Gospel account of the Transfiguration (said the Very Rev. preacher) Jesus was shown to be somebody superhuman by the glory wherewith He was clothed; somebody superior to the illustrious men of the Old Testament by the attendance of Moses and Elias upon Him. He was shown to be the Son of God by the voice from the cloud. What was the reason of that moment for this peculiar manifestation of His divine origin? After a long schooling and the witnessing of many miracles, the Apostles just declared their belief in Him as the Son of God, "Whom do men say that I am?" They replied: "Some John the Baptist; others Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter made the great declaration of faith, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." That declaration of faith was comparatively easy in the days of peace, in the days when the journeys of Jesus excited admiration and enthusiasm, and were a kind of triumphal marches, joined in by crowds. But dark and evil days were coming, the days of His contests with Pharisees and Scribes—contests which ended in His apparent defeat and death.

Coming to other times and other circumstances there was a period when all Christendom was one in faith; when all was peace, when religion ruled and triumphed. Then to elicit an act of faith in the Christian Revelation was the easiest of mental processes. But times have changed. The divisions and disruption of a great heresy have, in lands where it prevailed, thrown man into doubt and scepticism. It is necessary then in the days of such apostasy to understand our position and to keep the reasons for the faith that is in us well before us. By the brilliancy that shone round Him on the Transfiguration day the Apostles were confirmed in their faith against the day of trial. By the brilliancy of the Christian evidences, by the brilliancy with which Jesus shines on the world to-day, we too, when we think of it, are confirmed amid the trials of our time, in the faith of our fathers, in the Revelation and divine mission of our Lord Jesus Christ. What an extraordinary thing it is that our eyes behold: A carpenter of Nazareth, a rustic village of Palestine, declared nineteen centuries ago that He was the 'Light of the World,' and that to all who would follow Him He would be the light and the principle of their life. To be clearer, let us put the matter thus:—(1.) A carpenter of Nazareth, unlearned, untravelled, afterwards betrayed and crucified, declared, 'I am the Light of the World.' (2.) It is a fact of history that He gradually became the Light of the World. It is a fact of present observation, that He is now the great illuminator of the world. (3.) So wondrous a result must have a proportionate cause.

We know from certain genuine and truthful records that Jesus said: 'I am the Light of the World; he that followeth Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.' To the contemporaries of the speaker, this must have appeared as the wildest of speeches. What! a man who for the first 30 years of His life lived in a village, making yokes for oxen, One Who never studied letters, Who never saw any of the great doctors to proclaim himself 'the Light of the World!'

What then is the fact? Has the unexpected the absurd, taken place? Has the superhuman been realised? Has the village mechanic, the son of the carpenter; He who knew no letters, turned the greatest of teachers, the most effective of moralists? Is He even now 'the Light of the World?' Enter the towns and cities of the most progressive, the most cultured, the most highly civilised nations of the day. Look at the most elaborate buildings raised in them—those on which architects, sculptors and painters have spent most pains, those on which the populations have spent most money. What are they? Temples used to commemorate the memory, and carry on the teachings of the Carpenter of Nazareth. Listen to the men who speak from their pulpits; they are proclaiming the praise and inculcating the parables and teachings of

Jesus to a reverent multitude who look upon Him as the light of their life. There was an abundance of great men in the world about the times of Jesus Christ—great statesmen, great orators, great philosophers, great writers, great emperors and rulers. But their names are forgotten. The name of one is indeed mentioned often by the people—one of the most insignificant of those statesmen—Pontius Pilate. Why? Because of his accidental connection with Jesus Christ. The cross, the instrument of torture and of disgrace in those days long ago, now surmounts our finest buildings, is embroidered on the vestments of the priest, is worn as a symbol of religion by high and low. Why? Because Jesus of Nazareth was condemned to die on it by that same—Pontius Pilate. Look more closely into the power being exerted by Him on the thoughts, laws, customs—on the national life of the people. Look, and you will see that He is the Light of the civilised world—that His Kingdom leavens the whole mass. What are the chief ends towards which legislation is now directed? 'Listen to the party cries at election times you hear:—'The elevation of the masses,' 'The protection of workers,' 'The amelioration of the condition of the poor,' 'Provision for the aged and for orphans.' To whom is this spirit of kindness to the workers, to the poor, and the aged due? To non-Christian rulers? Their only care was to keep them in subjection and quiet. To moralists? No; they regarded the masses as beyond elevation and redemption, and so they were and are as far as any good they could do. Under the illumination of Christianity the slave and serf have become the free-born workers, the equal of their former masters. Assuredly the Carpenter of Galilee has become the light of life to them. So, too, have all the weaker classes been elevated. Women were the slaves of their fathers, who parted with or sold them to become the slaves of their husbands, who in turn might divorce and dismiss them on any frivolous pretext. If the husband died the widow became the slave of his relatives, mayhap of her own eldest son. Woman, so despised, Christianity has ennobled, making her the equal of man, offering her, in fact, special marks of respect and reverence. Surely to woman Jesus Christ is the Light of her life. Pre-Christian laws devoted children to exposure, sale, or strangling if it pleased the father. But the Carpenter of Nazareth has surrounded them with all the more pity and protection because of their helplessness. Christian principles as to self-denial, chastity, repression of the lower nature, subordination of the passions to law of a holy God have influenced human morals in a way undreamed of by heathen moralists.

The Very Rev. preacher here drew a vivid picture of the greatness of ancient Greece and Rome, and showed that self-indulgence, deception, fraud, and a contempt for human life lay hidden behind all this. But the lofty example and the principles of self-denial, of charity, of humility and obedience to law and reason changed, and does change, even debauched multitudes into pure, self-controlled men and women. Imitation of the example of the Light of the World has raised many to that great height of virtue which we canonize in the saints of God. The enemies of Christianity admit that the mightiest influence for the elevation of the human race that history presents is that of Jesus of Nazareth—mightiest, not merely on the subject of morals, but in the advancement of all the arts and industries that make the lives of men happy and refined. How could they deny this! There are the facts; they may be seen with the eyes and touched with the hands. What nations are the first in the world at present? What nations have produced the great thinkers and inventors of the past 2000 years. Those that walk in the Light of Christianity.

The Very Rev. Dean here quoted from the works of Renan, Richter, Stuart Mill, Ewald, and Lecky, in which these rationalists bear testimony to the marvellous influence of the teachings of Jesus Christ on the world. The last-named said: 'He has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the highest incentive to its practice. He has exerted so deep an influence on the world that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years has done more to soften and regenerate the world than all the dispositions of the philosophers and than all the exhortations of the moralists.'

When the Apostles saw the glory on Thabor and heard that voice, they exclaimed: 'It is good for us to be here.' When we see the brilliancy of the evidence for our faith in Jesus Christ, we may well exclaim, 'It is good for us to be here.' Yes, it is good for us to be of the society of His Church on