

St. Patrick's Cathedral,

AUCKLAND

OPENING OF THE NEW ADDITIONS

The impressive ceremonies in connection with the blessing of the new additions to St. Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday last added another chapter to the history of the progress of the Church in the Diocese of Auckland. The solemn event was one in which the Catholics of the whole of the Colony joined in offering their congratulations to the distinguished and popular prelate, who presides over the northern See, on the successful completion of the work, which was commenced less than eight months ago.

As it is now nearly seventy years since the Right Rev. J. B. F. Pompallier, Vicar-Apostolic of Western Oceania, made the province of Auckland his headquarters, and nearly sixty years since the Diocese of Auckland was established, a brief resume of the progress of the Church in the north of New Zealand will be of interest at the present time.

LOOKING BACKWARD

The first Mass celebrated in New Zealand was at Hokianga, on January 13, 1838, in the residence of Mr. Poynton, a timber merchant on the river. The celebrant was Bishop Pompallier, Vicar-Apostolic of Western Oceania. The first meeting of Catholics for the purpose of building a church in Auckland was held on July 29, 1841. At the meeting a sum of £65 10s was subscribed. At this time there were between 300 and 400 Catholics in Auckland, the total population being about 3000. Bishop Pompallier visited Auckland in July of that year, when he interviewed the Governor, who granted him an allotment of land as a mission station, and another section for a cemetery (Symonds street). Shortly after tenders were called for the erection of a church and a priest's residence in Wyndham street. By this time the building fund had reached the modest total of £100. A wooden building was erected towards the end of 1842, to be used as a temporary church and school, with residence for a priest. Father J. B. Petitjean arrived from the Bay of Islands in 1842, taking up his abode in Auckland, when he commenced collecting subscriptions towards the erection of a school. The 'priest's residence' gave the scantiest accommodation, being simply a portion screened off from the schoolroom, where was placed the altar, and Father Petitjean and the lay Brother slept on the floor behind the altar. The next important event in the history of the Church in Auckland is the visit of Bishop Pompallier in February, 1844, when he blessed the Symonds street Cemetery, and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation. About this time Father Forest, another French priest, joined Father Petitjean. It was about this time also that Governor Fitzroy gave a piece of land as a site for a convent school. In December of 1844, Bishop Pompallier, who was then visiting Sydney, presided at a meeting of the St. Patrick's Society for the Propagation of the Faith, when he gave an account of his mission to New Zealand, and a collection was taken up in aid of the fund for the erection of St. Patrick's Church, Auckland. In April, 1846, Bishop Pompallier closed a tour of his New Zealand mission by embarking at Akaroa for France in a French corvette, en route for Rome to give an account of his ten years' labors as Vicar-Apostolic of Western Oceania to his Holiness the Pope. Prior to his departure he was asked if he would remove his See to Auckland, provided a Cathedral was erected during his absence. The Bishop would not make any promise, however, further than that he would do all in his power to assist to carry out their object. Shortly afterwards a meeting was held, when it was determined to go on with the building of a stone church, and before leaving on his ad limina visit, Bishop Pompallier laid the foundation stone. Among those who took an active part in the work were Messrs. P. Dignan, A. O'Brien, Fairs, Ryan, Fagan, P. Grace, P. Covle, Conway, Harkins, McGarvie, Lorrigan, Sheehan, Hennessy, Walsh, McCarthy, and Dr. Lee. A start was made with the work in 1846, amid many difficulties, financial and otherwise. Some of the contributors gave labor, others carting, or timber. Father Forest, who supervised the erection of the church, was architect, foreman of works, and general

manager, and went with a lay Brother and assisted to quarry out the stone at Mount Eden. The church was finished in the following year. It was not dedicated till March 19, 1848, the feast of St. Joseph, when the ceremony was performed by Father (afterwards Bishop) Viard, the occasional sermon being preached by the Rev. Father O'Reilly, of Port Nicholson (now Wellington). When the stone church was finished the wooden one was turned round, and made to form part of the convent schools. These buildings were afterwards removed by the Church extension of 1885.

Bishop Pompallier returned in 1850, and with him came a number of Irish and French priests, and the first body of the Sisters of Mercy. Bishop Pompallier died in France in 1870. He was succeeded in the See of Auckland by Bishop Clode, who was consecrated on June 23, 1870. The new Bishop inaugurated a movement to build a Cathedral in keeping with the importance of the city, but in 1874 he left for Europe, and on the following year was appointed to the Archiepiscopal See of Cashel. He was succeeded in 1879 by the Right Rev. Walter Steins, S.J., Bishop of Bombay. During the following year Bishop Steins took immediate steps to build a new Cathedral. A most successful bazaar was held at the close of the year, thereby augmenting the fund already well advanced. Soon after Bishop Steins, owing to ill-health, had to resign. He died in Sydney in the following year. The next occupant of the See was the Right Rev. John Edmund Luck, O.S.B., who was consecrated in August, 1882, and under his administration St. Patrick's became too small for the congregation. A meeting of the parishioners was held in November, 1883, under the presidency of his Lordship, when it was determined to build an extension (with spire) of the Cathedral at a cost of £5500. The foundation of the new extension was laid on May 1, 1884, and on March 15 of the following year it was solemnly blessed and opened in the presence of his Grace Archbishop Redwood, and their Lordships Bishops Moran and Luck, and a large number of the clergy and laity. The sermon in the morning was preached by Bishop Moran, and in the evening by Archbishop (then Bishop) Redwood. The collections for the day amounted to over £500, £50 of which were contributed by Bishop Luck. The greater part of the money required for the work was collected through the untiring zeal of the late Mgr. Walter McDonald.

The Cathedral of 1885 was Gothic in design, constructed of brick, and cemented on the outside, and roofed with slate. The nave was 85ft by 40ft. Over the main entrance was a tower 140ft in height, surmounted by a gilt cross, 8ft high. At the date of opening six of the old settlers, who had taken a prominent part in the building of the old church, were still alive. Bishop Luck did great work in the diocese, but his health was not good. Towards the end of 1895 he applied to Rome for a Coadjutor, and in November of that year the choice of the clergy fell upon the Rev. Father Lenihan, at that time parish priest of Parnell. Before the choice could be confirmed by the Holy See, the Right Rev. Dr. Luck, Auckland's fourth Bishop, passed to his eternal reward on January 23, 1896. A new election, at which the Metropolitan presided, took place a few days afterwards, and resulted as before in the choice of Father Lenihan by the priests of the diocese, and his Grace Archbishop Redwood appointed him Administrator of the Diocese. At the Consistory held in June, 1896, his Holiness the Pope ratified the repeated choice of the clergy, and on September 13, the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, his Lordship Dr. Grimes, Bishop of Christchurch, arrived in Auckland, bearing the Pontifical Brief for the new prelate. In the evening, before a large congregation in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Bishop Grimes, in eloquent language, announced the object of his visit to the northern capital, and congratulated his new colleague in the ranks of the Episcopacy. The newly-appointed Bishop was the recipient of congratulations from far and wide, but there was one bearing an unique and historical interest. It came all the way from 'Castrol of the Kings'; it was from Archbishop Crke, the third Bishop of Auckland, who offered his congratulations to the fifth Bishop of that See.

HIS LORDSHIP BISHOP LENIHAN

The Right Rev. Dr. Lenihan, the present occupant of the See, and whose appointment in 1896 was received with such widespread satisfaction by others, as well as by his own flock, was born in London of Irish parents in 1858, so that he is now in his fiftieth year. At the age of three he lost his mother, and five years later his father died. At the age of fourteen he entered the Benedictine College, at Ramsgate, then under the charge of Lord Abbot Alcock and Father Edmund Luck. For nearly four years he studied at

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