

Girle Kilgour, Eily O'Hallahan, and Winnie O'Neill, beautifully dressed in white silk and wearing wreaths and veils, acted as train-bearers. The Very Rev. Dean Carew, representing his Lordship the Bishop, officiated at the ceremony, and was assisted by his nephew, Rev. Father Hyland, of Rangiora. The Very Rev. Dean preached an appropriate sermon on the 'Religious Life.' The choir sang the incidental music in a finished manner. The altar was decorated for the occasion by the Misses Sullivan, Burke, and M. and A. Heffernan, and their exquisite arrangement of flowers, pot plants, etc., reflected great credit on their artistic taste.

THE AMERICAN FLEET

On Wednesday evening Admiral Sperry and about 200 officers journeyed to Rotorua by special train as the guests of the Government. The Prime Minister, Lady Ward, and Miss Eileen Ward, the Hon. J. McGowan, and members of the Legislature, with their lady relatives and other guests, were also on the train, the total number on the trip being about 300.

On Thursday morning the visitors received a Maori welcome at the Sanatorium Grounds, when the Chief of the Arawas addressed them as follows:—Welcome, Admiral Sperry and officers of the American fleet. We bid you welcome to the land which our ancestors fished up out of the great ocean Kiwa. We welcome you with much pleasure to this island, because we have heard of your gracious words in Auckland. We welcome you as friends, because we recognise you are distinguished visitors, that you come of the same blood and have the same genealogical tree as the Anglo-Saxon people, and of King Edward. We welcome you always as men who go down into the sea in ships, because the Maoris and ancient Polynesians were seafaring people. They owned the Pacific at one time, and their territory extended from the southernmost limit of New Zealand to the Sandwich Islands. Our ancestors navigated the Pacific with canoes dug out with stone when your own people were hugging your own shores. We recognise that you are uplifting the mana and prestige which we once enjoyed, our ancestors sailing through the ocean long before the time of Columbus. Therefore we welcome you with a warm heart. The first chief welcome that we gave you was the incantation song in the Arawa canoe when reaching Aotearoa, because just as this incantation brought gladness to the hearts of the people who were in the canoe, so your visit brings light and gladness to our hearts this day. Had you been ordinary people we would have sent women to meet you but as you are warriors we sent warriors to meet you. To Sir Joseph Ward and the Government party we have little to say, because they are one with us. We just extend to them a formal greeting, but the main part is for Admiral Sperry and the American officers, because they come from over the sea.

Admiral Sperry, in his reply, which was translated by Dr. Buck, expressed great pleasure with the welcome, which, he said, was peculiarly acceptable as coming from a race of sailors who navigated the Pacific so many centuries before the Anglo-Saxon race settled in the colonies. It was doubly welcome, because they were members of the great Anglo-Saxon race—those two families extending in all directions over the Pacific. Both races, through their rulers, had effected improvement under their rule in the conditions of all native races with whom they had come in contact. He specially thanked them for welcoming him with ceremonies of ancient friendship, by which they preserved the noble traditions of their race.

At the conclusion of the Native welcome Sir J. G. Ward opened the new bath-house which has been erected in the Sanatorium Grounds. Having opened the door with a golden key, Sir J. G. Ward, accompanied by the official party, ascended the balcony, where he delivered an address.

The Prime Minister, in the course of his remarks, gave figures illustrative of the progress of Rotorua, as follows:—During the last five years the gross receipts to the Government from Rotorua have increased 153 per cent., the population has risen from 900 to 2000, and the number of houses from 96 to over 500, including business premises. The total receipts since 1902 were £43,282, and during that period the bath receipts have been £16,611. The building contains the last word of science in the electrical, massage, and other methods of treating disease. At present the town has electric lighting at a cheaper rate than Wellington. During the five years the Government has paid £21,253 into the town account. Rotorua is unique, inasmuch as it belongs to the people, and is managed by a State Department. I trust the building I am opening may prove a

success as a pleasure resort and a place where pain will be alleviated and sickness cured.

On Saturday morning, punctually at 8 o'clock, the American fleet left Auckland for Sydney. Prior to its departure Admiral Sperry sent the following message to the people of this Dominion, through his Excellency the Governor:—On the eve of the departure of the Atlantic fleet from Auckland, the Commander-in-Chief desires, on behalf of his Government and the officers and men, to express to you, and through you to the people of New Zealand, hearty thanks for the cordial reception and generous hospitality accorded the fleet by the Government and people of the Dominion. The friendship and esteem existing between the British Empire and the United States cannot fail to be strengthened by a visit of this nature, which will bring on both nations a realisation of their close relationship and common interests, and foster a sympathy and mutual understanding more binding than treaties.

A DESCENDANT OF AN IRISH PATRIOT.

(By Telegraph from our own correspondent.)

August 17.

At the banquet tendered by the Government to the admirals and officers of the American fleet last week, your correspondent discovered amongst the latter Ensign Robert Emmet, a great great grand-nephew of Robert Emmet, the great Irish patriot. He was pointed out to me by Father Gleeson (Catholic chaplain of the fleet), who, at the same time informed me of the young officer's relationship to Ireland's young martyr. Your correspondent immediately sought him out. Ensign Emmet was highly delighted at meeting one in this distant land who knew his family history very well. Soon there gathered around him Messrs. Poland, Hogan, and Jennings, members of Parliament. The last-named soon after brought the Prime Minister, who shook Mr. Emmet's hand warmly, saying, 'I welcome you as an American officer, but above that for the other great reason too.' Here was this young man, only 20 years of age, thousands of miles from his home in New York, on a foreign shore, yet he had gathered round him in that spacious banquet hall an enthusiastic body of friends, gathered as if by magic, and drawn towards him by the common tie of fidelity to Ireland. At first quite a number outside the group looked on in surprise, quite unaware of the emotions which moved each member of the group. Mr. Hogan recited the closing sentences of Robert Emmet's speech from the dock. The young officer was visibly affected, and said, 'Gentlemen, I cannot describe my feelings. I am delighted to meet you all.' Mr. Ngata, Maori member of Parliament, here joined the group, and asked to be introduced to Mr. Emmet, and showed a comprehensive knowledge of his famous ancestor.

On last Friday evening a representative gathering of Irish citizens assembled to honor Mr. Emmet. Mr. W. T. Jennings, M.P. for Egmont, presided, and next him sat the guest of the evening. When Ensign Emmet entered the room in uniform (he had attended a dinner on his ship, the Connecticut), the whole assembly of ladies and gentlemen rose, and enthusiastically welcomed him. The chairman introduced him to the meeting, and stated how delighted all were to receive one bearing the revered name of Robert Emmet—a name the bare mention of which sent a thrill of joy through every Irish heart. He felt that the honored name was well bestowed on the young gentleman in their midst that night. In the service of his country he would be true to the family traditions, and win renown and distinction in the future. He hoped when next the American fleet visited New Zealand Mr. Emmet would be in command. On behalf of the donors, the chairman then presented a costly sovereign case inscribed as follows:—To Robert Emmet, from Irish citizens of Auckland, 1908.

On rising to respond, Mr. Emmet, who was enthusiastically cheered, was deeply affected. He stood for some minutes unable to reply. He said: 'The warmth of this reception has unnerved me. I am not accustomed to speech-making; in fact, I never made a speech in my life. I cannot find words to express my gratitude to you. It has all come so unexpectedly upon me. I little dreamed I should find myself in the midst of such warm-hearted friends. Believe me, to my dying day, I shall recall this night in Auckland, and especially will this splendid gift remind me of you. These proceedings will delight the heart of my father, when he reads of them. I am proud of the historical name I bear; for generations we have always had in our family a Robert Emmet. I have never visited Ireland, but our fleet is expected to stay in France a fortnight, the whole of which time I hope to spend in the land of my ancestors. In the near future I hope to revisit you, and renew our friendship.

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