

SILVER JUBILEE OF THE VERY REV. FATHER KEOGH, S.M., B.A.

(From our Wellington correspondent.)

There has been evinced for a considerable time past, a desire on the part of the Catholic laity in general and the Old Boys of St. Patrick's College to show in a fitting manner their appreciation of the Very Rev. Father Keogh, under whose able direction, as Rector, the college has made such splendid progress, and whose princely generosity of heart and noble broadmindedness have won admiration in all quarters. An opportunity was awaited, and finally the occasion of his silver jubilee was availed of to pay to the reverend gentleman a well-deserved tribute of respect and esteem. When the time came, however, to make the necessary arrangements, it was found that the tribute was not to be confined to either the Old Boys or to the Catholic body. It was soon manifest that prominent citizens and representatives of other denominations outside the Rev. Father's Church were anxious to join with his co-religionists to do him honor. And so came about that gathering on Tuesday night last, which will long be remembered by those present, and which forms an interesting and delightful page in the history of the college.

As is only natural on such an occasion, the religious side of the event was deemed of first importance. On Tuesday morning at 9 o'clock, in St. Joseph's Church, High Mass was celebrated by the Very Rev. Father. At this Mass were present very many of the visiting clergy. The Rev. Father Quinn was deacon and Rev. Father McCarthy subdeacon. It was fitting that two ex-pupils of the college should assist their Rector in this Mass of thanksgiving. A forceful and impressive discourse on the dignity of the sacred office of the priesthood was preached by the Provincial of the Marist Order, Very Rev. Father Regnault.

On Monday evening the Rector was presented by the pupils of the college with a fine set of breviaries. The presentation was made by Mr. Mark Devoy.

On Tuesday the gymnasium of the college was transformed into a commodious dining-hall, tastefully decorated. The College Cadets, in their neat green uniforms, waited at table and performed their allotted duties in a most creditable manner. The Vice-Rector (Rev. Father Goggan), aided by the other college Fathers, supervised the arrangements. Just before the dinner the college hall presented a most animated scene. Here was his Grace and the Marist Provincial chatting with the Premier and Wellington's chief citizen, all present to do honor to a worthy, priest and equally worthy citizen. The clergy came from all parts of the Dominion to join in the tribute-giving. There were ex-pupils of the college, proud of their institution and its staff. Here they met to exchange reminiscences and to renew old friendships. Then there were the representatives of the Catholic laity, who regard the college and its successes with pardonable pride. And, to mark still more the cosmopolitan nature of the gathering—to show more clearly that the man to be honored was esteemed equally outside the Church—there was the presence of the Rev. Mr. Johnson, of the Anglican Church, from whom, on his northern tour, the Rector had received so much kindness. Representatives of the Presbyterian, Unitarian, and Jewish communities sent apologies for unavoidable absence. The Rev. J. Kennedy Elliott, Presbyterian minister, assured the committee of his practical sympathy with the testimonial and of his regard for Father Keogh. The Jewish Rabbi (Rev. Van Staveren) showed his appreciation by taking an active part in the canvass.

When, led by the Premier and his Grace, the guests moved towards the dining-hall, one felt that here indeed was as representative a gathering as one could wish. His Grace presided, being supported on his right by the Rector and on his left by the Premier. After justice had been done to the good things provided, his Worship the Mayor proposed the toast of 'The Very Rev. Father Keogh.' In doing so he congratulated the Catholic community on having as head of St. Patrick's so able and so genial a scholar and gentleman. Father Keogh was widely respected, not only as a teacher who had achieved such fine results, but as a good citizen. The toast was received with great enthusiasm. Sir Joseph Ward, who, owing to the urgency of Parliamentary duties had to leave early, paid a glowing tribute to Father Keogh, and wished him long life and happiness. His Grace then expressed to Father Keogh the congratulations of himself and clergy on so happy an occasion. He took some credit to himself in that he had chosen Father

Keogh for the important post he now occupied. Father Keogh, in rising to respond, was received with great applause. He felt very grateful for their kindness. He could not understand why they should so honor him. They had overlooked his faults and saw only his good qualities. Since coming to the Dominion he had received from every quarter the greatest kindness. He keenly appreciated the honor they had paid him that day. The next toast was that of 'Parliament,' proposed by Dr. Cahill, who said that, while the Parliament of to-day was perhaps not so learned and intellectual a body of men as those in the past, still it was practical and just as sincere in its desire to legislate for the welfare of New Zealand. The Hon. George Fowlds, Minister for Education, in responding, paid a warm tribute to the splendid work done by St. Patrick's College in the cause of education. He congratulated the Catholic body on possessing so successful, so able, and so zealous a teacher as the Rev. Father. On leaving to resume his duties at the House, the Hon. Minister was accorded a hearty send-off by the gathering. Response was also made by Hon. T. Thompson, who expressed his appreciation of the guest of the day, and hoped he would long be spared to preside at St. Patrick's. The toast of 'The Law' was proposed by Very Rev. Dean McKenna in a happy speech. Mr. H. D. Bell, K.C., in replying, said that Father Keogh was not satisfied with six days' work in the college. On Sundays he ventured in *partibus infidelium* to convert such men as Mr. Skerrett, K.C., and himself. They were both parishioners of Father Keogh's. He believed there was some hope for himself. The toast of 'The Law' was also acknowledged by Hon. Mr. Callan, who sympathised with Father Keogh in the magnitude of his task across the bay. The Very Rev. Father Clune, C.S.S.R., proposed the toast of 'Medicine.' He acknowledged in happy terms the debt they all owed to the medical profession, and pointed out that some of its brightest ornaments were present at the festive board that day. He took advantage of the occasion to express, on behalf of the Redemptorist Fathers, their congratulations to Father Keogh, and their warm appreciation of him. Father Keogh was one where a fine intellect had not congealed the warmth of the heart. His heart expanded in sympathy and love for his fellows. Mr. E. J. Fitzgibbon, in proposing the toast of the 'College Faculty,' referred to the splendid staff which the Rector had to assist him. He paid a special tribute of praise to Ven. Archdeacon Devoy and Rev. Father Goggan, both of whom had done much for St. Patrick's. The Ven. Archdeacon made a feeling reply. His connection with the college was a most pleasant one. Father Goggan acknowledged the toast for the present staff, amongst whom he said were many able young men who had achieved university honors. They were ably directed by their general, Father Keogh. The college had not much to help it financially. It had really only two benefactors in the way of scholarship grantors—Mr. Martin Kennedy and the late Mr. John O'Leary. It needed above all a chemical laboratory, and he hoped that something would be done soon in this direction. The toast of the 'Rector's Mother' was introduced by his Grace and proposed in a happy speech by Rev. Father Hills. The Rector made a fitting acknowledgment. The toast of the 'Boys' was proposed by Rev. Father Hickson, who referred to their prowess in the field of sport. Mr. Mark Devoy, replying for the boys, said they were only too happy to assist in doing honor to so good a Rector. His Worship the Mayor then proposed a vote of thanks to his Grace, which concluded a memorable gathering.

The gathering on Tuesday evening at the Town Hall was most impressive and enthusiastic. In spite of the inclement state of the weather, it is estimated that nearly 1700 people were present. Apologies for non-attendance came from many members of Parliament, who could not leave their duties at the House. Dr. Thomas Cahill presided, and speeches were made, as already reported, by his Worship the Mayor, Hon. George Fowlds, and Mr. E. J. Fitzgibbon. The purse of sovereigns will, it is stated, contain considerably over £320, as donations are still coming in. The press made special reference to Father Keogh's broadmindedness and to the consequent representative character of the gathering. A special tribute of praise is due to the committee for the success of the gathering. On the secretary, Mr. Fred W. Crombie, devolved a good deal of hard work, and to him the success must be very gratifying. To Mr. Martin Kennedy as treasurer, and to Dr. Cahill as chairman, much of the success of the gatherings and function must be ascribed. The musical programme on Tuesday evening was especially fine, and the musical committee, Messrs. Lamartine, Dwan, and J. E. Butler, are to be commended for their services in this connection.