

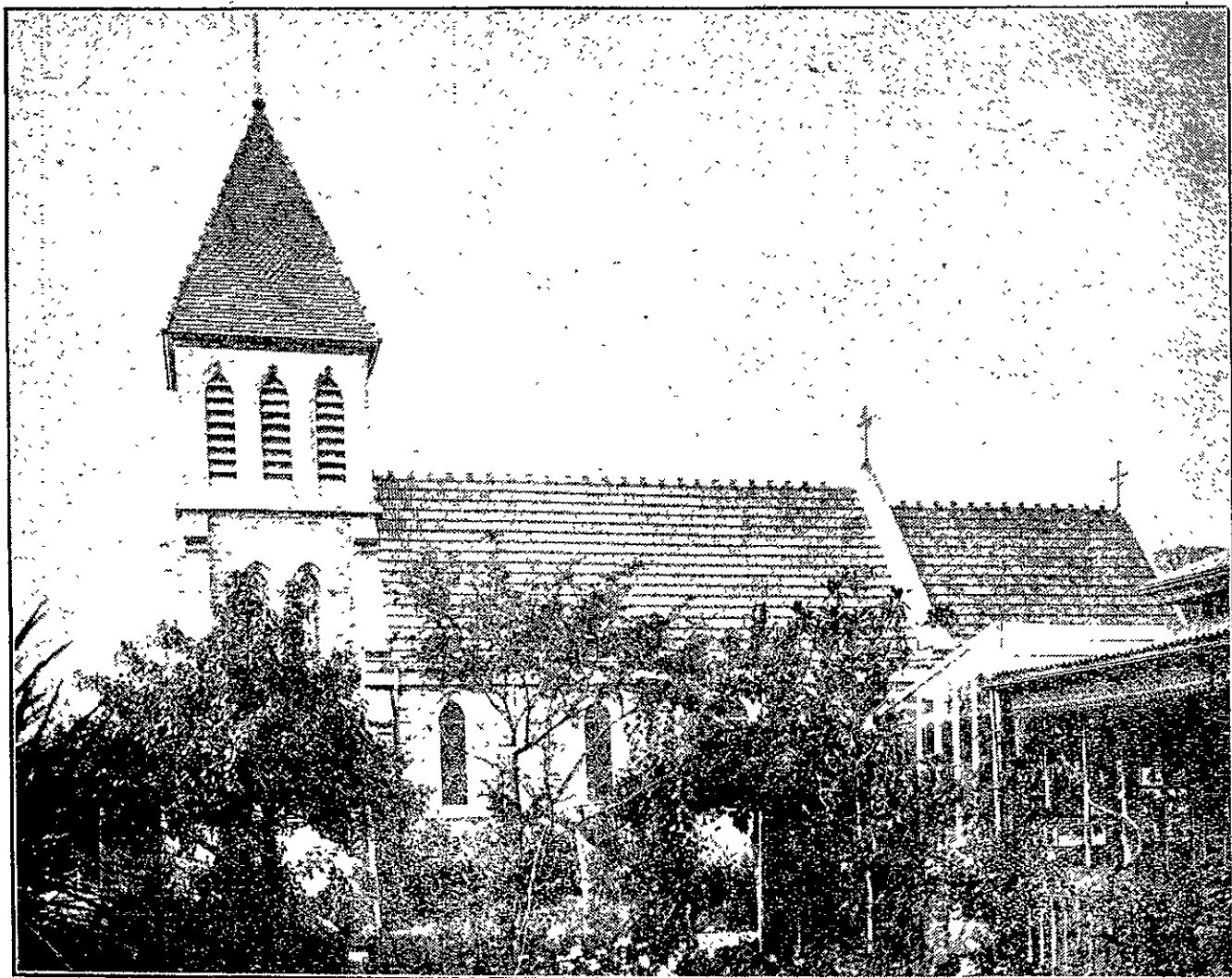
CHURCH OF THE IRISH MARTYRS CROMWELL

THE OPENING CEREMONIES

(From our Special Reporter.)

Ideal weather conditions favored the opening of the new Church of the Irish Martyrs at Cromwell on last Sunday. Rain is all too rare in this part of Central Otago, and the brown of the plains and the narrow valleys and the piled-up hills and mountains is broken at this season only by the picturesque effects of the rows or clumps of tall poplars and other European trees, now touched with the rich gold of autumn, and by the patches of rich and juicy green vegetation where irrigation makes the rich soil of the seeming desert blossom like the rose. The new Church of the Irish Martyrs stands beside the convent on a commanding site near the centre of the town, its red-tiled roof and tower rising picturesquely above the green

added much to the interest of the ceremonies. The ceremony of blessing and dedicating the new church took place at 11 o'clock on Sunday morning, and was performed by his Lordship Bishop Verdon, assisted by the Very Rev. Monsignor O'Leary (Lawrence), Rev. P. Murphy (River-ton), Rev. G. Hunt (the local pastor), Rev. J. Coffey, Adm. (Dunedin), and Rev. H. W. Cleary. The church was filled in every part. A feature of the ceremony was the large number of the Children of Mary and of the school children who took part in the procession around the church, bearing beautiful religious banners that added greatly to the picturesque impressiveness of the scene. At the close of the rite of dedication, solemn High Mass was celebrated. His Lordship the Bishop presided; the Very Rev. Mon-signor O'Leary was celebrant, Rev. P. Murphy, deacon, Rev. H. W. Cleary subdeacon, and Rev. J. Coffey master of ceremonies. The sermon was preached by the Right Rev. Dr. Verdon from the Gospel of the day. His Lordship dwelt upon the significance of the ceremonies in which they were engaged, the care of the Catholic Church for her children at every stage of their earthly life, and the manner in which the material edifice of our churches is



NEW CHURCH OF THE IRISH MARTYRS, CROMWELL.

foliage, with a decided suggestion of the quaint villages that one sees embowered in trees in the European Pyrenees. Our engraving and description of the new edifice, given hereunder, will convey some idea of its appearance; but one needs to see it inside and out and round about, and in its full setting, to realise what a gem it is, how solid, how well-proportioned, how finished in every respect, and the excellent taste shown in every detail, down to the arrangement and harmonising of the various tints of cathedral glass in the windows. It is far and away the handsomest building in Cromwell, and the many Catholics throughout New Zealand who contributed towards its erection will be pleased to know that their subscriptions have been expended upon a monument of religion that is worthy of its object and creditable in every way to its promoters.

The interest in the new church was manifested by the number of people from every part of the Cromwell parish—from Hawea to Bald Hill Flat—and from farther afield, who journeyed thither to take part in the opening ceremonies. Two sturdy boys travelled on foot twenty miles over the rugged hills to serve at the Mass of dedication, and formed part of a number of well-trained lads who

made to subserve their spiritual interests and be a focus of celestial blessings. He then dealt in detail with the various sacred rites that would be administered within those walls, and concluded a fine discourse by exhorting his hearers to remember and imitate the fidelity to their holy religion that was shown during long ages of bitter trial by their forefathers in the faith in Ireland. In making an appeal to the generosity of his hearers, his Lordship spoke in terms of high appreciation of the beauty and solidity of the new church, said that it would be an adornment to any part of the diocese or to any city in New Zealand, and paid a high tribute to the pastor and people of Cromwell. Father Hunt also thanked his Lordship and the visiting clergy, the choir, his people, all who had aided in the building of the new church, and concluded with a warm appreciation of services locally rendered by his flock, especially by Mr. Kerin.

At the evening devotions the preacher was the Rev. P. Murphy (River-ton). Preaching from the Gospel of the day, he dealt with the high, holy mission committed by the Saviour to the Apostles, the conversion of all nations. He described their labors in various lands—