

THE NEW CATHEDRAL, CHRISTCHURCH.

THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION STONE.

AN IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY.

(From our own correspondent.)

LAST Sunday will long be remembered as one of the most remarkable days in the history of Christchurch. On that day, amidst solemn ceremonies and every evidence of popular rejoicing, was laid the foundation stone of the great new Cathedral, which will endure to ages as the monument of the episcopacy of the first Catholic Bishop of Christchurch. In every respect the memorable function of last Sunday was a signal success—in the number of distinguished prelates and of the clergy who were gathered together from all parts of New Zealand and from Australia to take part in the solemnities of the occasion; in the high level of eloquence reached by those who 'divided the word'; in the great concourse of the laity who filled the Pro-Cathedral at Pontifical High Mass and Vespers, and who in the afternoon filled the broad space on which the new Temple is to rise in its symmetry and majesty; and in the sheer earnestness, and even enthusiasm, for the prosecution of the good work which found a highly practical and tangible expression in the munificent donations that were placed on the foundation stone.

The site of the new Cathedral, the avenue leading from Barbadoes street to the Bishop's House, and the passage thence to the Pro-Cathedral were elaborately decorated, and made a festive scene bright with many arches, flags, long festoons of evergreens and colored drapery, flowers, Chinese lanterns, mottoes of welcome, etc. The Pro-Cathedral was also handsomely decorated with banners, evergreens, and suitable hangings of various hues.

THE RECEPTION.

Great and general regret was expressed at the fact that his Eminence the Cardinal-Archbishop of Sydney was unable, owing to his duties at Bathurst and the pressure of urgent diocesan cares, to lay the foundation stone of the new Cathedral, as he had intended, on last Sunday. His place was, however, admirably filled by another learned and distinguished prelate, the Most Rev. Dr. Carr, Archbishop of Melbourne. His Grace, accompanied by Most Rev. Dr. Redwood (Archbishop of Wellington), Right Rev. Dr. Verdon (Bishop of Dunedin), Right Rev. Monsignor O'Reilly (representing the Right Rev. Dr. Lenihan, Bishop of Auckland), Monsignor O'Leary (Lawrence), and several other clergy, arrived from Wellington via the West Coast at 6.30 on Saturday evening. At 6.15 p.m. a long procession set out from the episcopal residence to meet the distinguished visitors. It was headed by the Stanmore Brass Band and followed by the various Catholic Societies and members of the Church, and the carriages of the Bishop of Christchurch and clergy. The procession proceeded to the railway station, and upon the arrival of the train the visitors were heartily welcomed by Bishop Grimes, and the procession then proceeded to the presbytery. The members of the Hibernian A.C.B. Society formed a guard of honor at the station, and after a short interval the procession was reformed and proceeded by way of Barbadoes street and Ferry road to the episcopal residence. After robing the distinguished ecclesiastics went along with the clergy in procession to the Pro-Cathedral, when the following address of welcome from the clergy and laity was read by Mr. E. O'Connor, and handed to Archbishop Carr:—

ADDRESS.

To His Grace the Most Rev. Thomas Joseph Carr, D.D., Archbishop of Melbourne.

We, the clergy and laity of the diocese of Christchurch, desire to express our sincere gratitude to your Grace, to Archbishop Redwood, and to the other illustrious prelates and clergy, by whose presence we are honored on this solemn occasion of laying the foundation stone of our new Cathedral, and we fully appreciate the great personal sacrifice and risks entailed in undertaking the wearisome journey to our shores. Through your Grace we beg to offer our own beloved Bishop most hearty congratulations on the inauguration of the work of erecting to the greater honor and glory of God such a noble pile as the new Cathedral will prove to be. The incessant labors of his Lordship during the past few years in raising funds for the object so dear to his heart have evoked our warmest admiration, and deserved our earnest thanks and constant prayers. The magnificent result of the efforts made by your Grace in completing the grand Cathedral of St. Patrick in your own archiepiscopal city, an enduring memorial of your zeal, activity and devotedness to our holy Faith; the multiplication of educational and charitable institutions, and introduction of numerous religious Orders into the archdiocese of Melbourne; your fearless advocacy of, and diligent watchfulness over Catholic interests are all objects of ardent rejoicing and our heartiest congratulations. In the world of letters the profound wisdom and deep learning, the facile and inexhaustible genius exhibited in your writings have, in the Australasian states, as well as in New Zealand, elicited universal commendation. We are cognizant also of how much the recent remarkably successful Catholic Congress held in Sydney is indebted to the efforts and assistance of your Grace and your diocesan. We earnestly hope and pray that you may succeed in all your projects, and be long spared to further extend the influence of our holy Faith and to assist in the vindication of truth and right in all things. We trust that the visit of your Grace and of the other distinguished prelates and ecclesiastics, who have accompanied you to our city, may be a pleasant one, and we hope at no

distant date to again welcome you all to Christchurch on the occasion of the completion of the great work now so auspiciously commenced.

Signed on behalf of the clergy and laity—

TH. LE MENANT DES CHESNAIS, S.M., V.G.
H. C. BOWERS,
M. T. MARNANE, S.M.
GEORGE CLIFFORD,
M. DONNELLY,
E. O'CONNOR.

The address was in album form, beautifully bound in leather. On the front page there was a perspective view of the new cathedral, the address proper commencing on the second page and continuing on the third. The first sheet of the address consisted of an ecclesiastical tablet, the several borders of which were in cream, blue, and pink respectively, with enrichments of gold ornamentation. The centre portion of the tablet had a semi-circular head, the corners being enriched with symbolic designs. The heading of the address was worked on a pale-blue ground in old English letters with medieval capitals, the texts being in old English lettering with gold capitals, all being artistically executed. On the last sheet was a well-drawn representation of the Archbishop's crest. The address was prepared by Mr. A. H. Hart, of Christchurch, and the binding was done by the Press Company.

His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne, in reply, said that he did not know what he had done that he should have been the recipient of so much honor, which he thought should have been given to the illustrious metropolitan of the province—the Archbishop of Wellington. He felt deep regret that his Eminence the Cardinal had not been able to carry out the wish of his heart to be with them that evening, and also on the occasion of the solemn blessing and laying of the foundation stone of the new Cathedral on the following day. He desired to congratulate his Lordship Bishop Grimes and the clergy and people of the diocese on entering upon their great and noble work. He himself had had some experience of the amount of work and labor involved in the building of a Cathedral, and judging from this he had no doubt that the beautiful Cathedral of Christchurch would rise completed very quickly, to the glory of God and the beautifying of the city. It would be a memorial not only to the piety and self-sacrifice of the Catholics of Christchurch, but also a glory to all the people. When the work of building St. Patrick's, Melbourne, was begun in 1867 the population of Melbourne was not equal to that of Christchurch at present. It might be an ambitious project to build such a magnificent Cathedral here, but he felt sure that the work they intended to commence to-morrow would progress successfully to its completion, and that it would be built in the same spirit which had animated the people of Melbourne in building St. Patrick's. He had seen the plans of the proposed Cathedral here, and they were worthy of the Catholic faith and the piety of any people in the world. He congratulated once more his Lordship Bishop Grimes, the clergy, and the people on the work which they had set their hands to. The address referred to the inconvenience that he had been put to in coming to New Zealand. He might say that any inconvenience that he might have suffered was more than amply repaid by what he had seen during his visit. Last Sunday he, with other visiting prelates, had officiated at the dedication of the beautiful basilica at Wellington, which was intended to be used as a parish church: the foundation stone of the Cathedral being shortly to be laid. This was inspiring, as showing that the Catholic faith was growing and increasing in New Zealand. Then, also, their Bishop intended laying the foundation stone of his Cathedral on the next day. When they found a people devoting their energies in building places for God's worship, religious education, or charitable works, they were giving the best proof that men could give of their sincerity and love of their faith. With the prelates who had accompanied him he had travelled through their noble country. He had seen scenery in Switzerland and throughout the Home Country, and where not only the beauty and grandeur but the extent with which natural scenery had been lavished on New Zealand he had never seen anything like it in the world. He had been delighted to come, and his only regret was that his Eminence the Cardinal was not occupying the position he was that evening, and also in the ceremony on the next day, and also that the metropolitan of the province, the Archbishop of Wellington, had not taken the position. He (the Archbishop) had experienced so much kindness and that brotherly feeling which bound together the people of the Catholic Church, and he must indeed be cold if he did not appreciate the many joyous events which had been brought before him since he had come to New Zealand. In conclusion, he trusted that on the foundation which would be laid to-morrow there would rise the outline of a glorious building which, when they saw, they would not only see its material beauty, but also the spiritual good done. He felt most emphatically that the Bishop of the diocese not only did the right thing when he conceived the proposal to build the Cathedral, but he had done that which God would bless abundantly. In the future he felt sure the people would say of the Bishop, 'God bless him, and God reward him for having conceived so noble a work.'

Archbishop Redwood also expressed his pleasure at being present, and thanked the people for their kind reception. The people of Christchurch had been famous for the hearty receptions they always accorded to Catholic prelates, and on behalf of himself and his fellow-visitors he expressed his appreciation of the good will. They were all pleased to be there to assist in the work of laying the foundation stone of the noble Cathedral which was now to be commenced.

Bishop Grimes thanked the Archbishop of Melbourne for coming all the way from Australia to represent the Cardinal, who had written expressing his great regret at being unable to attend and lay the