

PRESENTATION TO OUR EDITOR.

HIS DEPARTURE ON A TRIP TO EUROPE.

WHEN it became known a few weeks ago that the Rev. Father Cleary, editor of the N.Z. TABLET, had been granted a twelve-months' holiday for the purpose of visiting his relatives in Ireland, some of his friends decided that he should not be allowed to take his departure without some practical token of their esteem, and appreciation of the successful work performed by him as a Catholic journalist during the four years he has occupied the editorial chair. In that time not only has he raised this journal to the front rank amongst Catholic organs in English-speaking countries by the fearlessness and vigor of his writings, but he has also devoted considerable time to, and spared no trouble in defending in the secular press, the Church, its doctrines, its ministers and people from the foul aspersions and vile attacks of assailants of every degree. It was only within the past fortnight or so it became definitely known that Father Cleary would leave so early in the present month, and consequently the time was rather limited in which to organise a presentation expressive of the esteem of the readers of this paper outside of the diocese of Dunedin. Had the matter been known at an earlier date in other parts of the Colony the response would, we have every reason to believe, have been of a most widespread and generous nature. As it was, the gentlemen who had the presentation in hand must feel quite satisfied with the success of the undertaking, and the sum subscribed—upwards of £250—in such a short time was ample testimony, if such were necessary, of the very high place which Father Cleary holds in the affections of the Catholic people. Up to the very last moment subscriptions were being received, and this necessitated the postponement of the presentation until Sunday evening, the function taking place in St. Joseph's Hall immediately after Vespers. His Lordship Bishop Verdon presided, and amongst those present were the Rev. Father Murphy, Adm. St. Joseph's Cathedral, Very Rev. Father Boyle, Rev. Father Coffey, Adm., Rev. Fathers O'Reilly and O'Malley, Messrs J. Laffey, P. Hally, J. J. Marlow, J. O'Neill, P. O'Neill, J. P. Armstrong, J. Collins, and Jas. O'Neill. The hall was crowded.

His Lordship Bishop Verdon said he had great pleasure in assisting and presiding at that meeting. They had come there to present an address and testimonial to Father Cleary, who deserved everything they could do for him.—(Applause.) Father Cleary had edited the TABLET for the past four years with conspicuous success, and during that time he had defended the Catholic interests and refuted many foul calumnies which had been hurled against their holy religion. In that time he had provided excellent reading in every way in the pages of the TABLET, and had given full satisfaction to the directors. Father Cleary was taking a well-merited holiday, and he (his Lordship) trusted he would come back with renewed vigor, and carry on his work as successfully as he had done in the past.—(Applause.)

Rev. Father Murphy said they were there that night to make a presentation to Father Cleary on the eve of his departure for a trip to the Old Country, and after four years' labor as editor of the TABLET. They would all agree with him that his work during that time had been productive of immense good. Many were the wrongs he had been called upon to right, many the foul calumnies he had to refute, and every fair-minded, intelligent man must admit that he had done his work right nobly. (Applause). They had the consolation of knowing that they were not losing the services of Father Cleary; that he was going on a visit to his friends, and that in a short time he would be amongst them again. Not alone had Father Cleary the confidence of the bishops, priests, and laity of New Zealand, but he was also held in the highest esteem by the hierarchy of the Commonwealth of Australia. It would be satisfactory to the readers of the TABLET to know that they would not miss his contributions from its pages during his holiday, for no doubt Father Cleary would from time to time send accounts of his travels in many places which were new even to one who had travelled so much. Father Cleary held an altogether exceptional place in the esteem of the priests of the Diocese of Dunedin, and he deserved it. When it became known that he was going on a trip to the Old Country there was a spontaneous desire on the part of his lay and clerical friends to offer him a suitable token of their high regard, and, although the time had been very short, he was pleased to announce to the meeting that he had ready for presentation a sum of £250.—(Applause.) Father Murphy then read

THE ADDRESS.

Reverend and dear Father,—Your many friends among the clergy and laity of the Dunedin Diocese take the opportunity presented by your approaching trip to the Homeland to give expression to the sentiments of personal friendship and cordial good-will which are everywhere felt towards you, and to the warm appreciation which both priests and people have of the splendid services which, in your capacity as a journalist, you have rendered not only to this Diocese but to the interests of the Church throughout the whole Colony.

It is now some four years since you assumed editorial control of the N.Z. TABLET, and in that position you have achieved a success which must certainly be considered remarkable. During that period the circulation, the influence, and the literary standing of the paper have made an immense advance, a result which is undoubtedly due to the tireless energy, great business capacity, and exceptional powers both of thought and of expression which you have brought to bear upon your work. In addition to your official journalistic work, the duty has also devolved upon you of replying to the various attacks which have been made from time to time on the Catholic Church and Catholic body, and everyone knows how nobly you have discharged that duty. Your profound and varied

learning, your wide experience, and your natural courtesy of disposition have enabled you to conduct all controversy in a way which has not only brought credit to the Church you represent but has won even from our non-Catholic friends many tributes of admiration and respect. For your services in this direction the Catholics of the Diocese and of the Colony are certainly placed under a deep and lasting debt of gratitude to you.

Apart from your official work as priest and journalist, you have the strongest personal claims on our affection and esteem. Your generous and unselfish nature, your sunny kindness of disposition, and your many other gifts and graces of heart and mind have greatly endeared you to all with whom you have come in contact, and have won for you an altogether special place in our affection. As a modest token of our kindly feeling we beg you to accept the accompanying purse of sovereigns, and with it our sincere wish that you may have a thoroughly pleasant and enjoyable holiday, and may in due time come back to us with renewed vigour to resume those important duties which you have so faithfully discharged in the past.

Signed on behalf of the clergy and laity:

(Clergy)	(Laity)
J. MACKAY, V.F.	J. LAFFEY
P. O'LEARY, V.F.	J. J. MARLOW
P. MURPHY, Adm.	P. O'NEILL
J. COFFEY, Adm.	J. P. ARMSTRONG
	J. COLLINS
	J. O'NEILL (Hon. Sec.)

Mr. J. Laffey, as one who had interested himself in the testimonial, expressed his pleasure at the success which had crowned the efforts of the committee. He hoped Father Cleary would have a pleasant journey, and that he would return to New Zealand in the best of health.

Messrs. J. J. Marlow and P. Hally also spoke, expressing their appreciation of their services of Father Cleary as a Catholic journalist, and wishing him a pleasant time during his visit to the land of his birth.

Mr. J. P. Armstrong, in the course of a characteristic speech, said he had known his dear friend Father Cleary since his arrival in New Zealand. In fact he had made it his business to call on him soon after his arrival as both of them had come from the same part of Ireland. Their late lamented Bishop had also come from the same place, and he was also a very dear friend of the speaker. Though not a member of the Catholic Church he had read the TABLET since its start, and he could say that during the past four years it was conducted with marked ability. He was, as a personal friend of Father Cleary, very sorry he was going to leave them, but it was pleasing to know that it was only for a time.

FATHER CLEARY'S REPLY.

The Rev. Father Cleary, who, on rising to reply, was received with prolonged applause, said:—I should be more or less than human if I were not deeply touched by this splendid demonstration of personal regard. There are two special circumstances which greatly increase my sense of the overwhelming kindness which my lay and clerical friends have shown to me on this occasion: One is, the great number of recent, present, and prospective claims or other kinds upon their generosity; the other is this—that it is barely eighteen months since a similar demonstration of affectionate regard was tendered to me by the same people in this same hall. It is a rare experience for a priest—it is, I believe, unique for an amateur editor—to receive from the same people, in little more than a year, two such emphatic tokens of goodwill as those which your sheer goodness of heart has prompted you to accord to me. You have forestalled my intention of slipping away quietly on the trip to the dear Old Land which the kindness of his Lordship enables me to take. And you have done this, too, in a spirit which would ennoble even a small gift. But all the circumstances of your present splendid testimonial raise it so far above the ordinary level of such proceedings, that it must leave an indelible impression upon my memory.

There are acquaintanceships that ripen quickly. I have become so rooted here that I almost have the feeling of having grown up in the place; and I sometimes find it difficult to realise that it is only four years since I came among you, a slender priest—chiefly bones—(laughter)—from the Australian bush. Dr. Johnson has somewhere said that a man should keep his friendship in constant repair. So far as my feeling towards my lay and clerical friends in New Zealand is concerned, that task is an easy and pleasant one for me. Their constant friendliness to me has made the duty of reciprocation act automatically and without efforts.—(Applause). They have made my stay in this favored country as pleasant as it is good for me that it should be. From his Lordship the Bishop, from the other members of the venerated hierarchy, from the clergy all over the Colony, I have received every form of helpful kindness and encouragement. By the clergy in this diocese above all, and by all those whom I have met and visited in other dioceses, I have been treated with that spirit of happy and affectionate camaraderie that constitutes one of the brightest charms of the social life of a priest. The Catholic laity here and elsewhere I have found kindly, sympathetic, generous. And to-night they have crowned a thousand previous acts of thoughtful kindness by this further touching evidence of that warm affection which has so long bound the Catholic people.—(Applause.)

You have been good enough to commend such meagre services as a brief apprenticeship to journalism has enabled me to give. I cannot, however, lay the flattering unction to my soul that I have merited the warm eulogiums which your kindness has prompted you to address to me. There remain many of even my own journalistic ideals to which it is not within my capacity or my opportunities to attain. And I feel thankful that heaven does not, so to speak, exact a poll-tax from us—does not require so much fixed service per capita, but pro rata, in proportion to the few or many talents given to us.