

Presentation to Father O'Donnell, Queenstown.

IN consequence of the ill-health of the Rev. Father J. O'Donnell and of his projected departure from the district for a well-earned holiday for the purpose of recruiting his health (says the *Lake Wakatipu Mail*), his parishioners made the occasion one in which to show their esteem for their worthy pastor and their appreciation of the good work he has done in the parish. To this end a movement was set on foot to tender him a fitting farewell. The matter was taken up with the heartiness that always characterises any and all efforts of our Catholic friends. The farewell, which came off on Thursday evening in the Garrison Hall, took the shape of a social, combined with the presentation of an address and purse of sovereigns. There were only four days in which to get up the whole function, and the spontaneity with which each member of the congregation worked was exceedingly creditable. The social commenced at 8 p.m., and in less than half an hour the Garrison Hall was very comfortably filled with people from all parts of the district. The hall was gaily decorated for the occasion.

About an hour after commencing the presentation of the address and purse of sovereigns claimed the attention of the assemblage. The Rev. Father O'Donnell, accompanied by representatives of the Catholic Church from all parts of the district, took up a position on the stage, when Mr J. Black read the address, which was in part as follows:—

'Dear Rev. Father,—With very sincere regret your people have learnt that they are deprived for awhile of your helpful presence and your devoted ministrations and untiring labors. The result of your zeal in the service of your Divine Master, and your well-known devotion to the spiritual and temporal welfare of your flock have in all human probability accelerated, if not caused, the indisposition that renders it necessary for you to leave us for a short time, in order to take a much-needed holiday, and thus to regain, with God's help, your former health and vigor. With pride and pleasure, we note the rapid strides made by our Mother Church in the district under your guiding influence since your arrival in the Wakatipu some five or six years ago. The beautiful church of St. Joseph in this town—elegant alike in design and proportion—the erection of which the people of the sister parish in Arrowtown took so great an interest, and rendered such valuable assistance, and of which all are now so justly proud; the recently repaired church of St. Patrick at Arrow; the church of St. Bridget, lately opened at Cardrona; and last, but certainly of paramount importance to our own town and district, the foundation of the School of Art in our midst—an idea all your own—destined, we hope, when fully understood and realised, to produce great and lasting results for Queenstown; these, we say, are monuments to your unbounded zeal, your self-sacrifice, and your unwearied energy. These qualities, joined to the warm-hearted generosity of the Irish soggarth, have endeared you to your flock, aye, and beyond the circle of your own co-religionists you are revered and respected as a kindly, liberal-minded man and a good citizen. In conclusion we wish you a pleasant holiday, and we trust that you may return to the Wakatipu fully restored to health. Finally, we would ask you to accept the accompanying sum offered with the love and gratitude of your devoted people, together with the respect and esteem of your non-Catholic friends.'

The address was signed on behalf of the parishioners of the various districts as follows: Queenstown.—F. M'Bride, J. Black, P. McCarthy, J. M'Chesney, J. M'Mullan, C. E. Gudgeon. Arrowtown.—R. Cotter, P. Butel, P. Kerin, T. M'Donnell, T. M'Intyre. Garston.—A. M'Caughan, P. M'Namee, T. Muirhead, P. M'Guirk. Cardrona.—A. Lafranchi, G. Hayes, T. Eulright. Nokomai.—D. A. Cameron. Glenorchy.—C. E. E. Waller.

Mr Black then handed the purse of sovereigns and address over to Mr F. M'Bride, as the oldest member of the congregation, for presentation to the Rev. Father O'Donnell. Before making the presentation Mr M'Bride expressed the hope that the holiday Father O'Donnell was about to take would greatly benefit him in health and that he would come back a new man. The presentation of the beautiful address and purse of 77 sovereigns and the large number present to witness same showed that they were very proud of their priest, and he was sure that their priest was very proud of them.

The Rev. Father O'Donnell, in replying, said he wished to thank them from the bottom of his heart for their present and for the way they had attended to bid him farewell. As Mr M'Bride stated, he felt justly proud of them. This warmhearted feeling had existed ever since he made their acquaintance. He hoped that Almighty God would restore him to health and strength so that they might welcome him back to Wakatipu once more. The Wakatipu was the first place in his affections since he left Ireland. He could not say too much regarding the kindness extended to him since he came to the district. Continuing he said: 'I have been here now nearly six years, and I do say, that a more respectful, a more generous, or a more solidly pious people, than the Catholic people of the Wakatipu, cannot be found in the whole diocese of Dunedin. It would be simply impossible for one not to feel elated at the thought of receiving a testimonial from such a people, and because that it is absolutely spontaneous, and that it comes at a moment of weak health, it is doubly dear and fascinating to me. You make reference to the strides made by the Church in the Wakatipu under my guiding influence, and you remind me of the building of St. Joseph's Church, Queenstown, of the repairing of St. Patrick's, Arrowtown, and of St. Bridget's, Cardrona. Well, allow me to say, just in a few words, that any success achieved in the way of church building was more the result of your own generosity than of any efforts of mine. You have contributed for this purpose in the Wakatipu since my arrival amongst you something like £3000, a marvellous sum, when we remember that the entire Catholic population is only about 600 souls. You give me credit for one thing, which I gratefully acknowledge, and that is the founding of the School of Art. This

work cost a great deal of thought and anxiety. It is not founded for Catholics only, nor for Presbyterians, nor for Anglicans, nor for English, nor Scotch nor Irish, it is founded for the whole people of Queenstown. And I hope they will take advantage of the opportunities afforded them.

There is one thing stated in your address, and it embarrasses me not a little, and that is, where you say my warm-hearted generosity has endeared me not only to my own flock, but also to my non-Catholic neighbors. Well, if I am possessed of those qualities, I have to remind you that they are characteristic of the Irish race to which I belong, and hence I cannot personally claim any merit for them. Anyway, they are gifts for which the whole people of the Wakatipu are remarkable, and it is only natural that I should follow suit. It is of the utmost satisfaction to me to know that I have the good-will and esteem of the non-Catholics of the district. It shows that we in the Wakatipu know how to respect one another's conscientious convictions—a state of things in which we all should feel a pardonable pride. Well, now, how can I thank you sufficiently for this most beautiful address, and for your money gift? The former shall always have a place of honor in my house, and as to the latter, I know I am giving expression to a veritable fact when I say that the form of thanks most appreciated by you is to assure you that this money shall be expended by me in the endeavor to regain health and strength. On my return I hope to find you all in good health and strength and spirits, and when re-united we shall in the future, as in the past, work in harmony—we shall work might and main, weekday and Sunday, in season and out of season, and become, as it were, a tower of strength, for the good of the Church as well as for the advancement of the temporal interests of the district.'

Rev. Father O'Malley, who has taken Father O'Donnell's place during the latter's absence, gave a brief address, in the course of which he said that the presentations made to their pastor by his people showed the esteem in which he was held. The work done by Father O'Donnell since he came to the district could not be surpassed in the diocese or even in the whole of New Zealand.

GREYTOWN.

One of the best entertainments ever given in the Wairarapa was the verdict passed on that which took place in the Palace Hall, Greytown, on Wednesday night of last week in aid of the funds of the local Catholic Church. This (says the *Wairarapa Leader*) is the first call the Catholics of Greytown have made upon the public, and the latter certainly responded most liberally, the whole of the seating accommodation of the Palace Hall, and no inconsiderable part of the standing room, being occupied. The Very Rev. Dean McKenna and the Rev. Father Cahill were in attendance; there were numerous visitors from all parts, and performers were present from Wellington, Featherston, Martinborough, Masterton, Woodville, and Carterton.

The programme opened with a fantasia of American airs, ably played by Miss Eccleton. 'The Yeoman's wedding,' was given by Mr. Cartayne, whose baritone voice found excellent scope in the rendering. Greytown is certainly fortunate in possessing a voice of such calibre as that of Miss Annie Gallagher. 'O, Divine Redeemer,' as sung by this lady, revealed what might perhaps correctly be termed a mezzo contralto, although the upper notes were of an exquisite soprano quality. The singer was encored in an imperative manner, and responded by repeating the last verse. 'Come back to Erin' as sung by Miss Maguire, appealed to the audience as it has to thousands of audiences before, and the hall rang again with the plaudits which enforced the re-appearance of the lady, who this time sang 'The Carnival.' 'The promise of life,' found a capable interpreter in Miss Twohill. The recall elicited that quaintly cheerful ditty 'Tit for Tat,' sung with much archness by the lady. The triumphant swing of the baritone song, 'Queen of the earth,' was supplied by Mr. Hornsby, who gave an encore 'Father O'Flynn.' The next item, wholly unexpected as it was, took the house by storm. It was supplied by little Kathleen Twohill, a sedate lady of about four years, who, fondling a doll as large as herself, lifted up her childish treble in the melodious injunction that it was 'Past eight o'clock.' An encore induced the wee dot to sing some nursery rhymes. Yet another infant prodigy was furnished in little Alma Fuller, who recited 'Papa's letter' in a way that suggested great histrionic possibilities in the future. One of the pleasing features of the entertainment was a vocal duet by the Misses Hall and Eva Card, entitled 'Gathering flowers,' the voices blending musically throughout. A humorous dialogue, in which an anxious mother (Miss Lucy Apora) seeks the advice of a medical gentleman (Miss F. Low), convulsed the audience with laughter. An admirably executed sailor's hornpipe by Mr. Samuels elicited a deserved encore. Carterton had the credit of supplying the next item, which consisted of a Scottish reel by Masters J. Lawrence, G. Johnston, H. Kitchen, F. Deller, T. Skelley, W. Mansfield, C. Whyte, and N. Armstrong, who were arrayed in full Highland costume. If this item was purely Scottish, the next (and last) was unmistakably Irish in all its essentials. The little Misses Kitty and Norah O'Leary, Maggie Collins, Maria Savage, Nellie Coyle, Mary Coyle, Gertie Collier, and Ruby Chapman, all of Masterton, and, habited in the immortal green, tripped on to the stage and danced an Irish jig. The bulk of the task of accompanying the singers fell to Miss Eccleton. She was assisted by Mrs. J. W. Card, Miss Twohill, Miss Smith, and Mr. Maguire.

In an interval the Rev. Father Cahill thanked the audience for their presence, the performers, who had attended, in some cases, at personal inconvenience, and the ladies who had provided a bounteous spread of good things.

Upon the whole, the Catholics of Greytown have reason to be proud of their first entertainment, and no small amount of credit for the successful issue is due to the joint secretaries, Miss Slattery and Mr. M. D. O'Connor.