

## Presentation to Dean Grogan

(From our Wanganui correspondent.)

On Monday, August 24, the Very Rev. Dean Grogan attained the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. The celebration of the important event by the parishioners was nearly passed by, as the Dean was reticence itself with regard to it. However, the fact that his silver jubilee fell on that day leaked out, and hurried preparations were at once made to celebrate the occasion in as fitting a manner as time and circumstances allowed. The result was that St. Mary's Hall was filled to overflowing on Monday night, when the celebration took the form of an impromptu concert and conversazione. During an interval in the proceedings some of the most prominent of the parishioners appeared on the platform, and Mr. T. Lloyd explained, in a characteristic speech, the object of the gathering that had assembled that evening. It was to celebrate the silver jubilee of the Very Rev. Dean Grogan's ordination. Because Dean Grogan had been a resident only a few months in the parish was no reason why the people should not celebrate that event. They had heard of his labors elsewhere, and his name was familiar for many years to the Catholics of Wanganui. Mr. Lloyd said that lack of time had prevented them from making the presentation as handsome as it might have been. He then called upon Mr. W. J. Mahoney, hon. sec. of the presentation committee, to read the following address, which was beautifully illuminated by the Sisters of St. Joseph:—

Very Rev. Dear Father,—We, the Catholics of Wanganui, heartily congratulate you upon this, the occasion of your silver jubilee. Five and twenty years of zealous labors in the vineyard of the Lord entitle you to our esteem and love. Only a small portion of one year, it is true, has been spent in our midst, but we have heard of the success of your labors elsewhere, and we realise that your time and energy have been expended in advancing the cause which is dear to the hearts of all Catholics—the cause of Holy Church. As a small token of our affection and esteem we beg your acceptance of the accompanying present. Owing to pressing demands upon our resources and other causes we have not been able to offer you a gift more in keeping with the importance of the occasion, but we ask you to accept the will for the deed. In conclusion, Very Rev. and dear Father, we pray that Almighty God may, in His mercy, grant you every blessing, and may spare you long to labor for the advancement of His holy cause amongst the people of New Zealand.

Signed, on behalf of the Catholics of Wanganui, R. T. N. Beasley, W. Beswick, J. Bates, F. Neylon, B. J. Kelleher, W. J. Mahoney, T. W. Tymons, P. London, G. McCulloch, J. Dempsey, H. Tyrrel, T. Lloyd, N. Neily, J. Robinson, D. Ball, W. Koorey, J. W. O'Brien, C. J. McCarthy.

### Dean Grogan's Reply.

The Very Rev. Dean Grogan, on rising to respond, was greeted with loud and prolonged applause. He thanked the people for honoring him in such a manner that evening. He did not expect it. There was no reason why they should do so. Had he been in Napier, where he could point to lasting monuments as the result of his labors in the Lord's vineyard the situation would be altogether different. Had he been among his old parishioners he was sure that they would celebrate his silver jubilee. But in Wanganui he was a comparatively recent arrival, and the monuments had been the work of a zealous man, who was now stricken with a serious illness. Here the Dean paid a glowing tribute to the work done by the Very Rev. Dean Kirk in the parish of Wanganui. Continuing, Dean Grogan said that he looked back upon three days in life in particular with great pleasure. The day on which he took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, the day on which he was invested with the high dignity of the priesthood, and the day on which he landed in New Zealand. He said that he had never regretted becoming a priest, and were he a boy now on the benches of the Marist Brothers' schools, he would work up his way to the priesthood. He had, at his ordination, dear friends who counselled him not to go abroad, but in the first ardor of his vocation he had asked his Superior as a special privilege to allow him to come to New Zealand. He had never regretted this step; he was proud of the land of his adoption; from his first arrival, it had become his aim in life to spread the truth among its people, to suffer with them, and, if needs be, to die in their service. Dean Grogan's remarks were received with loud applause, which continued for some time.

The concert was arranged by the members of the choir, and proved a great success. The following ladies and gentlemen gave items: Mesdames Parker, Ahern, and Meehan, and Misses Dempsey, Dickenson, Kiely, and Northcote. Mr. Sheenan gave two recitations, and

Messrs. G. McCulloch, Wadman, and Armstrong contributed songs. A very pleasant social evening was also held on Friday, August 21, at which there was a large attendance.

On the following Tuesday Dean Grogan was invited to the convent schools, where the young lady boarders presented him with an address, also a beautiful pastoral stole, with some other pretty and useful articles. The address was beautifully illuminated by Sister Xavier, and was greatly admired. A school operetta was then ably executed by the young ladies, after which all the children were given a holiday, with sweets to their hearts' content.

## Silver Jubilee of Dean Smyth, Hastings

The Catholic school, Hastings (says the local paper), was crowded on Tuesday evening, not only by members of the Catholic congregations, but also by representatives of other denominations to do honor to the Very Rev. Dean Smyth, S.M., on the attainment of his silver jubilee as a priest, and also to assist in presenting him with an address and purse of sovereigns to mark the esteem in which he is held by all classes of the community. The school was artistically arranged and the walls draped with banners and evergreens, whilst Chinese lanterns swayed from the roof, and the stage surroundings were set forth in blue and silver, the tout ensemble having a most admirable effect and reflecting the highest credit on the Sisters, who spared no pains over the details. On the stage were also the gold chalice and silver gilt ciborium, valued at £40, presented on Friday to the Very Rev. Dean by the Catholic school children besides a surplice fringed with lace, worked by the nuns, and an alb, trimmed with Limerick lace, the gift of the Sisters. In the front of the stage the Very Rev. Dean was seated, supported on the right by the Ven. Archdeacon Devoy, and on the left by the Very Rev. Father Lewis, V.G. The other priests present were: Rev. Fathers Yardin, T. McKenna, O'Shea, McNamara, Ainsworth, and Rev. Dr. Kennedy.

The Mayor (Mr. W. Y. Dennett), who presided, read apologies from Sir William Russell, M.H.R., and Mr. A. L. D. Fraser, M.H.R., regretting their unavoidable absence. Continuing, he said:—

We have met this evening as a little social gathering to do honor to our worthy and much-respected parish priest, Dean Smyth, and to congratulate him on attaining the silver jubilee of his priesthood, seventeen years of which have been spent in our midst, laboring both for our temporal and spiritual welfare. There is a good and true saying which is very appropriate on this occasion, viz., 'By their works ye shall know them.' Seventeen years ago, when Father Smyth took charge of this parish, there were not many buildings on this block of land. The present old building, now doing duty as a boys' school, was our little chapel, but, in the course of time, it had to take a back place to make room for something better, and there has arisen in its stead one of the prettiest little churches to be found in New Zealand. There is a good presbytery, with beautiful grounds, a substantial and up-to-date convent, and those commodious school buildings we are now in. All those stand out as monuments of our revered Father's good works, his energy and enterprise, which will make his memory shine ever very brightly in our hearts. Certainly he has had your co-operation and assistance, but it was he who devised and schemed, and it was by his strenuous exertions that the works were carried out. They are not only a credit to the parish, but an ornament to the borough of Hastings, and we look upon them with pride. But as proud as we are of them, prouder still are we of our beloved priest, whom we all reverence, love, and esteem. We are not, however, ungrateful, and to-night we will prove this, not only by kindly words, but by actions and deeds.

### The Address.

The Mayor then read the following address:—

'Very Reverend and dear Father,—Upon the occasion of the silver jubilee of your priesthood, your parishioners desire to express their joy that you have been spared to celebrate so happy an event. When we remember that for seventeen years you have been in charge of the parish, our priest, adviser, and consoler, we are bound in affection and gratitude, to acknowledge, although the words be feeble, the place which you hold in our hearts. How many hundreds, aye thousands of souls had been blessed by your ministry. The church, the convent and schools will be an abiding monument of your work; but they will not be more permanent than our remembrance and esteem and love. We pray for the blessing of God upon you that He may grant you life and health and grace to do His will, and that you may see more and more fruitful the result of your labors.'