

THE CHURCH IN NEW ZEALAND

HISTORICAL NOTES.

A marble tablet in the front wall of a little memorial chapel in the Nelson Cemetery briefly tells us of the fruitful pastorate of Nelson's first parish priest (writes an esteemed correspondent). From April, 1850, until April, 1889, Father Garin labored untiringly for the advancement of our holy religion in this large and scattered district. "He was the first to build schools for the education of its youth." In these words the memorial speaks of the debt owed him by all the pioneer families of Nelson, for Father Garin's were the first provincial schools.

In 1848 the Catholics erected on Government land a little cottage to serve as a mixed school. The modest outlay was £20. The first chapel, which was built in 1847 and opened on Easter Sunday, was afterwards transferred from the hilltop given by the New Zealand Company to the site adjoining Father Garin's dwelling (originally a store belonging to the company). This chapel was used during the week as a mixed school for children of all denominations, of whom 40 were on the roll of 1850. The following year the school was placed in charge of Mr. McQuade, who took up his residence with Father Garin. The school fees were not sufficient to warrant other arrangements.

About the same time Miss O'Dowd took over the charge of the girls' school. Two years later these teachers were succeeded by Mr. Horrigan and Mrs. Clark, their respective classes numbering 38 and 40. At this stage Father Garin was asked by the Committee of Education to favor them with his views on the subject of a scheme of education for the province. The case for Government assistance was plainly stated, the pastor insisting that all well-conducted schools giving a certain amount of secular instruction should receive a grant. More than this, he considered the Government should not interfere with the religious instruction given, nor with the management of the schools. To meet the case of children whose parents objected to the religious instruction imparted, only primary secular instructions should be given them. In 1856, Father Garin's claim was made good, and £60 was received by him as a capitation grant. This enabled the existing school to be substantially enlarged, and the first half of the church having been erected, the school was no longer required to serve its dual purpose.

Father Garin was then approached by the council with the request that he should bring his school under the operation of the new Education Act. This he steadfastly refused to do so long as his terms were not conceded. Chief among these was that religious instruction should be given during school hours. As the council would not yield Father Garin continued his school as a private school, and although many non-Catholics attended, he was proud to have kept it free from Protestant books, doctrines, and teachers. Mr. and Mrs. Richards having now taken charge of the schools, an addition was built to the girls' school at a cost of £70, for their accommodation.

In 1861 Father Garin acquired for school purposes a cottage built by Mr. Richards near the girls' school. For this he paid £44. After having successfully maintained St. Mary's Schools for seventeen years, Father Garin decided, in 1867, to place them under the Government system. This he was induced to do chiefly through the increasing difficulty of competing with the Government schools, which, with adequate means at their disposal, had made remarkable progress. The parishioners, too, were tiring of bearing the burden of supporting schools of their own while paying at the same time the education tax. Father Garin secured the right to have an exclusively Catholic committee, to elect his own teachers, and to choose the school class books. Under this arrangement two teachers were appointed, the salaries paid by the Government being £180 and £80 respectively. Steps were next taken with a view to building a select school in readiness for the

Sisters. This school was completed in 1868. The subscription list represented £289, and the total cost was £657. Father Garin made up the difference and also paid the passage money of the first three Sisters (£325).

In 1871 a new schoolroom for girls was commenced at a cost of £444. On February 9, 1871, five Sisters arrived in Nelson, and on February 26 the convent was blessed. The new school was opened in the February of the following year. By means of a bazaar and art union and direct donations the sum of £883 was raised for the school improvements. During the first two years of the Sisters' residence further expenses amounting to £216 were incurred. The select school had accommodation for 70 pupils, and ten boarders were also provided for. Another building was erected for school purposes, two rooms with a sliding partition serving as a classroom for 100 day scholars, the upstairs as a dormitory for 16 boarders. The schoolmaster's residence was let to a family for the purpose of receiving orphans, the idea, later realised, being to found an orphanage in part supported by Government. In the year 1872 there were in attendance at the girls' school 100 pupils, at the boys' about 70. There were then two orphan girls at the convent and three boys with Mrs. Traynor. The Government paid for the five at the rate of one shilling per diem for each child. Father Garin was required to meet all the usual expenses.

This necessarily fragmentary account of Father Garin's early work may fittingly close with an extract from the *N.Z. Tablet* reporting the opening of the new St. Mary's Orphanage:—"Father Garin's memory and his work are still a benediction among the widely scattered little flock of the faithful in the Nelson Province."

An historic building in the annals of Catholicism in Wellington is at present disappearing in the demolition of St. Patrick's Hall in Boulcott Street, for many years the meeting-place of Catholic bodies in Wellington Central. This building, which is being removed in order to clear the site for the new St. Mary of the Angels' Church, was erected in the early eighties as a presbytery to the parish church, then presided over by the late Rev. Father Kerrigan. It was so used until the new presbytery was erected on the same block, but a little higher up Boulcott Street. When that building was erected the old presbytery was used as a Sunday school and for the holding of parish meetings and social functions, and served its purpose well.

The church, which has so lately disappeared, was built of timber between forty and fifty years ago from a design by Mr. Clayton, Sir Julius Vogel's father-in-law, and at the time the first Government architect. Mr. Clayton was a man of considerable taste, but unfortunately his work was chiefly in wood and not much of it remains. The Government Building, containing the Departmental offices, is the chief. The church, however, under notice, when it left Mr. Clayton's hands, was a model building—cruciform in plan, and having a tower and spire at the intersection of the nave and transepts. In style, it was early English, inasmuch as the windows were lancet-headed, and the general proportions were what might have been expected of a thirteenth century architect to have adopted had he been building at the present day, and with the materials at Mr. Clayton's disposal.

THE MOST OBSTINATE

Corn must quickly yield to BAXTER'S RUBY CORN CURE. Once this remedy is applied there is no escape for the corn—it must give in. Price, 1/-, post free, from Baxter's Pharmacy, Theatre Buildings, Timaru.

LADIES!

A new style of dressing the hair is quite in order, but the purchase of a delicious appetiser, like MILITARY PICKLE is sound judgment. Sold by all grocers. Buy it now.

Molly O'Moore

DODD'S MUSIC STORES

"MOLLY O'MOORE" is the loveliest Irish Love Song ever written.

Can be had at all Music Stores or direct from the publishers

Box 131

DANNEVIRKE