

## OPENING OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, TIMARU.

FOR some time past the Roman Catholic portion of our community have been conducting their services in a very humble manner in a building not at all appropriate for such solemn observances. Mainly through the exertions of the Rev. Father Chataignier, however, a movement has been afoot, having for its object the erection of a proper place of worship, and accordingly subscriptions have been freely given for the purpose, the result being the handsome little building which was opened for Divine worship on Sunday last.

The building itself is situate on a section of land on the western side of the boundary of the town facing its junction with Brown street. The foundations are of blue stone, three feet in height, the church, as is usual with all Romish ones, being cruciform. It is built in accordance with the Gothic style of architecture, and presents a very pretty appearance, being quite an ornament to this portion of the town. Its total length from east to west is 55ft., and the extreme width 35ft. The walls, from the foundation to the eaves, are 13ft. in height, and from the level of the ground to the apex of the roof is nearly 32ft. The steeple is situated on the southern side of the church, being 60ft. in height, unmounted by a cross. The roof is shingled, a portion of which is colored. The porch by which the church is entered, is situate at the south-western part, is 8ft. by 4ft., the steps leading up to the building being of dressed blue stone, and the floor of the porch cemented. The interior of the church is 33ft. in length by 24ft. in width. The chancel at the eastern end is 20ft. in length, being apsidal in shape. The sanctuary is reached from the body of the church by two steps, on the top one of which is the communion rail. At the further end of this sanctuary are two more steps leading to the altar. The whole of the work in the interior of the building is of a Gothic character, being uniform throughout to the walls. Over the altar are placed three stained glass windows, the centre one representing the Lord Jesus, to the left, the Virgin Mary, and to the right, St. Joseph. There are also two other stained glass windows in the chancel, in fact, all the rest of them in the church are stained also. On the north side, there is a recess for the singers and the harmonium, the dimensions being 10ft. by 5ft. The vestry is a small room on the ground floor of the steeple, and which can also be entered by a door from the outside of the building. At the extreme eastern end are the confessionals, 8ft. by 4ft. Ascending a flight of steps from the vestry the second and third floors of the steeple are reached. In the fourth story the bell, which weighs 2 cwt. is hung. The church is furnished with comfortable seats and varnished. The altar which is of partly carved Gothic work is furnished with six candlesticks, towards the middle of each of which are shields bearing the sacred monogram in gilt letters on a blue ground. It is also tastefully decorated with artificial flowers, the whole of which, when the candles are lighted have a very pretty effect. In the rood at the entrance to the chancel is a wooden crucifix, under which is a lighted candle.

As we before stated, the architect is the Rev. Father Chataignier, and the contractors Messrs Derby and Philips.

On Sunday morning last the Roman Catholics of Timaru assembled for the first time in this church, which will be dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and will shortly be consecrated by Bishop Redwood.

The services were conducted by the Rev. Father Chataignier, who was attired in rich vestments, attended by five acolytes, in accordance with the Romish ritual. The harmonium was presided over by Miss Griffin, and the solos were rendered very effectively by Miss Fiddler.

After the celebration of the mass and the Holy Eucharist, the Rev. Father Chataignier preached a short sermon, taking as his text the first verse of the 121st Psalm, Douay version—"I rejoice at the things that were said to me: we shall go to the house of the Lord." He remarked that he deemed these words as a fit expression of the feelings which had taken the steps of his flock thither that day. To him it was a day of unalloyed and sanctified gladness. He rejoiced because he had at last, at the price of much anxiety and of no small outlay of means, been enabled to offer a house to his Lord Jesus. He rejoiced because they were permitted to offer a house to the sacramental indwelling of their God and Saviour. He rejoiced because henceforth they would meet under a roof more worthy of Him, wherein to adore Him in humility of soul, and offer to him the sweet incense of praise, and raise towards His throne the childlike accents of confident prayer or the silent sighs of a sorrowful heart. With greater means at their disposal—had they been more numerous, instead of being a few units only, lost, as it were, amongst the hundreds making up this community—they might have been entitled to borrow other words of the Psalmist, and looking on a majestic and more extensive pile; exclaimed with jubilant soul, "How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord God of Hosts." Their church became from that time the residence in this town of the Eucharistic presence, waiting for humble supplications, and sorrowful entreaties, to meet the first with a refreshing shower of Divine grace, and the latter with words of forgiveness and of peace. It would also be to the hungered, world-weary, weakened, wounded soul, the house of bread, another Bethlehem, wherein the Divine charity would keep always ready at hand a feast of love. One further consideration would add to the loveliness of their church. With the sanction of their now soon-expected Bishop, it would be dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus: its name by anticipation, "The Church of the Sacred Heart." The rev. gentleman explained the reasons for naming the church as above, and proceeded to remark that such considerations guided him in doing so, and he thought he would place his flock, good and bad, in the wounds of the Sacred Heart, and thus gradually draw them to the contemplation of its loveliness, and most merciful and boundless charity. They would now join in prayer and holy sacrifice, begging through the merits of the Sacred Victim, Jesus, help for the fulfilment of their hopeful district, while He came for the first time to take possession of the House they had built for Him, and to consecrate it by His sanctifying presence.

At the conclusion of the sermon a collection was made, which resulted in the handsome sum of £45 being added to the Building Fund.

In concluding our report of the opening of the church, we have to congratulate the Roman Catholics of Timaru, first on having such an indefatigable clergyman as the Rev. Father Chataignier, who also was the architect and superintendent of the building, and also in possessing such a pretty church as was opened for the first time on Sunday last.—*South Canterbury Times.*

## G A L I L E O .

### W. SWANSON, ESQ., M.H.R.—THE R. C. CHURCH.—THE PROGRESS OF SCIENCE.

WHEN imperfectly educated and inveterately prejudiced enemies of the Church have a mind to prove that she is an enemy to science, the case of Galileo is ever ready to their hand. A celebrated member of the Legislature and a secularist, Mr. W. Swanson, threw the case of Galileo in my teeth a short time ago, when justifying his views as a secularist. These gentlemen take good care to tell only a part of Galileo's story, and of the relation of the Church to his system of astronomy, for the best of reasons perhaps, because they do not know the whole story. We are all aware that a half-told story is very convenient for certain dishonest purposes, and that to suppress part of the truth is often the worst form of direct falsehood. It is true that Galileo was persecuted in one sense, and it is true that his great predecessor, Copernicus, was also persecuted by calumnious tongues, if not otherwise, and that in both cases ecclesiastics were the persecutors. But Galileo taught his system for years in the Italian Universities, with the full knowledge of dignitaries of the Catholic Church, and when in the full height of his fame as a teacher of the Copernican system of astronomy, the then Pope received him in Rome with every public mark of friendship and honor. A successor of this Pope not only adopted Galileo's system, but, by his thorough knowledge of it, turned it to a most valuable practical purpose. By means of it he introduced a more correct computation of time, the benefit of which the Christian world, with the exception of Russia, enjoy at this day. The present is called the Gregorian Calendar, in honor of the eminent Pope who introduced it. Galileo's great predecessor, Copernicus, dedicated his immortal work on "The Revolution of the Heavenly Bodies" to Pope Paul III., because he said his Holiness was, of all men living, the best qualified, by his profound knowledge of mathematics, to judge of its merits, and to defend his reputation from ignorant and malicious traducers. I have never had an opportunity of seeing in full the report of the judicial proceedings of the Court before which Galileo was tried at Rome, and should like if any of your learned readers would say where such could be obtained. Individual ecclesiastics—and I presume even ecclesiastical Courts of inferior jurisdiction—may meddle with things they do not understand, and go far out of their depth. Certain it is, the Church, as a leading authority, does not pretend, and never did pretend, to pronounce with infallible certainty on pure questions of physical science. If Galileo was persecuted, the Church, in her corporate capacity, was not the persecutor. Her Popes and high dignitaries—Catholic kings, princes, and noblemen—have been among the most zealous and munificent patrons of science and learning in past ages. They may be so in the future. It is a notorious fact that all the great Universities in Europe were founded by Popes, or under their auspices, without the aid of education rates or taxes. Our own matchless Alfred led the way—a Catholic Sovereign, the latchet of whose shoes even Queen Victoria would not be worthy to untie.—*L.A.C.*

P.S.—Modern Protestant scholars and philosophers, while reaping all the advantages which their Catholic predecessors in past ages have given them, often turn round, and with base and black ingratitude, reproach them, and the Church which patronised them, as the enemies of all progress. Mr. W. Swanson does not pretend to be a scholar or philosopher, yet he makes misuse of the little knowledge he possesses to misrepresent and blacken the character of the Roman Catholic Church and her clergy.

### ST. PATRICK AND ST. COLUMBA, CATHOLIC PIONEERS OF IRISH AND SCOTCH CIVILISATION.

#### AUCKLAND.

THE conductors of the Protestant Press in this colony—the men who profess "to lead," but who so frequently mislead and deceive the people on subjects connected with the Catholic Church—might study with profit the lives of St. Patrick and St. Columba, as given in the first volume of "Dr. Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia"—a Protestant work. They would there find both their own ignorance and ingratitude sternly rebuked. The above two eminent saints not only introduced Christianity among the idolatrous and barbarous natives of Ireland and Scotland, but they laid the foundations of that proficiency in literature and the practical arts of life for which the people of Scotland and Ireland have ever since been so celebrated, and for which they are so highly distinguished at this day. Even in their day—nearly fourteen hundred years ago—we see evidence of the existence of that burning zeal or passion for letters, and for the advancement of the Christian religion, which marks the character of the Scotch and Irish people in our own time. St. Patrick and St. Columba preached to no cold or unwilling hearers, and their efforts to advance the interests of religion and secular learning, as well as the practical arts, were nobly seconded by those who had just received the faith and love of Christ at their hands. These are the lights and ornaments and supports of a Church, which our modern "gentlemen of the Press" and platform orators seek to persuade the million is ever hostile to all social progress, and desires above all things to keep her children in ignorance, for the most unworthy of purposes. The very same spirit which animated the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland and Ireland when St. Patrick and St. Columba lived animates her still. What a contrast between the characters of St. Patrick and St. Columba and that of the barbarian Knox, who, with his worldly, ambitious, and blood-thirsty accomplices, did so much to bring reproach on Scotland and Christ-