

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHEDRAL, DUNEDIN.

ON Sunday last on the termination of the 11 a.m. Mass, the Blessed Sacrament being removed from the tabernacle, a meeting was held in St. Joseph's Church, Dunedin, to consider certain matters in connection with the new Cathedral building. His Lordship the Bishop, who addressed those present, said he had called them together to consult them as to what it was necessary to do in order to open the Cathedral, as it was intended, next February, and to be ready to receive in a becoming manner those prelates who had promised to be present at the opening ceremonies. If they would visit the building, and he would be glad if they would do so, they would find it in an advanced stage.—All that was now needed in order that the inside should be finished, was to provide glass for the windows, the flooring, and the sanctuary and vestries.—A great part of the inside work had been done; the ceiling was now nearly completed, and the carving of the windows of the clerestory was in process.—This was being done at once because, if it were deferred, it would be both difficult and expensive afterwards to erect the necessary scaffolding which, moreover, would then be in the way.—The carving of the windows of the aisles would not be done at present, nor that of the front of the building. If this were done it would be a great addition and the effect would be very beautiful, but, it was not necessary and could be left for a while.—The masons were at present engaged in putting up the tracery of the clerestory windows, and all the tracery had been made except a small portion belonging to that of the round or rose window in front.—His Lordship had contracted for the glass of the clerestory windows with a gentleman in town who had undertaken to furnish it, and who would not require payment for some months. The windows of the aisles were to be of stained glass. There were fourteen to be provided, and of these eight had been presented by members of the congregation, who gave them as monuments to their deceased friends. A great deal of money was spent in erecting monuments in the cemetery, and this was right and proper, but a better monument was the stained window—on which was inscribed the name of the dead, and which would be in such a position as to be frequently seen, so that prayers might more frequently be obtained for the repose of the departed soul. The speaker had little doubt but that the privilege of erecting the six remaining windows would be soon applied for. It would be possible to erect a temporary sanctuary and vestries of the same kind—that is of perishable material—but, besides the danger of fire, waste must ensue from such a proceeding. The plan that was being pursued was for the erection of the two remaining pillars of the transept, on which, with the two already completed, the central tower, 200 feet in height, was to be sustained—and between these four pillars the sanctuary would be placed. Its cost could not be exactly estimated. A high altar would be necessary—that now standing in St. Joseph's church being utilised as a side altar of the Blessed Sacrament,—and all must be fitted up becomingly. The vestries—such as were requisite for a cathedral—would be built of brick, and the material could afterwards be made use of when the work of completing the Cathedral was undertaken—one-third of the building being only comprised in the present undertaking,—and thus there would be no waste. He, the Bishop, had determined on beginning a beautiful building because he had often heard it remarked with respect to churches that it was to be regretted that those who had begun to build them had made the mistake of undertaking only plain or ugly constructions of which nothing could be made, and all that remained was to pull them down and replace them by churches of respectable appearance. He had determined that those who came after the present generation of Catholics in Otago should have no such complaint to make, and that he would leave them a beautiful building to complete. There was no debt on the building—that was to say every claim had been satisfied. No one who asked for money due to him had been refused, and there was reason to hope that when the building was opened he would be able to announce to his people that not a shilling of debt had been incurred, and that would be a great deal to say. It might be expected that a large sum would be contributed on the opening day. He had calculated on a certain sum, and had resolved to over-draw the account of the Building Fund at the bank to that amount. The amount at present to the credit of the Fund was £500. Last week it had been £800, but in the last ten days between £300 and £400 had been paid away, and money was due on work at present being carried out, but not as yet completed. His hope was that the weekly collections, which had provided the very back-bone of the Fund, would be continued. He would appeal to his people to continue their contributions still for a few months until all was done. They had contributed generously in the past, and could anyone who had done so say that he felt the worse for having done so, or as if he had suffered any loss? On the contrary, there had been a great gain, and the increase in the faith and devotion of the congregation was very marked. The times had been very depressed and he (the Bishop) would rather have discontinued the works altogether than appeal for subscriptions, but his people would not consent to his doing so. Times were now depressed everywhere, but they would improve again, and the wave of depression would be succeeded by a wave of prosperity. The front of the Cathedral was now finished, so far as he (the Bishop) had from the first intended to finish it. He had never meant to complete the two flanking towers. The building would, however, look much better if this were done, and its appearance on the opening day would be much more imposing. His work, nevertheless, was now confined to the sanctuary and vestries. But as certain gentlemen had expressed an earnest desire for the completion of the towers, he had given the matter over into the hands of Father Lynch, and if he and those gentlemen chose to carry out the work in question, he (the Bishop) would be very glad to see them do so—but the work would be theirs and not his.—The gentlemen and ladies who had acted as weekly collectors, deserved an acknowledgement of their services. They had done a difficult, and self-sacrificing work, and done it well. To these was owing in great part, the success of the undertaking, and their reward was certain. The Bishop appealed to those of them who still continued the work, to carry it out to the end, and to those who had discon-

tinued it to resume the task. His Lordship concluded by inviting any gentleman present who desired to express his views on the subject under consideration to do so.

Mr. Callan said he had not been deputed to speak. He had prepared no formal resolution, but he would say a few words on his own account. He thought he might also on behalf of his fellow-Catholics express the pride which they all took in the building. It reflected the utmost credit on its architect, and, in its present stage, even those who had the least knowledge of architecture, or were the least experienced could see that it was a noble structure. To all appearances, also, it was nearly fit for occupation. Money, however, was evidently still required, and its contribution was all-important. The congregation was not a wealthy one. They had just contributed to Archdeacon Coleman's collection, but, as His Lordship had remarked, the weekly collection was a most proper one, and he (the speaker) hoped they would all unite in supporting it. They were the pioneer Catholics of the province, and in sending down this great Catholic monument to posterity they would provide an influence which it was difficult to estimate, and that none could measure. The scion of a noble race would feel ashamed to do anything that might dishonour the name that had been transmitted to him, and such Catholic monuments, as this Cathedral would be, exercised a strong influence in keeping men loyal to that Grand Old Church, now close upon 1900 years in existence, which had seen the rise and decay of so many empires and kingdoms, and which still remained vigorous and young as of yore. All that was needed for the full accomplishment of this great work was that Catholics should combine to carry it out to the end. He (the speaker) had on one occasion heard the late Dr. Bachaus say, in Melbourne, that it was not the pound of the rich man that was wanted. If it were given, well and good, but it was the penny and the halfpenny of the poor man that had built the great churches of Europe. The sight of the building, as it was now, should inspire them with one more vigorous effort, and a combined effort would bring them to the end.—When the history of this Colony came to be written, and the skill and enterprise that had been shown in its establishment were recorded, not the least creditable page would be that on which was inscribed the zeal of a body which, although the poorest and the smallest in numbers had proved themselves superior to the commonplace occupations of every day life, and had raised this monument not unworthy to be compared with the greatest masterpieces.—And this might be perfected by means of the weekly collections. He (the speaker) could not conclude without saying that every member of the congregation should acknowledge the debt due to His Lordship the Bishop for the work done by him (applause). The members of the congregation had subscribed, but they knew that Dr. Moran also had contributed to the funds many sums that might legitimately have been applied to support the state becoming his sacred calling (loud applause). He could assure the Bishop that his sacrifice was warmly appreciated by his people, and it was their earnest prayer and hope that not only might his Lordship live to witness the completion of his great undertaking, but that he might be spared long to administer the sacraments of the Church, and perform his sacred functions there.

The Bishop said that, if no other gentleman wished to speak, he would take their silence for consent, and conclude that they agreed to all that had been proposed. Nothing, he added, was more deplorable than debt. It damped all energy. It was, moreover, a waste of money, for interest was very high in this Colony. They could do nothing if they borrowed money. They could not further the interests of their schools, for example, which were so important. If the Cathedral were finished free from debt, the present church could be transformed into an admirable school-room. If no one wished to speak he would conclude that the meeting endorsed all the opinions that had been expressed, and he would take it upon him to dismiss it with thanks. Another thing he had to mention was that Mr. Steinmetz, the organist of the church had kindly undertaken to train for the opening ceremonies, and to take part in the music, any such members of the congregation as were qualified. There must be many who had good voices and a musical ear, and it would be very desirable if a choir could be constructed without being obliged to have recourse to extraneous aid.

The meeting then separated—it being understood that the weekly collections were to be continued with renewed vigour.

An editorial article in the *Liverpool Weekly Post* says:—In the name of peace and good-will I must protest against the flaunting of the banner of bigotry in Liverpool on St. Patrick's Day by the Irish Church Missionary Society. The Irish Catholics of the city appeared to have kept the festival of their patron saint in an exemplary manner. It was remarked on all hands that there was little or no drunkenness amongst the votaries of the national feast, and the peace and goodwill that prevailed so largely, in contrast to the shocking disturbances of ten or fifteen years ago, were a creditable and pleasing result of the influence brought to bear by the priesthood on the "Little Ireland" of Liverpool. Such being the case on the one side, it is all the more deplorable that the group of foolish fanatics who are connected with the "Irish Church Mission" (an entirely chimerical and useless institution) should of all days in the year select St. Patrick's Day on which to hold forth in abuse of Irish Catholics, and in praise of a preposterous society the chief object of which appears to be the payment of the salaries of these blatant Boanerges. Their mission (upon which they acknowledge they spend—or receive—almost fabulous sums of money per annum) has been proved long ago to be an impudent failure. Mr. John Yates, of Liverpool, offered them a substantial contribution if they would produce a single convert, and although he accompanied them to Ireland, along with an impartial reporter of the *Daily Post*, they miserably failed to show any result of their operations. Yet this is the society in which one of the speakers acknowledged that the increase in contributions alone at the end of last year was £10,000. Will the Irish Church missionaries produce a full balance-sheet showing their list of salaries and expenses? I, for one, would like to peruse it.