

THE NEW ST. MARY'S CHURCH, NELSON.

Colonist, January 3, 1882.

THE knowledge that the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new St. Mary's Church was to be performed by his Lordship the Catholic Bishop of Wellington, attracted a very large concourse of people to the neighbourhood of the Convent grounds on Sunday afternoon. At three o'clock a procession headed by the Wellington City Guards Band left the Convent for the site of the new church, which is to be erected partially on the same ground that the church destroyed by fire last Easter stood. In the procession the Band was followed by a cross-bearer, Acolytes, Children of Mary, members of the Hibernian Society, members of church Committee, Sisters of the Convent, the Clergy, and his Lordship the Bishop. On arriving within the church grounds his Lordship took a seat upon a raised dias, and thereupon his Honor Judge Broad read an address, and presented his Lordship with a trowel manufactured from New Zealand silver, and which bore the following inscription:—

"Presented
By the Congregation
to

RIGHT REVEREND DR. REDWOOD,
Bishop of Wellington,

On the occasion of his laying the foundation stone of
New St. Mary's Church, Nelson,
January 1st, 1882."

The following is a copy of the address which was presented:—

"To the Right Reverend, FRANCIS REDWOOD, D.D., Lord Bishop of Wellington.

"May it please your Lordship,—

"We desire to offer to you a hearty welcome to Nelson, and to express our gratitude for your goodness in visiting us at a time when we know you are very busy, and have many prior engagements. We believe the occasion of your coming, however, will have an especial interest for you, as for us. A new church is to be erected to replace the old building in which you were accustomed as a boy to worship God, and it is to lay the foundation stone of this new dwelling place for the Most High, that has induced your Lordship at much personal inconvenience to visit us once more.

"Beside you stand the same venerable priest, who 31 years ago was (as now) Vicar of St. Mary's, and your Lordship's spiritual director in those days gone by. Here is the spot where you resolved to devote your life to the Ministry—this is the district where amongst the many honoured names of the early settlers, none stand higher than those of your late parents. There is then something peculiarly interesting and fitting in your Lordship's association with the day's ceremony.

"You will agree with us that we can never be sufficiently grateful to the Rev. Father Garin for the personal sacrifices he has made for many years to provide a church, boy's school, convent, orphanage, etc., and you will lament with us that increasing infirmities compel him in a large measure to 'rest from his labour,' but it will no doubt be some comfort to him to reflect that he has 'fought a good fight and kept the faith,' and that all classes of this community hold him in high respect, whilst his flock regard him with unbounded affection.

"It is our duty on this occasion to publicly express to your Lordship our appreciation of the vigour and ability displayed by the Rev. Father Mahoney in collecting funds for this new church, and not only on that special account; but the general work of the parish has for a long time mainly fallen upon his shoulders, and has been carried on with such devotion and skill as to have secured our hearty gratitude and admiration.

"Prominent amongst the good works established in this parish are the Convent schools, which from small beginnings have, thanks to the zeal, devotion, and ability of the Sisters, become very large and important establishments. As a congregation, we are conscious how much we owe these excellent ladies of whose self-denying lives it is impossible to speak too highly.

"We trust your Lordship may be spared for many years to administer the Holy Sacraments within the walls of the new church, and we now beg your acceptance of this silver trowel as a memento of the interesting ceremony you are about to perform."

His Lordship said he was very much obliged for the very kind address, which he would acknowledge at greater length at the conclusion of the ceremony, and he then proceeded to explain what the ceremony would be. He said that all things were sanctified by prayer and the word of God, and that the Catholic Church, acting up to this, provided that solemn prayer should be pronounced over water and other elements, and these elements used; that he should first proceed to the spot where a cross had been erected, which marked the spot which would be occupied by the altar of the church, and that he should sprinkle that spot with holy water and offer prayer. He should then proceed to the foundation stone, sprinkle it, and lay it, and then pass round the foundations, invoking God's blessing on the work which was to be erected to His glory, and say the Litany of the Church. The ceremony was then performed by his Lordship, the Wellington Guards Band performing sacred music during a portion thereof. At its conclusion the Bishop preached an excellent sermon, taking for his text the second chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke which he read: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." Having spoken to the glory due to God and His atonement, and the peace it had brought to those willing to accept it, he said the boast of many men was to be independent, but it was only God who could be dependent, for that man was the very creature of independence. They must crucify their own inordinate passion, for such was the high teaching of their Saviour. Having connected the subject of his discourse with the ceremony of the day, he said that in the church to be erected they would be taught the light of God's truth, a perfect code of morality,

and all truths requisite to enable them to attain to their high destiny; but he said it was not enough for them to know what was good; it required also the help of Divine grace to enable them to act up to their knowledge. He then spoke of the church as the place where their children would be baptised, anointed by holy oil before entering upon the greater trials of life, where they would come to receive pardon of their sins, where they would come in their youth and beauty to be made one in holy matrimony, and where they would be anointed after death. In concluding he impressed upon them the necessity of prayer, which he said was a great lever. He quoted the passage "My House is a House of Prayer," and he said the church about to be erected would be a house of prayer to them. His Lordship then said he had to thank those present most cordially for their kind and sympathetic presence there that day. He looked upon the attendance of the many there as a demonstration that they were not as yet a prey to materialism which in reality was a reconcoction of what was taught before our Saviour came on earth, and which could only lead to an anarchy and bring men down to a state of bestiality. His Lordship then alluded in very feeling terms to the venerable Father Garin, who had been here, he said, for thirty-one years, and his Lordship drew a picture of the little cottage which in these days served for chapel, and one portion with a curtain across, did duty for a school, and he said it was there he first pursued the study of French, Latin, Greek, Mathematics, and other subjects. His Lordship spoke of the prudence, abnegation of self, and other priestly conduct practised by Father Garin, and alluded to his efforts in education, stating that 5000 of their youth had been educated under him. He said that Father Garin had been instrumental in rearing those Convents, and lastly the Orphanage, which he hoped was going to do good work. A short time ago the hand of God had fallen heavy on Father Garin, not only visiting him with infirmities, but just after one of their greatest ceremonies there was a roar of fire, and his church was destroyed. His Lordship said that whenever he had heard that fire referred to, he had also heard a word of sympathy for Father Garin that the object of his solicitude and love had been levelled to the ground, but he said God came to his aid, and thanks to the zeal of his worthy co-operator money began to flow in for the erection of a new church, till now they were able to commence the work of erecting a church that would be more beautiful than the old one. His Lordship having alluded to the generosity of all classes in Nelson and other places, said he had again to appeal to them, and he asked them to give what they gave for God, but if those motives did not touch them, he asked them to give for another motive, one honourable to mankind: to give out of that sympathy which it was creditable for man to extend to man.

At the termination of the address the collection was made, and we learn that some £27 was received. The procession then reformed and returned to the Convent, and the large body of people speedily dispersed.

Copies of the *Colonist* and *Evening Mail* of Saturday, the *Tablet* of 23rd December, coins of various values, and an inscription on parchment, were enclosed in a stone bottle, hermetically sealed, and deposited in the cavity beneath the foundation stone. The inscription was as follows:—

"In the 4th year of the Pontificate of His Holiness
Pope Leo XIII.,
and the 45th of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria,
This first stone of St. Mary's Church, Nelson,
was laid on New Year's Day, 1882, by
The Right Rev. Francis Redwood, D.D.,
2nd Lord Bishop of Wellington;
The Rev. Antoine Marie Garin, S.M., having been for 31 years
Vicar of the Parish;
The Rev. William Joseph Mahoney, S.M.,
Curate of the Parish;
Lady Superior of the Convent, the Rev. Mother St. Michael;
Architect, Thomas Turnbull;
Builder, Walter Good;
Governor of the Colony of New Zealand,
The Honorable Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon;
Premier of the Colony.
The Honorable John Hall;
Chief Justice of New Zealand,
The Honorable Sir James Prendergast;
District Judge of Nelson, His Honor Lowther Broad;
Resident Magistrate of Nelson, Oswald Curtis, Esq.;
Mayor of Nelson, Edward Everett, Esq.
This Church is built to replace the former one, which, having been
erected in 1856, and enlarged in 1865, was destroyed
by fire on Easter night, 1881."

The mild young man who has been playing Governor-General in Canada for a few years past, is packing up to go home, and there seems to be a good deal of uncertainty about his return. The royal Court that he set up in Ottawa began to dwindle before his wife went back to England, and has now passed away, and the young man himself is no longer regarded as a person of any particular consequence. He got a very bad scare a few weeks ago, during his trip to the West, and it is said that his nervous system has not yet recovered. The train in which he was travelling met with an accident at night, and he was knocked about a good deal at the moment. As he had been reading about Fenians, dynamite, infernal machines and other dreadful things, his first thought was that a plan had been laid to kill him, and on being flung out of his birth he exclaimed: "My God, it has come; we are all lost!" He was assured there were no Fenians about, and put back in bed, but the shock is believed to be telling on him still. A visit to the Scotch hills may put him again in good trim. His wife returned to England fifteen months ago, suffering from an accident, it was said, but the *London Truth* says she has since passed "a very pleasant time receiving her friends at Kensington, staying with them in the country, and diverting herself with occasional trips abroad." What does that mean?—*Pilot*.