

ST. PATRICK'S BASILICA, OAMARU.

EMBELLISHMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

THE diocese of Dunedin can boast of two churches that are, for New Zealand, almost unique of their kind. They are of the basilica style of architecture, one the beautiful edifice at Oamaru, dedicated to St. Patrick, the other at South Dunedin, also dedicated to Ireland's patron saint. Both churches have much in common, but that at Oamaru is larger and more costly, the magnificent row of stately pillars forming a striking feature in its architectural beauties. The Very Rev. Dean Mackay, of Oamaru, has been unremitting in his efforts to complete the splendid structure, and the latest addition which has been made to it is a richly embossed and panelled zinc ceiling which, says the *Oamaru Mail*, consists of some 72 squares of zinc, about 5ft square, which are fixed in between the cross beams. The general appearance is that of a richly carved and decorated ceiling. Owing to the cunning curves of the decorative portions of the squares, and a judicious contrast of shades, each square has the appearance of sweeping in dome-like lines back a depth of three or four feet, the depth from the cross pieces to the base of the coffers being really only about half that distance. Five shades have been utilised in the coloring, which was undertaken by Dean Mackay, with the assistance of Father Howard and some of the best pupils at the convent school, the work being admirably done in sections before erection. It would be difficult to improve on the arrangement of colours. The ceiling, besides being light while conveying the impression of massiveness, has also the advantage of being an excellent resonator, and has greatly improved the acoustic properties of the basilica. The congregation mean to push on with further embellishments, which, when completed, will, our contemporary remarks, make the basilica one of the show buildings of New Zealand.

The re-opening ceremony, which took place on Sunday last, was conducted by the Most Rev. Dr. Verdon. There was a large congregation at High Mass, which was celebrated by Bishop Verdon, assisted by Father Regnault (Waimate), and Father Howard (Oamaru). The Bishop preached from the text, "Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy House, and the place wherein Thy glory dwelleth." In the course of an eloquent discourse, his Lordship said that these words came naturally to his lips when he looked round and saw the beautiful building which the zeal of their pastor and their own generosity had combined to erect. His Lordship referred to the labours of priests and the generosity of the people in raising and beautifying those temples which they knew by faith were the abodes of the Living God. He exhorted them to labour for the fuller completion of their noble Basilica, and urged upon them the necessity of exhibiting by their attendance there a practical evidence of the faith that was in them.

The musical portion of the service was beautifully rendered by a strong choir, Mrs. Lynch taking the principal solos, and Mr. F. Stokes of Dunedin presiding at the organ. At night there was again a very large congregation, when the Rev. Father Moore preached an impressive sermon.

At the conclusion of the service a pleasing little ceremony was enacted, his Lordship being made the recipient of a handsome and costly buggy rug, as a memento of his visit to Oamaru. In making the presentation on behalf of the Oamaru Catholics, Mr. John Cagney said that the Catholics had heard with great satisfaction from Dean Mackay the glad news of the prospective visit of the Bishop of their diocese. Bishop Verdon, when he entered upon the labours of his diocese, had cut out for himself a long and laborious programme, and the Catholic community, judging from the work he had already done, would see that he had well justified the decision of those who had ordained that he should cross the Tasman Sea to take up the duties of the Dunedin diocese. Though the dark clouds surrounding the death of their late beloved Bishop had heralded his coming, these had faded away. The Catholic community were grateful for his visit, and asked him to accept their small present in the spirit in which it was offered. It was of small intrinsic value, but the load of good wishes which accompanied it gave it an additional value. The speaker remarked that the addition of the beautiful ceiling to their basilica was another plume in the Dean's hat. He complimented the local clergy for the marked success of their work in the cause of religion and education, and, on behalf of the people of Oamaru, prayed that his Lordship would long be spared to guide and guard the diocese committed to his care.

His Lordship, in responding, congratulated the community on their beautiful church, and was glad to find that they were making such progress. They were in good hands with their priests, and their educational facilities were excellent. They had sacrificed much in the past to educate their children properly, and must be prepared to make other sacrifices in the future, for the Catholics could not support a national system of education which was entirely secular. They recognised that their children must have a good, sound Catholic education. In this connection his Lordship paid a very high tribute of praise to the usefulness and thorough work of the nuns of the Dominican Convent, and to the very excellent work done by Mr. Duggan, who was in charge of the boys' school, and whose success has from time to time been chronicled in our columns.

Nothing of real worth can be achieved without working. Man owes his growth chiefly to that active striving of the will, that encounter with difficulty which we call effort; results apparently impracticable are thus often made possible.

The first external revelation of the "dry rot" in men is a tendency to lurk and lounge, to be at street corners without intelligible reason, to be going anywhere when met, to be about many places rather than any, to do nothing tangible, but to have an intention of performing a number of tangible duties to-morrow or the day after.

MARRIAGES.

MR. HENRY REDWOOD, of Woodville, nephew to his Grace Archbishop Redwood and third son of Mr. Charles Redwood (formerly of Blenheim but now a resident of Queensland), was married to Miss Josephine Eissenhardt, of Greymouth, at St. Mary's Cathedral on Monday. Misses O'Meara and McGrath acted as bridesmaids, and the duties of best man were discharged by Mr. Wilfrid Redwood, of Kaikoura, cousin of the bridegroom. The marriage ceremony was performed by his Grace the Archbishop. The dress of the bride was a pretty travelling costume à la Russe, with cream picture hat and plumes. The bridegroom's presents to the bride were a cable bangle, watch and chain, diamond and pearl brooch and ring, and to the bridesmaids, pretty brooches. The honeymoon will be spent at the southern lakes.

Mr. C. Aldridge, of Dunedin, was married to Miss Agnes McParland, second daughter of Mr. F. McParland, J.P., of Wellington, on Wednesday at St. Mary of the Angels. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Father Ainsworth. Miss K. McParland, sister of the bride, was bridesmaid, and Mr. Hunter, Christchurch, acted as best man. Mr. G. Aldridge, brother of the bridegroom, was groomsmen. The bride was attired in a pretty white costume with veil and orange blossoms. The bridegroom's present to the bride was a gold cable bangle and ring, and to the bridesmaid a gold brooch. The newly-wedded pair left for the South in the afternoon.

THE LIGHT THAT CAST NO SHADOW.

CURIOUS stories are told about the powers possessed by certain natives of India, who live up among the Himalaya mountains. These old men, it is said, have devoted scores of years to the study of natural laws and forces, which the rest of the world knows nothing about. Lately a German professor visited the "adepts," as these queer Hindus are called, for the purpose of finding out the secret of their remarkable performances. They treated him rather scurvily, but interested him all the same. One day the professor wanted to examine some ancient Sanskrit manuscripts. An adept went with him to a cave wherein the books were kept. The place was dark as the bottom of a well.

"I can't see to read here," said the visitor.

"Then we will have some light," was the reply, and immediately (the professor says) a soft, pearly light brightened the cave. He could not tell whence it came, but he noticed that it had one strange quality—it cast not the slightest shadow.

This story is hard to believe, yet its truth is affirmed by a man of vast learning and high character, and you who now read it have no reason for doubt except that all the lights you have seen have cast shadows. Belief or unbelief commonly runs parallel with one's own experience. Dr. Johnson sniffed at the account of the Lisbon earthquake, yet credited the tale of the Cock Lane ghost.

A man who has been ill for years, and failed to find a cure, is sceptical when friends tell him of a medicine which they believe will make him well. What else but doubt could result from his experience? Take an example:—

"In the spring of 1888," writes our correspondent, "I fell into a low, weak, and languid state. I felt low-spirited and out of sorts. At first my stomach was deranged, my appetite poor, and after eating I had pain and weight at the chest. I was much troubled with wind, and frequently spat up a sour fluid, also bitter bile. Later on I suffered from nervousness and great depression of spirits. I kept up with my work, but had always a sense of discomfort. Off and on I continued in this way for two years, nothing that I took relieving me. At last I heard of Mother Seigel's Syrup, and procured a supply. After I had taken only a few doses I found relief; my food digested, and gradually all nervousness left me. Although I had no reason at first to feel any confidence in this medicine, never having used it or seen it used, I now gladly admit its value, and its power over disease. Since my recovery, for which I thank Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, I have been in the best of health and spirits. In the interests of suffering humanity I deem it a duty to send you this testimony. (Signed) D. Griffiths, tailor and outfitter, 151, Hockley Hill, Birmingham, June 8th, 1893."

There is a deal of difference between Mr. Griffith's candid letter and the story about the light that cast no shadow. The latter may be true enough, but it cannot be verified without more trouble than it is worth. On the other hand we have a trustworthy witness, who will answer letters of inquiry, and can be found at his address.

Finally, there is nothing mystic or magical about Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. It acts on the theory that most ailments are but symptom, foras, or phases of that universal disease—indigestion and dyspepsia; it cures that, and throws the light of health and happiness over hearths and homes where illness and pain had cast such dark and terrifying shadows. And that is why people believe all that is told of its success by eager witnesses.

Let a boy once distrust the love or tenderness of his parents, and the last resort of his yearning affections—so far as the world goes—is utterly gone. He is on the sure road to a bitter fate. His heart will take on a hard iron covering, that will flash out plenty of fire in its after contact with the world, but it will never, never melt!

One who has tasted the delights of the heights and suffered the agonies of the depths knows that a balanced life is the ideal one—a life in which the trials and sufferings of one time are offset and counterbalanced by delights and compensations at other times, in such ways that humanity is better adjusted, the divinity of man is better apprehended, and the fact that God is infinite is somewhat comprehended.