

THE NEW CONVENT SELECT SCHOOL,  
WELLINGTON.

SOLEMN OPENING BY HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP REDWOOD.

(From our own correspondent.)

THE BUILDING.

THE new select school, erected in connection with the parish school in Dixon street, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, which has been erected at the rear of the parish school, is a handsome, substantial, and commodious edifice. It is a two-storey building, and measures 44ft by 24ft. On the ground floor is a class room 23ft by 18ft; dining room, 15ft by 14ft; music room, 14ft by 12ft; and kitchen, 14ft by 10ft. Leading into these apartments is a porch 12ft by 10ft, fitted up as a hat and cloak room, and an up-to-date lavatory. A well-designed staircase of easy grade leads to the first floor, the whole of which is devoted to a class room, which has been fitted up on the most modern and approved style. Most of the apartments are furnished with gas stoves for heating purposes. The sanitary and ventilating arrangements have been carried out according to the latest scientific principles, and nothing has been left undone so as to ensure the comfort and health of the Sisters and pupils, and also to comply with the city by-laws, and the requirements governing the erection of buildings for scholastic purposes. The exterior of the school is painted a warm stone colour, whilst the interior is finished off in quite an artistic style. The ceilings are of what is known as a dead white tint, whilst the whole of the walls are dadoed to a height of about four feet, and oiled and varnished in a tasteful manner. From the dadoing to the ceiling, the walls are set off in a light emerald green, the effect of which is extremely pleasing. There is a handsome ground enclosure for recreation, to be devoted to the exclusive use of the pupils of the select school. The school has been erected at a cost of about £500, which is a very moderate sum, considering the admirable manner in which the work has been carried out by the contractor, Mr. F. Hunt. Great credit is due to the architect, Mr. J. O'Dea, for the complete building, which has been erected from his specifications and under his supervision at a very moderate cost, and the Very Rev. Father Devoy, V.G., has expressed himself in very complimentary terms regarding the more than satisfactory manner in which the architect has carried out his duties. The Vicar-General and the Catholics of Te Aro parish are to be congratulated on the acquisition of this latest addition to the parochial schools, and that, too, at a minimum of expense.

THE OPENING CEREMONY.

The new school was solemnly blessed on Sunday afternoon by his Grace the Archbishop. Prior to the ceremony a large number of parishioners assembled in the parish school close by. Among those present were Archbishop Redwood, Very Rev. Father Devoy, V.G., Rev. Father O'Shea, Rev. Father Ainsworth, Rev. Father Clancy, Rev. Father Hickson, Dr. Mackin, Messrs. Martin Kennedy, P. F. Garvey, J. O'Dea, T. Davis, Kenny, Lawlor, Houldsworth, Coogan, Butcher, etc. The proceedings commenced with the singing of a couple of hymns by the school children.

The Very Rev. Father Devoy, in asking the Archbishop to perform the blessing and opening ceremony, said that some time ago it became evident to him, and many of the parishioners, that the accommodation for the school children was insufficient, and the question was how to increase that accommodation. There were two courses open to them, one to add to the parish school and the other to purchase a piece of land and build on it. Both of these schemes would be very expensive, as if the infant school were to be enlarged the new wing would have to be erected in accordance with the city by-laws. He then thought that if the Sisters would give a part of their garden at the rear of the parish school, as the site for the new building, it would suit their purpose. He mentioned the matter to the Rev. Mother, who, after consulting with the Sisters, generously fell in with his views. Now, at that time he had not one penny to build the school. He had been depending on the bazaar to bring in the funds, and he need not tell them what a great success that had been a result due to the way in which the ladies, who had got up the affair, worked, so that there was sufficient wherewith to build the school, and a balance left towards paying off the parish debt. When he took charge of the parish they were paying £40 a year rent for a small schoolroom in Newtown, and the children were continually praying that a new school be built for them. Eventually he succeeded, through the generosity of a few gentlemen in the parish, in securing a piece of ground. The ground cost £300 and the school £800. A bazaar had been held to assist in paying off this amount, with the result that £700 had been raised. After the Sisters who had given the ground, his thanks were due to Mr. O'Dea, the architect, who had done his work in a first rate manner; he (Mr. O'Dea) had paid the closest attention to the work, as he was most desirous that it should be second to none in all its requirements. He had been extremely pleased, too, with the manner in which Mr. Hunt, the contractor, did his work. The contract price was very low, so that they had a good building put up for the moderate sum of £439, whilst the highest tender was £700. The school was now finished, and he wished to tender his sincere thanks to his Grace the Archbishop for coming to bless it. There was another matter which he wished to mention—there had been some extras done, and instead of these costing more than the contract price they helped to reduce it by a couple of pounds (laughter). An entertainment given by the children of the school brought in £20, which was devoted to furnishing the school, and the amount handed over by the Hibernian Society, as part of the proceeds of the St. Patrick's Day Demonstration, would be devoted to the purchase of maps. It was usual on such occasions to make a collection to assist in paying off the debt, but he did not intend to do so that day. There was a piece of work which required to be

done, namely, to fence the recreation ground and erect a shed where the children could play in wet weather, and he would be pleased to receive subscriptions for this purpose. In conclusion he begged to thank Messrs E. Daly and Minogue, who had brought material for the play-ground (applause).

His Grace Archbishop Redwood said he had very little to say after the very interesting and satisfactory statement of the Very Rev. Father Devoy. It gave him very great pleasure to be present and assist in the opening of this new school and bless it in the name of God. He desired to congratulate them on the erection of the school. In the first place he desired to congratulate Father Devoy, and in the next place the parishioners who had so heartily co-operated with him, for with hearty co-operation seemingly impossible tasks became easy. He was extremely well pleased to hear from Father Devoy that the architect had given such satisfaction, and also that the builder had done his work faithfully and well. He congratulated both architect and builder, and wished them every prosperity. They knew that education was a great work in the Catholic Church. The Church knew full well that on her youth depended the future of society, and if they were not brought up in virtue they would drift back into infidelity. The salvation of the world, the true prosperity depended on the education imparted to their children. It is the training imparted in the schools which fitted them for the world, and helped them to bear the burdens of life. It was their duty and happiness to see that the children received a proper education at whatever sacrifice, for every sixpence spent in this way was well employed, for in this they were doing the highest and noblest work; they were apostles before God, doing His great work and contributing to the progress and prosperity of the Church of God.

Father Devoy again thanked the Rev. Mother for the generous manner in which she acceded to her request for a site for the school. His Grace also added his sincere thanks to the Rev. Mother.

A procession was then formed when his Grace blessed and formally opened the school. At the conclusion of the ceremony numbers visited the building, one and all of whom were loud in their praise concerning the admirable manner in which it was finished, and at the moderate cost at which the school had been erected.

IRONCLADS IN ACTION.

DESCRIBED BY EXPERTS.

THERE are few landsmen, and not a great number of those who 'go down to the sea in ships' that properly realise what takes place on a modern battleship previous to and during an action. The sea-fight at Manila has given some idea of the powers of destruction that lie in a modern ship of war; but there it was a battle between the lighter ships—mere cruisers and gunboats—of the Spaniards and the far heavier and better-armed vessels of the United States. The battleships of the two powers have yet to meet in action. It is, moreover, quite within the range of possibilities that out of the tangled complications in East and West there may arise a bigger war which will bring all the fierce reserve energy of the great battleships of some of the first-class powers to bear upon each other. So much hangs upon a modern fight at sea that every detail of such gigantic struggles have a perennial interest for the general reader. A writer in the *New York Tribune* gives many particulars which, especially at the present time, cannot fail to be of interest to every reader of the N. Z. TABLET.

The first things, said he, to be remembered by the people on shore who may ere long be reading of a sea-fight between two modern iron-clads, is that modern vessels will fight under way. There is no longer any grappling of two ships, for one or both of them will be destroyed before they can come to such close quarters, or else one of them will be helpless and will have struck her colours. All steam will be put on the moment that the two combatants descried each other on the far horizon. Then the monsters will begin to switch themselves about in the water and lash the waves, and the great frames will tremble with the engines' vibrations.

A lateral trial of the Cincinnati in battle trim occupied ten minutes going and coming over a measured distance, with a floating target at a distance varying from three-quarters of a mile to a mile and an eighth. Her whole battery was fired as many times as possible, one of the 5-inch guns being discharged thirty-six times in the ten minutes, and the others nearly equaling this rapidity. She was a flying cloud of smoke and flame. The ship herself was not visible, gunners could often only guess at the position of the target, or had to wait a few seconds for a little momentary rift in the cloud to take advantage of it. As a matter of fact, the target was completely wrecked, owing to the skill of the officers and gunners' mates. Here let it be said that the lateral sighting of a great gun is more important than the vertical. Get your muzzle working on a line with a target which is parallel with the horizon before you try to train the gun up and down.

The suppressed energy which is apparent in the very frame of a vessel when she sights an enemy is her quick response to the brains on board of her. Could a spectator be poised in mid-air above two battleships approaching each other, he would be struck by the similarity of actions of the human beings aboard them both. What seemed a moment ago an idle 500 men, in harmony with the inert monster they inhabit, spring into a living independent organism like the works of a watch.

'Clear ship for action' is the command of the executive officer, in modern battle every one must expect injury or destruction; he who does not had better not go to sea in a modern ironclad. Some will escape death, but not many. In the engagement between the Peruvian ironclad Huascar and the Blanco Encalada only fifty of the Huascar's crew were uninjured out of 200. One hundred were killed and fifty wounded. And so if Uncle Sam's executive officers give this command next week or next month the fearful seriousness of it will be felt to the core of every man who hears it.