

Rev. Father Caine, O.P., arrived here from the United States by the last inward mail steamer. He has been for the last seventeen years in various parts of the world engaged in missionary work. On last Sunday evening he delivered a very fine sermon on the Apostleship of Prayer. Father Caine left in continuation of his voyage for Sydney last Monday evening.

The St. Patrick's Day celebration committee is working hard to ensure the success of the national festival. Efforts are now being made to have in attendance at the sports two well known international athletes, and though the expense will be heavy, every hope is entertained of securing their services. The national concert will be held this year in the Choral Hall, and the girls and boys from our schools are to sing the opening choruses in the first and second parts of the programme.

At the Marist Brothers' Schoolroom, Pitt street, last evening a concert was tendered to the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Association by their friends. The following contributed items: Madame Casier, Misses L. Knight, M. Donovan, and Messrs. A. Ford, H. Herbert, V. Meredith, H. Hodges, H. Stebbing, E. Glenister. Mr. T. K. Shorland acted as accompanist.

## NEW CHURCH AT OTAUTAU

### OPENED LAST SUNDAY

(From our Special Reporter.)

On Sunday last the handsome new Catholic church erected at Otautau was solemnly blessed and opened for Divine worship. It is now six years since the writer of these lines passed through that rich and fertile district of Southland. It is, so to speak, one of the garden plots of New Zealand, and in few places has there been, of late years, a greater degree of activity among the many factors that have gone to give such a high degree of prosperity to the agricultural interest in the Colony. A favored climate, a rich soil, advanced and skillful methods of farming, pleasant homesteads within their sheltering plantations, rising hamlets, and a sturdy and well set-up population, all combine to give to the Otautau district an air of settled comfort and prosperity. Otautau has itself grown considerably since the present writer's last visit there, and it bids fair to become to the western district of Southland what prosperous and go-ahead Gore is to the eastern.

Closer settlement and other causes have combined to draw population to the district. These have reacted favorably on the Catholic as well as on the non-Catholic element. For some years past the Catholics of Otautau and district have felt that the time was fast becoming ripe for the erection of a church. Under the guidance of their pastor, the Very Rev. Father Sheehan, a strong committee was formed for the purpose of bringing their hopes and wishes to a happy realisation. The committee consisted of the following: Messrs. P. Joyce, R. Sweetman, N. Kelly, F. Kettig, E. Prembergast, J. Thornton, D. Murchison, P. Clifford, R. Gavigan, P. Fahey, B. Fahey, A. Bulman, and J. Killkelly. The matter was taken up with great zeal, funds were rapidly collected, the church—the handsomest edifice in Otautau—was erected, and on last Sunday the good work was crowned by its solemn dedication to the service of the Most High.

#### The Church

is built on a fine and well-planned three-quarter acre section in the main street of the town. With its various projections, its deep and Swiss-looking eaves, its flights of steps, its handsome windows and fine proportions, it presents a handsome and striking appearance. It stands back 60 feet from the main street and is raised three feet from the ground on a solid concrete foundation, neatly cemented off and furnished with two broad flights of concrete steps, the one leading to the main entrance through a fine porch, the other to the sacristy. The deep, gabled roof, is painted in a warm red brown, and all the gables are finished with handsome gold-tipped ornamental crosses. The building is 58 feet long, with 36 feet of nave. The transepts measure 27 feet across, and the chancel 16 feet by 16 feet. The sacristy is 12 feet by 10 feet and forms an extra wing on the outside, as does also the entrance porch, both facing the north or town side and contributing very much towards the handsome appearance which the exterior of the church presents. The walls (in w.b.) are 12 feet high. The roof is pitched

high, the rafters measuring 21 feet. The roof is constructed of heavy principals (9 feet by 4 feet), with braces, purlins, and sarking all shown, and all chamfered and well oiled and giving a handsome appearance to the interior. The roof overhangs the outside walls by three feet. The chancel is formed with a large Gothic arch. Four broad steps lead to the carved altar, which is painted in dull white, picked out with gold. The whole of the chancel is covered with a heavy crimson Brussels carpet, having the conventional ecclesiastical design of the lily woven into its texture—an appropriate emblem for a church that is dedicated to St. Joseph. Above the carved tabernacle are three narrow windows, lighting the chancel, which presents a very handsome appearance to persons entering by the main door of the church. The main building is lighted on each side by three windows, and at each end of transept, as well as over the altar, is a large treble window. The glass in all the windows is of alternate diamond-shaped panes dull gold and violet. The walls of the building inside have a four-foot dado, of picked red pine. The upper part of walls is calomined in a delicate shade of dove grey. The seats and altar-rails are all of beautifully marked red pine, and the supports of the altar-rails and the ends of the seats are carved.

The sacristy is in every respect well furnished, and the church is lighted by massive lamps. Among the special gifts to the church are the following: A splendid pair of five-branched silver candlesticks (the late Mrs. Sweetman, Otautau); a full set of stations of the cross (Mrs. Joyce); a large missal (Mrs. Farrelly); a large crucifix, altar-linen, and communion-cloth (Mrs. N. Kelly); bell (Mrs. Culling).

The church (which cost close on £700) was designed by Messrs. Mackenzie and Wilson, architects, Invercargill; and the work of erection was carried out in a very efficient manner by Mr. Joseph Swap, of Otautau.

#### Opening Ceremonies.

On last Sunday, the day appointed for the dedication and opening of the church, the weather conditions were unfavorable to a degree. The rain fell steadily for the greater part of the day. Nevertheless the church was densely packed in every part by a large congregation from the surrounding districts, and even from places so far beyond Otautau as the Waiata, Heddon Bush, Riverton, etc. At 11 o'clock Solemn High Mass was begun. It was celebrated by Rev. H. W. Cleary (Dunedin), with Very Rev. Dean Burke as deacon, Rev. P. O'Donnell subdeacon, and Very Rev. J. Sheehan (pastor of the district) master of ceremonies. The dedication sermon was preached by Rev. H. W. Cleary from the text: 'I have sanctified this house which thou hast built, to put My name there for ever, and My eyes and My heart shall be there always.'

The music of the Mass was rendered in very efficient style by the Invercargill choir, who were fortunate enough to also secure the valued services of Mrs. Murphy, of the Bluff. The 'Kyrie,' 'Credo,' and 'Sanctus' were from Mozart's Twelfth Mass, and the 'Agnus Dei' from Weber's Mass in G. Mrs. Murphy sang in exquisite style, as an offertory piece, Zelmanna's 'Tantum Ergo.'

In the evening, at Solemn Vespers, the church was again densely crowded. Rev. P. O'Donnell was celebrant, assisted by Very Rev. Dean Burke, Very Rev. J. Sheehan, and Rev. H. W. Cleary. A fine discourse was given by the Very Rev. Dean Burke. He spoke from the text: 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and showed, by an appeal to the facts of history, what the Christian religion had done for the individual, the family, and the State, referring in particular to the abolition of slavery and the elevation of woman from being a mere chattel and upper-slave to the proud position which she holds in the world to-day. In concluding his discourse, the preacher exhorted his hearers to make their religion personal and to show it in the actions of their everyday life.

Father Sheehan returned cordial thanks to the people for their sympathy and generosity, to the committee, whose work had been brought to so successful an issue; to the visiting clergy; and the choir—and in a special manner to Mrs. Murphy—for their valuable and greatly appreciated assistance.

During the evening Mrs. Murphy sang Cherubini's 'Ave Maria' in finished style. Mr. Pasco gave a devotional rendering of Hummel's 'O Salutaris'; and he and Mrs. Murphy also sang Rossi's 'Tantum Ergo.' Miss Hishon presided in a very efficient manner at the organ both morning and evening.

The amount contributed to the building fund at Mass and Vespers amounted to £104—a result which speaks well for the generosity of the congregations present on last Sunday.