

## Presentation to Very Rev. Father O'Neill, Milton.

From the Limerick papers of October 15 we learn that on the previous evening an interesting ceremony took place in St. John's Temperance Hall, when the Very Rev. James O'Neill was made the recipient of an address and handsome set of vestments, the gift of the parishioners of St. John's. The rev. gentleman is a native of St. John's parish, and for the greater part of the year has been home on vacation from New Zealand, the scene of his spiritual labors. He is now (says one of our Limerick contemporaries) about to return, and the residents of St. John's have availed themselves of the opportunity to mark their respect and admiration for their distinguished fellow-citizen by a suitable and valuable gift. The presentation included a set of gold vestments, richly embroidered in fine gold and silver, with a medallion of the Sacred Heart forming a device on the back of the chasuble, which were made at the Convent of the Good Shepherd, Clare street, and are a very handsome piece of work, and reflect very great credit upon the convent. The alb, which was also worked at the convent, is made of rich Limerick lace, and is of very beautiful design.

The chair was taken by the Mayor (Mr. J. Barry), and among those present were the Very Rev. J. O'Neill, Rev. J. Griffin (U.C., St. John's), Rev. J. O'Shea (U.C., do), Rev. R. Fitzgerald (C.O., do), Rev. Father Lynch, C.S.S.R., Very Rev. Dr. Watters, S.M. (Rector, Marist College, Dublin) and a large number of prominent and representative laity, professional and commercial, of the city. His Lordship the Bishop of Limerick gave his hearty and practical support to the presentation.

The proceedings were opened with a concert, at the close of which the Mayor said they had assembled to pay a deserved tribute to a clergyman whose labors in the cause of religion in a foreign land had been crowned with the greatest possible success (applause), who, since his return to his native country and city, had endeared himself to the hearts of everyone (applause). Irishmen were not ungrateful, especially towards those who went forth to a foreign country, amidst strange faces and strange people, and there labored in the cause of the religion for which our forefathers fought and fell (applause). It should be a pleasure to Father O'Neill to see around him the people of St. John's parish to show the rev. gentleman the respect and esteem in which he was held by them (applause). He was sure that many of their fellow-countrymen and women, who had been driven from their own land, had been helped along the rugged path by Father O'Neill, and that these people and others were now looking forward to his speedy return to New Zealand. On behalf of those present he wished Father O'Neill a safe voyage back to the land of his adoption, health and happiness, and hoped he might be spared for many years to carry on the good work. The presentation they were now making would in future days remind Father O'Neill of the happy time he had spent amongst them in his native city (loud applause).

The address, which was beautifully illuminated by Messrs Guy and Co., was enclosed in a massive gilt frame. It was original by reason of the fact that the address was rendered in Irish as well as English, and contained some very fine local views. Mr John O'Donnell having read the address in Irish, Mr John Sheahan (both of whom acted as hon. secretaries) read the address in English, which was as follows:—

Address and Presentation from the Parishioners of St. John's Limerick, to the Rev. James O'Neill, P.P., Milton, Otago, New Zealand.

Rev. and Very Dear Father O'Neill,—We cannot allow you to pass from our midst, after a happy sojourn in your native city, without giving deep expression to the sentiments of mingled grief and joy at your departure. You have for the short time that you have been amongst us, by your rare qualities, singularly endeared yourself to each and every one of us. Yet, though we have to regret your departure, still we cannot but rejoice that after a holy life spent in the interest of the spiritual and temporal welfare of the people of Milton, Otago, New Zealand, we now see it crowned by the splendid and edifying work you have accomplished for the Holy Faith in the land of your adoption. The services which you have rendered in furthering the Gaelic revival and industrial movements are highly appreciated by all. We now, dear Rev. Father, beg your acceptance of this address, as an expression of our regard and esteem for you, together with the accompanying presentation, and this we hope you will wear for many years to come in health and happiness. Reverend Father, it only remains for us to wish you a pleasant voyage to again resume your spiritual ministrations of charity, piety, and zeal in the vineyard of the Lord.

Signed on behalf of your faithful friends and fellow-parishioners,

James F. Barry, Mayor; John O'Donnell and John Sheahan, hon. secs.; Patrick Hurley, hon. treas.; Thomas O'Neill, John Griffin, John Doyle, James Greaney, Donat Cantrell, Patrick McInerney, U.D.C.; John Hurley, Daniel Clancy, Thomas Greo, Joseph Quinn.

Father O'Neill, who was received with enthusiasm, said his feelings on that occasion would have to be interpreted by their own thoughts rather than by any words of his. The fact of their concealing from him their intention to make such a presentation until the last moment made it imperative on him to fall into line with the practice of avoiding useless talk now taking place in Ireland. The time for talking had gone in Ireland—the time for action had come (applause). He was glad to see there many faces he had known in the years of his boyhood. A great many had, no doubt, passed over to the majority, but that was a fate that would overtake them all. He was very grateful for their kindness. He could never forget the kindness of the priests of St. John's—he was always a welcome

guest at the presbytery and treated by them as a brother and a friend. In New Zealand it had sometimes been suggested to him on occasions, when he was called on to address various societies, to speak on the subject of Limerick and Sarsfield, and there was no subject he liked to speak about more. The spot where they were standing, the site of the Temperance rooms, was historic. It was in the vicinity of that spot that the Irish women distinguished themselves centuries ago in the cause of Faith and fatherland (applause). They had also very near them in St. John's parish a place which was the subject of many a good natured song in social gatherings all the world over—dear Garryowen (applause). That air had been heard by him through different parts of America, Australia, New Zealand, and in different places over Europe. The melody touched the hearts of all Irishmen, and brought back the recollections to dear old Ireland. He should again say he did not know what he had done to deserve such a gift. There might be some reason for it, if he had labored amongst them—the moral of the whole thing was that the best parish in the world to be born in, was St. John's (laughter). He thanked the Mayor, the Rev. Fathers, and his friends, the Rev. Dr. Watters, who for many years had presided successfully over an educational establishment in New Zealand, whom he was glad to see present on that occasion (applause). He thanked the committee who had taken the matter in hand, and who experienced nothing but spontaneity from the parishioners. He should carry out their wishes in wearing the beautiful vestments they had presented him with, and which were a credit to Limerick workmanship. Wherever he went he would show in them what Limerick could do. He understood that the lace had been exhibited at the Cork Exhibition, and was one of the finest pieces of Limerick lace ever shown. He should take occasion to point out what could be done in Ireland in such matters. He wished the Irish revival and Industrial movements in the country the heartiest success, and that it would go on prospering until Ireland would be able to keep at home all her own children, and would win back again much of the population she had lost through industrial conditions over which she had no control (applause). Father O'Neill referred to the working of the Irish class in New Zealand, where, he said, the rosary for some time past had been said in Irish in some of the churches, and the old people still retained, and loved the language. He then, by way of conclusion, addressed a few words in Irish to the audience, the purport of which was that in the course of a few years in Ireland, if the people continued zealous in the Irish language, that it would be spoken in the churches, in the streets, and in the houses of the people (applause).

On the proposition of Mr Ralph Nash, seconded by Mr S. Hastings, a vote of thanks was passed to the Mayor for presiding.

Later the Very Rev. Father O'Neill and others were entertained at supper in the Temperance rooms. Songs were contributed by Very Rev. Father O'Neill, Rev. Father Griffin, the Mayor, and Mr Ralph Nash, and an enjoyable evening was spent.

## Diocesan News

### ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

December 13.

The Rev. Father Kimbell, who has been on a holiday in Australia, left Sydney on the 10th inst.

The Rev. Father Murphy, S.J., arrived by the Monowai on Thursday from Australia. He is to preach retreats in the South.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was held at St. Mary of the Angels' on Sunday last.

The annual picnic of the children attending the Catholic schools will be held at the Bellevue Gardens, Lower Hutt, on Boxing Day. The committee have made satisfactory arrangements for an enjoyable day's outing.

Fering reference was made in all the churches on Sunday last to the late Father Malone, for whom the prayers of the congregation were specially asked.

Rev. Fathers O'Shea, Mahony, Galerne, and Holley, who left on Monday morning to attend the funeral of the late Father Malone, returned home on Wednesday evening. The three first-named were ordained at the same time as the deceased.

The children attending the convent schools at the Lower Hutt gave the cantata 'The White Cat' at the Oddfellows' Hall on Wednesday evening last, and repeated it on Friday night at Petone. The cantata was very creditably performed by the children and reflected great credit on those responsible for their training. The following took the principal parts:—Misses Radford, Gray, Sullivan, Casey, Garner, and Master Joseph Casey. Several vocal and instrumental items were given during the interval and were greatly appreciated.

### DIocese of CHRISTCHURCH.

(From our own correspondent.)

December 15.

A large number of children made their First Communion at St. Mary's, Manchester street, on Sunday, and were afterwards entertained in the adjoining school-room by ladies of the congregation.

The Rev. Father McCarthy, C.M., preached at Vespers in the Pro-Cathedral on Sunday last; the subject of his discourse being a preparation for the worthy observance of the festival of Christmas.

# RIDE "ANGLO SPECIAL" CYCLES.