

mantles, slowly and solemnly carry in the folded papal flag and approach the outstretched mats, while the Archbishop, clergy, and assembly rise to their feet in token of respect for the present of the venerated Sovereign Pontiff. And instantly the crowd, unable to contain its emotion, burst into spontaneous and loud shouts of welcome. The flag is laid on the mats, and gradually unfolded to its full length. Next a series of speeches of welcome and gratitude are delivered by some of the principal chiefs, preceded by the solemn ritual chants of olden days. Obviously the audience is much impressed. The speeches are brief, as becomes the great occasion, as the speakers keenly feel their inadequate powers of due expression.

When the speeches cease, the Archbishop rises to respond. He salutes the tribes from the various districts of the Dominion, and then he briefly tells how, some years ago, the tribes then assembled erected in Pukekaraka hill the metal statue of St. Peter, which the Archbishop solemnly blessed; how many precious mats were taken by him to the Pope, accompanied by a Maori address, illuminated and framed, with the good translation of the same in Italian, how, in return, the Holy Father sent back by the Archbishop to the Maoris beautiful and valuable presents of religious objects, which were received with jubilation by the Maoris brought together for the purpose of accepting them with due respect, gratitude, and solemnity. Then he pointed out to his hearers the symbolism of the flag—its colors, white and yellow, like the golden rays of the sun; its keys, recalling the spiritual power given by Christ to the first Pope, St. Peter, with those divine words of everlasting import: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven': finally, its tiara, tipifying the threefold authority of the Popes over heaven, earth, and hell—hell to conquer, earth to sanctify, and heaven to fill with the elect. The present flag would be to them and to all the Catholic Maoris of New Zealand a rallying point to keep them in their holy faith, and stimulate them to live in accordance with its precepts. Peter was the rock upon which Christ built His Church. Peter lives in his successors, the Popes, who are, like Peter, the Vicars of Christ. Where the Pope is, there is Peter, and where Peter is, there is the true Church, and nowhere else. Thus the Catholic religion was summed up symbolically in this large, rich, handsome flag, which in their great gatherings and solemn festivities would be their standard and their pride, and in its folds they would raise aloft and carry abroad the faith and virtues of their holy religion. Salutation again to all, with best Christmas and New Year wishes.

When his Grace the Archbishop sat down, Very Rev. Dean Regnault rose and said that after the apt and copious speech of the Archbishop, his own talk was only to be the echo of those eloquent words; but he had one item of news to convey to them which doubtless would afford them unalloyed pleasure, namely, that he hoped in the course of the next year to be in Rome and to present personally to his Holiness their greetings and their tokens of loyalty to the Supreme Pontiff, the common father of all the faithful, and particularly of all the Catholic tribes in New Zealand.

The proceedings closed with the shaking of hands, when all, men, women, and children, passed in procession before the Archbishop and ardently shook and reverently kissed his hand.

On Sunday, December 28, at the 7 o'clock Mass, a goodly number of Maori children made their First Holy Communion. For several days preceding, Rev. Father Venning, S.M., had worked with untiring energy and unflagging zeal to prepare these young hearts for the worthy reception of their Lord.

After the 11 o'clock Mass, the Archbishop confirmed a large number of candidates. A short address on the Sacrament of Confirmation was delivered by his Grace, and interpreted by Rev. Father Vibeau,

S.M., who acted as interpreter to the Archbishop on the various occasions of his speeches to the assembled Maoris.

A very large and solid concrete pedestal has just been erected for the metal statue of St. Peter, on Pukekaraka hill, at the expense of Te Ara, a Catholic Maori chieftainness of considerable influence, who is proud to wear the fine cross presented to her by Pope Pius X. on one of the Archbishop's visits to Rome. The Archbishop took occasion of this ceremony of specially blessing this pedestal, to impress again upon the Catholic Maoris the depth and importance of the lesson conveyed to them by this statue of St. Peter. In a few well-chosen sentences he showed them that where Peter is, there is the rock on which the Church was built by Christ and made indestructible, the Church against which the gates of hell shall never prevail; that where the successor of St. Peter is, there is Peter, and where Peter is, there is the true Church which is vainly sought elsewhere.

During the ceremony the new papal flag was hoisted on its high mast, where it floated resplendent in the rays of the afternoon summer sun. Another touching and significant monument is erected on Pukekaraka hill, the high cross over the grave of the late Father Cognet, S.M., so dear to the Natives for his zeal and affection, and for his works in the Maori language for the use of all the Catholic Maoris. This was blessed by the Archbishop, and appropriate prayers for the deceased missionaries, particularly Father Comte, were sung and recited.

In his speech before the statue of St. Peter, his Grace feelingly referred to two facts most interesting to the Natives:—(1) The spot where the ashes of Father Cognet repose is the very place in which stood for years the first Catholic church erected in the Otaki district; (2) The small Maori house, erected close by on the same hill, occupies the very site of the residence of Father Comte, the first Catholic missionary to the Otaki Maoris. Appropriate hymns were sung at these interesting spots, and then the crowd came down to the lawn, where an extensive photographic group of the clergy and laity was taken. So ended the outdoor ceremonies of this eventful day.

#### The Evening's Ceremonies.

At half-past six o'clock Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament took place in the church, and then preparations on an extensive scale were made in front of the grotto of Lourdes for the celebrations in honor of the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God. This grotto was beautifully illuminated, and a portion of the space in front of it and the lawn below were sufficiently lighted up. The Natives, men and women, had gathered in goodly numbers round a harmonium and sang several hymns with great fervor and excellent effect. Among them were 'Ave, Maris Stella' in Maori, 'Ave, Ave, Maria,' the special hymn of Lourdes, already translated into so many different languages.

Very Rev. Dean Regnault preached a very interesting sermon, interpreted by Father Vibeau, in which he gave a full and interesting account of the apparition of our Lady to the privileged child, Bernadette Soubirous, and the words which passed between them till the day came, the 25th of March, the feast of the Annunciation, when the Blessed Virgin said to the child, 'I am the Immaculate Conception.' The discourse was followed by other hymns in honor of Mary Immaculate, after which the illuminations were completed, all Pukekaraka hill being lighted up, as well as the grotto of Lourdes and a most brilliant cross, the last-mentioned recalling the cross which appeared to the Emperor Constantine, and which led to his victory over the tyrant Maxentius and the edict of peace for the whole Church, published at Milan.

The effect was equally varied and charming, and thus all the religious celebrations of the day were brought to a most effective close. The whole assembly next adjourned to the largest meeting house, as on previous nights, when important work was gone through and continued to a late hour. For those readers who have not had the privilege of attending

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