

## A PASTORAL VISIT

## HIS LORDSHIP BISHOP GRIMES IN WESTLAND

Considerable space is devoted by the *Hokitika Guardian* of May 5 (writes our Christchurch correspondent) to an account of the visitation of the South Westland portion of the diocese by his Lordship Bishop Grimes. As previously stated (says the *Guardian*) his Lordship Bishop Grimes, accompanied by Rev. Father Hyland, left Hokitika in the steamer *Jane Douglas* on Wednesday, April 20. The journey down was a very pleasant one, and after going on with the steamer to Jackson's Bay and staying a night at anchor at Open Bay Island, the settlement of Okuru was reached on Friday, April 22. Here a stay was made till the following Monday morning. The whole of the residents of the settlement turned out in full force to welcome the visitors, who were the guests of Mr. J. Cuttance at his homestead, and their reception there was of a most hospitable nature. The settlers of the district for twenty miles around came in to attend the services that were held during the visit. The schoolroom was found too small for the services, and the public hall which had been tastefully decorated for the occasion was then utilised. On Sunday morning Mass was celebrated, and afterwards nineteen candidates received the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Bishop referred in special terms to the good work among the children by Mr. A. J. Saville, who was giving them a splendid education. The weather during the stay was perfect, with one slight exception, a little light rain falling one morning. Thanks to the kindness of the owner, Mr. Molloy, and Captain Vendore, of the *Jane Douglas*, who went to a considerable amount of trouble to make the journey as enjoyable as possible, his Lordship and Father Hyland were enabled to again join the steamer at Okuru and journey to Bruce Bay, thereby saving a long, wearisome horseback ride from Okuru to Bruce Bay of 57 miles, a trying journey to those in the strongest of health.

On arrival at Bruce Bay on Monday night, April 25, the settlers were present in full force to meet his Lordship. In landing by means of the surf boat, at the landing place Mr. T. Condon drove into the surf right up to the surf boat, and the visitors were enabled to get into the conveyance without even getting their feet wet. They were then driven out to Mr. T. Condon's homestead at Mahitahi, a stay being made there until the following Wednesday. Instruction to the children was given by Rev. Father Hyland until Wednesday morning. Services were held each day, and on Wednesday morning ten candidates were confirmed. An appeal was also made on behalf of the Cathedral fund, and it was very generously responded to, a similar appeal at Okuru also being likewise well received.

On Wednesday, April 27, at 10.30 a.m., the visitors left Mr. Condon's comfortable homestead at Mahitahi, the owner accompanying the visitors as far as Bruce Bay. A short stay was made at Mr. J. Ritchie's, where dinner was partaken of. In the afternoon the party left for Weheka, a distance of 31 miles, a stiff day's ride. The travelling was good, the rivers were fairly low, and the track was in good order, while perfect weather prevailed. The journey was broken with a short stay at Mr. A. O. Scott's homestead. His Lordship was agreeably surprised to find such a pleasant homestead, with its well-preserved plantation of virgin native bush, almost right up to the hall door, in all its splendor. The homestead is beautifully situated on the Karangaroa River. After a short stay, the journey was again resumed, a further call being made at the homestead of Mrs. Ryan at Pekanga. The visitors arrived at Mr. F. Williams's homestead at Weheka (Cook's River) about 6 o'clock that night, and were met there by Rev. Father O'Connor, who had come on from Ross to assist his Lordship during the remainder of his journey. A stay was made at Weheka from the Tuesday night until the following Friday morning, the visitors receiving every possible attention at Mr. and Mrs. Williams's hands.

Next day a visit was made to Fox Glacier, one of the lowest in the world. A beautiful view was obtained, and on the way back a magnificent sunset was seen, the appearance of Mount Cook, Mount Sefton, and the whole of the Southern Alps in the vicinity being a ravishing sight of stirring beauty. The next morning a good view of the comet was obtained, the mountains being moon-bathed and making a very charming spectacle. The settlers of the district came in full force to welcome his Lordship, and to assist at Mass and receive the Sacraments, and five candidates were confirmed.

On Friday, April 29, the visitors, accompanied by Messrs. Sullivan and Williams and Miss Mulvaney, left the charming Cooks River settlement for Tataru (Waiho). On the way the first typical wet day of the journey was experienced, the rain coming down uninterruptedly. They rode through in the wet, a journey of some seventeen miles, reaching Mr. Patrick's well known residence.

Here again, as at all the other centres, their reception was of the warmest and most cordial nature. On Saturday morning Mass was celebrated and a number approached the Sacraments. Shortly after they left Mr. Patrick's, Rev. Father O'Connor having charge of a pair of sturdy horses and buggy. The torrential downpour continued unabated. The creeks on this part of the journey were found to be

running high in flood. Especially was this found to be the case at McDonald's Creek, where the buggy was bodily lifted by the force of the current. Rev. Father O'Connor and his pair, however, were equal to the task, and the party crossed safely. Mr. F. Heveltdt's at The Forks was reached in good time. A stay was made here for a couple of hours awaiting information as to the condition of the rivers on the way. They eventually left The Forks about 3 o'clock, Mr. Heveltdt accompanying as pilot. With some little difficulty the Waitangi river was crossed, and Mr. J. Butler's homestead was reached shortly after 4 o'clock. The weather at this stage was the worst experienced during the tour. There was a continuous heavy rain, accompanied by some of the most vivid lightning and heavy thunder ever experienced by the visitors. One crash of thunder in particular was exceptionally severe, and was the cause of much comment by the settlers.

On Saturday morning and evening devotions were held at which all the settlers in the vicinity assisted. Rev. Father Hyland was busily engaged in preparing the candidates for next day's solemnities. On Sunday morning his Lordship dedicated the new church recently erected at Waitangi, about a mile distant from Mr. Butler's homestead, nicely situated, and surrounded by the beautiful virgin forest. The incessant rain of the previous day still continued, and the rivers being in heavy flood some of the more distant settlers could not get in to the morning service. There was in spite of this a very good attendance, and four candidates were confirmed. After the last Mass an address of welcome was presented by the settlers to his Lordship in which they expressed their great pleasure at his presence once more in the district, and their hope that at an early date his Cathedral would be free of debt and ready for consecration. They likened his Lordship to the Apostle of the Gentiles, who braved the perils of sea and land to dispense the consolations of Holy Faith to the members of his flock scattered in the remote districts of the diocese. The settlers who were prevented by the floods from putting in an appearance at the morning services managed to get in during the afternoon owing to the rivers subsiding a little, and they assisted in the devotions that night. On the Monday morning after Mass, Confirmation was again administered to those who were prevented from attending on the previous day.

After Mass on Monday morning, May 2, the northward journey was continued. The travellers had a fairly good trip. The rivers, including the Little Wanganui, were somewhat high, and there were a number of minor wash-outs caused by the floods. On the way the ravages of the storm of a month ago were very noticeable in some places, large areas of bush being wholly uprooted by the force of the wind. Mr. J. Adamson's comfortable homestead at Hari Hari was reached in good time and a stay was here made, every possible comfort and attention being given. On Tuesday morning considerable doubt was felt as to the possibility of crossing the Big Wanganui river, and had it not been for the assistance received at the hands of Messrs. J. Diedrich and H. Hende they would not have been able to have crossed the river so soon. Mr. Diedrich and Father O'Connor took the conveyance over and H. Hende ferried the Bishop and Father Hyland across by boat. The onward journey was then continued, a stoppage being made at Mr. Urquhart's for lunch, a considerable improvement being noticeable here since the last visit. The party then pushed on, and though the Mikonui river was in flood, Ross was safely reached that (Tuesday) night at 6 o'clock, after a very trying day.

## General Impressions.

Commenting on the visit generally, his Lordship expressed his great satisfaction, which had proved very consoling to him, to find the intelligent way in which the candidates for Confirmation had answered the various questions put to them. He recognised that this was largely due to the care and attention of the Sunday school teachers and the settlers, and the organisation of the catechism classes by the priest in charge of the extensive district, which was by far the largest in the whole diocese. The teachers deserved every praise for their devotedness and the careful manner in which they attended to their good work. He had been deeply impressed (his Lordship continued) with the loyalty of the settlers to their faith, and they showed they deeply appreciated that treasure which had been handed down to them. Describing the scenery of South Westland, his Lordship referred to it as incomparable in beauty. He had been all over the world, but he had rarely seen anything to equal those vast forests, the snow-capped mountains, and the picturesque lakes which are to be seen on all sides in the southern district. Among the many improvements noticeable since his visit nine years ago there was nothing, continued his Lordship, that had proved such an immense boon to the settlers as the extension of the telephone to Okuru. The value of this convenience could hardly be estimated, and in many ways it was daily proving its great value. Personally, he would never have been able to have gone through the district with such despatch but for the telephone, which was invaluable to travellers in obtaining information as to the state of the rivers on their difficult journey. The people of the whole district highly appreciate the convenience. Since his last visit he had found many of the roads much improved. There were still a great number of requirements needed by the sturdy settlers of South Westland, who deserved

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