

PRESENTATION TO FATHER O'MALLEY, SOUTH DUNEDIN

St. Patrick's Schoolroom, South Dunedin, was crowded on Wednesday evening, when a farewell gathering was held for the purpose of giving the parishioners an opportunity of bidding good-bye to the Rev. Father O'Malley prior to his return of his native archdiocese of Cashel, after working for ten years in the Dunedin diocese. Mr. J. J. Marlow presided, and there were present Rev. Fathers Coffey, O'Malley, Delany, (Father O'Malley's successor in South Dunedin), Corcoran, and D. O'Neill, Messrs. C. A. Shiel, W. Carr, and other representatives of the congregation.

After a programme of musical items had been given Mr. Marlow, addressing the meeting, said that they were present that evening to say farewell to Rev. Father O'Malley, who had labored successfully in their midst for some years. He felt that it would be no easy task for him to do justice to the work of Father O'Malley in the parish since he came amongst them, and if he did say all he wished to say he would probably offend Father O'Malley, who disliked praise of any kind. There was one kind of work which Father O'Malley made a specialty of, and that was looking after indifferent members of his flock, and in this he was most successful, having induced several to become practical Catholics. When the people heard that Father O'Malley was about to return to his native land it was decided that they should give him some tangible token of the esteem and respect in which he was held, and appreciation of the good work he had done in the parish, and he (Mr. Marlow) had much pleasure in stating that he was never connected with any presentation which was responded to so readily and with such spontaneity as this one, this being the case not alone in South Dunedin but in the Cathedral parish, where several contributed most generously. During his time in South Dunedin Father O'Malley had done good work amongst the young men as well as the congregation as a whole. The address which he was about to read would express more forcibly than any words of his the people's appreciation of the sterling work done by Father O'Malley in their midst. Mr. Marlow then read the following address:—

'Rev. and dear Father,—When it came to our knowledge that you were about to leave us to resume your priestly duties in Ireland, there was a widespread feeling of regret that these changes would be necessary. The years you have spent in our midst have been full of noble work: Your great zeal and energy for anything you deemed needful for our spiritual advancement, your assiduous labors for the inmates of St. Vincent de Paul's Orphanage, your zeal in ministering to the sick and dying, your untiring labors for the young men, have all stamped you as a true priest and a genuine friend. In leaving us for Ireland you are taking with you the best wishes of every Catholic in the district, and the respect and esteem of all with whom you have been brought into contact. We ask you to accept the accompanying purse of sovereigns, with our fervent prayers that God may bless your work in the Dear Old Land. We beg to remain, Rev. and Dear Father, on behalf of the Catholics of South Dunedin, affectionately yours.—James J. Marlow (chairman), William Carr (hon. sec.), Chas. Alex. Shiel (hon. treas.)'

At the conclusion of the reading of the address, which was an artistic work in book form, Mr. Marlow handed Father O'Malley a purse of ninety sovereigns.

Mr. C. A. Shiel said he could endorse every word that was said by Mr. Marlow regarding Father O'Malley's worth and work. Not alone had he done good work in South Dunedin, but the people of every parish where he had been since he came to New Zealand were grateful for the work

done by him. There was one trait in his character which they all admired and that was his straightforwardness, for when he wanted anything done or any work carried out he did not hesitate about asking the assistance and co-operation of his people, which was always readily given.

Mr. W. Carr also spoke briefly regarding Father O'Malley's work, dwelling especially on the improvements which he had made, with the co-operation of the parishioners, in the school grounds.

Rev. Father O'Malley, who on rising to reply was received with prolonged applause, said that the tie which united priest and people was similar to the tie that existed between the shepherd and his flock. It was the duty of the priest at all times to look after and minister to his people just as it was the duty of the shepherd to lead, feed and protect his flock. The priest like the shepherd must guard his flock with vigilance, assist the weaklings, and give consolation and spiritual assistance to those in suffering and sorrow. The young need especial care, for there is a tendency in this new country for young people to get beyond legitimate control, and therefore it was necessary for the pastor to exercise great vigilance in dealing with that portion of his flock. Furthermore there falls to the lot of the priest in this new country many and various duties; he has not only to undertake the building of churches and presbyteries, but also schools, and in carrying out such work he must have expert counsel to assist him in dealing with men of the world, and he was pleased to say that at all times the members of the congregation who were men of virile Catholicity gladly and willingly placed their services at his disposal and assisted him by their advice. There was one thing that consoled him for the breaking of the ties that bound him to the people of South Dunedin, and that was he was not going to a strange country; he was going to a land where the people were noted for their generosity—a land where priests and people were united by ties of faith and love, and wherever his lot might be cast in his native diocese he would always look back with fond remembrance to the many friends he had left in New Zealand, which country would always be very dear to his heart (applause).

Father O'Malley then introduced his successor to the meeting. Father Delany, he said, was no stranger to the Catholics of South Dunedin. He had done good work in Invercargill, Naseby, and Gore, and he had no doubt but that he would do equally good work in South Dunedin.

Rev. Father Delany said it was somewhat of a disadvantage to come after one who had been so successful as Father O'Malley, but he trusted that with the assistance of the people the church would continue to progress in South Dunedin.

Rev. Father Coffey, after paying a tribute to the zeal and energy of Father O'Malley, said he felt confident that Father Delany would prove a successful administrator.

A vote of thanks to the chairman, to the performers, and the audience for their attendance brought the proceedings to a close.

The following contributed to the evening's musical programme: Misses M. Mahony, C. Kerr, A. Heffernan, and Messrs. J. T. Carr and F. Perkins. Mrs. Mooney played the accompaniments.

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