

## DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH

### SILVER JUBILEE OF BISHOP GRIMES

#### TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' WORK IN CANTERBURY

In May next (says the *Lyttelton Times*) the Christchurch diocese of the Catholic Church will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary, and, by a happy coincidence, Bishop Grimes will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his episcopate. The event, of course, is an important one from a Church point of view, as it marks a notable advance in social, religious, and philanthropic work in this part of the Dominion; but there are many people of all denominations and in all classes of society who will regard it as a fitting opportunity for congratulating Bishop Grimes on the success of his efforts since he came to Christchurch, at a time when the city had hardly emerged from its days of small things. During the twenty-five years that have passed he has taken an active and zealous part in public life, and in many ways has shown that he has the welfare of the city and the whole community at heart. The history of his career as occupant of the see is largely bound up with the history of Christchurch, and it is a record of many achievements that have benefited the people.

#### Diocese of Christchurch Erected.

Prior to 1887 Christchurch was part of the Wellington diocese, but petitions had been sent to Rome asking the Holy Father to detach it from Wellington. The Holy See had decided to comply with the request of the petitioners, as the proposal was supported by the Most Rev. Dr. Redwood. According to rumor, indeed, as early as 1884, the present occupant of the see had been already appointed, when the Australian prelates, with the late Cardinal Moran at their head, requested the Pope to withhold the appointment until after the first Plenary, or National Council, to be held in Sydney in 1885. At that Council it was unanimously decided to petition the Apostolic See to erect an archdiocese or metropolitan see in New Zealand, and to create a new diocese, with Christchurch as its seat; and amongst the names submitted to the Holy Father was that of the present Bishop. On May 13, 1887, accordingly, Pope Leo XIII. raised the diocese of Wellington to the rank of a metropolitan see. He named Dr. Redwood its first Archbishop, and Dr. Grimes, then rector of St. Mary's, Paignton, in Devonshire, first Bishop of the diocese of Christchurch.

Cardinal Manning had consented to consecrate the new prelate, but was taken ill a few days before the function, and Cardinal Vaughan, then Bishop of Salford, took his place, and performed the ceremony in the beautiful church of the Marist Fathers, St. Ann's, London. The Bishop of Christchurch was the first bishop consecrated by Cardinal Vaughan. The co-consecrators, or assistant prelates, were the Bishop of Southwark (the Right Rev. Dr. Butt) and the Bishop of Emmaus (the Right Rev. Dr. Patterson), who also preached the consecration sermon. Among the laity present at the solemn and impressive function were Sir Charles Clifford, father of Sir George Clifford, the first Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. White, with several members of their family, and Mr. and Mrs. Martin Kennedy, who then resided in Greymouth. At a subsequent banquet Sir Charles Clifford gave a very interesting description of his early pioneer days in this country.

#### Arrival of Bishop Grimes in New Zealand.

It was impossible for the new Bishop to leave Europe until December in the same year. He reached Wellington at the end of January, 1888, and, accompanied by his Grace the Archbishop, the late Dean Ginaty, and several other priests, arrived at Lyttelton in time to offer up the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass on Candlemas day, February 2. On the evening of the same day he came on to Christchurch by a special train, was met by an immense gathering of priests and people, and was installed by the Metropolitan, Archbishop Redwood. Amongst those who met him were the late Bishop

Harper, Dean Harper, Sir C. C. Bowen, Sir Westby Perceval, and Messrs. H. H. Loughnan, J. Barrett, G. O'Malley, M. Ryan, P. Henly, the late Mr. E. O'Connor, and other prominent residents. On his arrival in the city he found that the Catholic Church, now the Girls' Parochial School in Lower High street, was served by three zealous priests, who had to minister not only to all the Catholics of the city, but also to those in the outlying districts of Addington, Halswell, Hornby, Papanui, Woolston, Sumner, and New Brighton, besides visiting the two prisons, the mental hospital, and other institutions in the city.

After a short stay in Christchurch, Bishop Grimes began the visitation of his diocese, comprising the whole of Canterbury, Westland, and a portion of the province of Nelson, and the Chatham Islands, and since then he has visited the whole diocese eleven or twelve times, preaching and ministering in every church, convent and chapel within its boundaries. More than once, he has penetrated South Westland to Jackson's Bay, where, in 1901, he had a terrible experience on the *Jane Douglas*. With four priests, he was for nearly a week obliged to seek shelter in the old *Jane* at Open Bay Island. It was thought throughout New Zealand and Australia that the vessel, with all aboard, was lost. When Bishop Grimes at last landed and reached the post and telephone office he received many congratulatory messages and telegrams, amongst others from the King, who was then visiting New Zealand as the Duke of York; Lord Ranfurly, Mr. R. J. Seddon (then the Premier), and Sir Joseph Ward. Among the strange incidents in connection with that adventure was the fact that the Bishop was enabled to read his own obituary in a provincial journal sent to him by one of his priests. He had not been many years in the diocese before he saw the need of establishing another parish in Christchurch. He cut off a large part from the pro-cathedral parish and formed an independent one in Manchester street, now known as St. Mary's parish.

During the last quarter of a century great progress has been made in church and in school matters in the Catholic diocese, while the number of priests has doubled itself. There are now sixty churches, ten teaching Brothers of the Marist Order, six different Orders of nuns with 240 Sisters, nine boarding or high schools, and twenty-six primary schools, attended by over 3000 children. In addition, there is the institute known as Mount Magdala with an industrial and preservation school containing over 250 inmates: a home for the aged and infirm of both sexes, conducted by the Sisters of Nazareth, who attend to the wants of ninety aged persons, some of them blind, others paralysed or otherwise helpless, and nearly 100 orphans. A high school for boys has been opened recently on the Ferry road, and is known as St. Bede's Collegiate School; and a missionary residence, with four missionaries, has been established at Temuka.

#### Increase of Churches and Schools.

Since the erection of the diocese in 1887, new parishes have been established at Fairlie, Akaroa, Leeston, Darfield, Hawarden, and Christchurch North, and in addition to the magnificent cathedral in the city, churches have been built or enlarged at Manchester street, Timaru, Waimate, Waiau Downs, Makikihi, St. Andrews, Hakateramea, Fairlie, Albany, the Cave, the Hinds, Rakaia, Methven, Hornby, New Brighton, Woolston, Leeston, Darfield, Springfield, Coalgate, Rangiora, Hawarden, Cheviot, Hanmer, Waiau, Greymouth, Blackball, Rimu, Ahaura, Barrytown, Dunollie, Kanieri, and Waitangi. New schools have been erected or enlarged in Christchurch North, Christchurch South, Addington, Halswell, Lyttelton, Akaroa, Rangiora, Darfield, Leeston, Temuka, Timaru, Waimate, Kumara, Greymouth, Brunerton, Dunollie, Hokitika, Kanieri, Ross, and Rimu. Presbyteries have been built, secured, or greatly enlarged in Christchurch, Lyttelton, Akaroa, Darfield, Hawarden, Leeston, Lincoln, Greymouth, Hokitika, Ross, Ahaura, Ashburton, Temuka, Timaru, and Waimate; new convents have been erected in Colombo street, Christchurch, Mount Magdala, Sydenham, Lyttelton, Akaroa, Rangiora, Darfield, Kumara, and Ross; Catholic Clubs have been opened in Christchurch,