

its trained and skilful law-giver, its cultured protagonist, its mightiest bulwark, the beacon-light in its watch-tower ever flooding his own diocese with the clear warm light of Divine truth, and periodically flashing the polished shafts of that light with meteoric brilliancy not only throughout the Dominion but across the Tasman Sea to the Australian Commonwealth as well. To get some idea of the magnitude of the work accomplished, we have to go back to his consecration on the Feast of St. Patrick, 1874, "when he put on the robe of glory and was clothed with the perfection of power." A brief survey of the difficulties that confronted him, and of the scanty material within reach for fortifying and consolidating the Temple of God, will give us an idea of the courage, and the wisdom and the physical endurance needed to successfully discharge all the duties appertaining to his exalted and responsible office, and a glance at the flourishing condition of the magnificently equipped Archdiocese of Wellington to-day will show us how faithfully, how zealously his Grace "has taken care of his people" and how adequately and richly he has supplied all their spiritual needs. The Diocese of Wellington was then only in the chrysalis stage of its development, poor in resources and equipment, rich in the immensity and productivity of its vast territory, in the perennial beauty of its foliage and verdure, in its pastoral, agricultural and mineral wealth, but above all rich in the possession of a Chief Pastor who like the Patriarchs of old "ever walked before God." With only seventeen priests to break the bread of life to the eight or nine thousand Catholics scattered over the vast area now comprising the

Archdiocese of Wellington,

with only thirty unpretentious churches in which to preach the Word of God and feed the lambs of Christ—with only a few Catholic schools and a tiny pioneer band of that illustrious teaching Order, the Sisters of Mercy, to which the Church throughout Australasia is so much indebted—the problems confronting the young Bishop at the threshold of his episcopal career were many and complex. But when we call to mind who he was, and the intellectual and spiritual equipment with which he was endowed, we cease to marvel at the signal success of his administration, at the undaunted spirit displayed by him in the laborious and perilous discharge of duty in those far-off days when modes of transit were primitive, and at the splendid provision made for the various elements and needs of a rapidly expanding Catholic population. The son of that old Staffordshire stock, that could not be torn from the faith by all the savage ferocity and the crippling disabilities of the Penal Laws, was not one to be daunted or deterred by difficulties or dangers in the discharge of duty, by swollen rivers, impassable gorges, angry seas. Nor was his unshaken confidence in God to be weakened by the paucity of priests and religious teachers, nor by the scanty material resources at his command.

Among the contributing factors of his Grace's glorious record in Wellington I place in the forefront *his personal holiness of life*. Though no witnesses survive to tell us of the purity and piety of his early years, of those forewarnings of grace, which marked him like the youthful Timothy for the ministry to which his life was devoted, his selection by that saintly and discerning man of God, Father Garin, is sufficient evidence that his boyhood gave early promise of the virtues that adorned his life, and that the signs of his heavenly vocation were early manifest in the grace and wisdom wherein he grew. Of him as

Priest, Bishop, and Archbishop

it may be truly said in the words of my text that "when he went up to the Holy Altar, he honored the vesture of holiness." "And as the sun shineth, so did he shine in the Temple of God" by the brilliancy of his intellectual attainments, but even more I will venture to say by that radiant purity of heart and soul, that unaffected holiness, which has made that long span of life luminous as light in the New Zealand Church. This ever clarified and spiritualised his vision, for "the clean of heart see God." It gave an irresistible force and charm to the living word

issuing from the lips of one "ever faithful as the steward of God." It purified the springs of all the multiple activities crowded into that long life. It exhibited a picture of daily beauty that God contemplated with delight, and priests and people with ever increasing reverence. It merited as we believe and procured for him a rich and constant infusion of heavenly graces and gifts, and thus may I not say that holiness of life has been the source of strength and largely the secret of his successful administration.

Again his Grace "propped up the House, and in his days fortified the Temple" by his faithful life-long observance of the Divine command to "preach the Gospel to every creature," and by his singular success in every branch of the Apostolic Ministry of Preaching. Not for purposes of vain-glory did he apply himself so assiduously to the acquisition of theological lore during his long and distinguished course of studies. Not to win human glory or applause did he by a course of general reading with his wonderfully retentive and absorbing powers of memory and mind amass that rich store of knowledge and information by which like the great High Priest of old "he obtained glory in his conversation with the people"—an extrinsic glory that added literary lustre to the virtues of the man of God. No—but because he took to heart early in life St. Paul's advice to his disciple Timothy "Carefully study to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Tim. 3, 15). To rightly handle the word of truth that it might penetrate and sink into the souls of the people was the noble ambition that throbbed through every fibre of his being.

Few among the Prelates of the Australasian Church

have ever handled the Word of Truth with such eloquent force, such dialectic skill, such literary grace, and such convincing oratory. I speak not so much of those occasional displays at functions like the opening of St. Mary's, Sydney, the Requiem for Archbishop Vaughan and so on when mighty audiences were held spell-bound by his oratory. Nor do I refer except in a passing way to those crises when a clear and cogent exposition of the mind and teaching of the Church on social and economic questions was needed except to say that all New Zealand instinctively looked to Wellington for that exposition, and the illustrious head of the Church there never disappointed. I refer more especially to those homely expositions of Catholic doctrine from the pulpit of the Basilica or on his visitations throughout the Archdiocese by which like the High Priest of old "he took care of his nation and delivered them from destruction." Rarely has one heard the great truths of Salvation announced with such clearness, elegance, simplicity, majesty, and lovingness of heart. Rarely did one behold the dignity of the Christian minister, the sublimity of the apostolic office, more fully realised than in that noble form when he stood on predella or pulpit, and flung broadcast the seed of God's word. No wonder "the people were in admiration at his doctrine, for he spoke as one having power" (Matt. 9, 28). Oh, how he appealed to and touched the simple hearts of his people during his visitations in the back-blocks! What light and comfort did he bring to them when he developed the Parables of the Gospel in the language of the people, a language almost as beautiful in its imagery as that in which they were first preached—a language in which he conveyed to the minds of the "bush" audience the most abstruse dogmas of theology and made them as transparent as if clothed in garments of gauze.

Finally, he "propped up the House and in his days fortified the Temple"—solidified and enriched it by his single-minded, enlightened, and whole-hearted zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. That zeal found its beneficent outlet in the laborious and often perilous

Parochial Visitations,

that meant so much sacrifice and self-denial especially in the early days, and in those wise Synodal Laws, the outcome of expert knowledge and

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