

Children's Demonstration

GREAT GATHERING AT TOWN HALL.

Some 4000 children of the Catholic schools of Wellington, with a large influx of children from the outside schools of the province, assembled in the Town Hall on Wednesday afternoon to honor his Grace Archbishop Redwood by the presentation of an exquisitely illuminated address signed by pupils on behalf of each school.

Such a gathering of fine young New Zealanders has seldom been seen in the building. The left of the choir was composed of the boys of the Marist Brothers' School, and on the right were the Guilford Terrace Convent girls. The body of the hall was filled by the other schools. In the centre of the semi-circle at the back of the gallery were Sisters of nearly every Order, on the right the lady boarders of the Convents of the Sacred Heart (Island Bay) and St. Mary's (Hill Street), and on the left the hundreds of visiting clergy. The appearance of the hall, with each school arranged in orderly manner with its colors, and the graceful veils and green scarves of the pupils of the convents, was striking. There was not enough room to allow of the admission of the parents, and the hall was taxed to admit the pupils alone.

As the procession of bishops, headed by the Papal Delegate (Archbishop Cattaneo) and the jubilarian himself, approached the platform, the applause which spontaneously broke out was deafening, and a continual roll of clapping turned to cheers as Archbishop Redwood seated himself.

The well-known excellence of the musical tuition of Catholic teachers, reflected by the aid of fresh, sweet young voices, was evidenced in the musical programme arranged in his Grace's honor. The Guilford Terrace School girls sang "The Angel" (Rubinstein), subdued at the opening, triumphantly jubilant at the close; "Angels That Hover Round Us" (Wallace) was well rendered by the Marist Brothers' School boys; a septette of the Guilford Terrace girls gave a musicianly and perfectly balanced rendition of "La Donna e Mobile" ("Rigoletto"), the charm of their voices being irresistible. The singing of the combined schools in "God Defend New Zealand" and "Faith of Our Fathers" was magnificent in the volume of sound, which drowned the organ, and, when suddenly cut off by the baton of Brother Fidelis, echoed splendidly in the high ceiling. Mr. Paul Cullen was the organist and Mrs. Emerson the accompanist.

The enthusiasm of the Gathering mounted steadily, applause broke out at frequent intervals, and when the chosen pupils of the schools formed up for the presentation of the beautiful address, which was read by Mr. Vernon Redwood, the jubilarian received a veritable ovation. The address was as follows:—

CHILDREN'S ADDRESS.

Your Grace,—

We, the children of the Archdiocese, offer to you on this day of days our praises for your years that are past and our good wishes for the years that are to come.

We know your Grace loves our country as your own, for your days of childhood and of boyhood were spent here. It was in New Zealand, too, that you heard the whispering of a gentle voice that made you the first from our shores to be called to the altar of God. Therefore, do we greet you to-day as one who has brought us honor, and given us a noble example.

As New Zealanders we are proud of you; as Catholic children we rejoice that God has so long spared you to His Church to be our Bishop, as you were Bishop when our parents were little children. Because we love our country and are proud of and treasure our Faith, we salute and honor your Grace who are to us a daily lesson of a life well lived for Faith and Fatherland.

That God may spare your long life into greater length of days is the united prayer we, your children, offer you as our hearts' best gift to-day.

We are, on behalf of the Catholic School Children of Wellington Archdiocese— (Signed)

THE ARCHBISHOP'S REPLY.

The representatives of the schools having paid their homage to the jubilarian and the applause having subsided, his Grace replied:

"You have just sung the national hymn of New Zealand," he said; "you have sung again and again

'God Defend New Zealand.'

I pray God to defend New Zealand from the greatest possible enemy. The greatest possible enemy of any country

is to be without religion, the greatest misfortune that can befall any country is to have only secular education. Without religion it cannot have any sound morality, it cannot have any hope in this world or the next. It is the birth-right of every child to have a Catholic education. (Applause.) To have a Catholic education means that the child must be taught by able Catholic teachers, that it must live in a Catholic atmosphere, and parents are bound to see that it gets that education. Parents risk the salvation of souls if they neglect the education of their children. I wish this to ring in the ears of every person in the land. Some parents do not realise that, and send their children to an atmosphere where God's name is not known and not heard. It is appalling to think of the ignorance that prevails in a country where the education is not Catholic. . . . I am determined all my life to secure Catholic children Catholic education, with the best teachers, such as we have many of in this district, with its convents and colleges and daily elementary schools, all working and living in a Catholic atmosphere, taught not merely by theory and thought, but by example. The way of precept is long and tiresome, the way of example is short and efficacious.

"I am very pleased to be here to-day, and to see nearly 4000 Catholic children. I would be a very sorry disciple of Jesus Christ if I did not love you children. Christ made the most magnificent promises to those who helped the little children, and the most terrible threats to those who scandalised them or went against them. What an awful scandal it is to deprive these children of a Catholic education. Woe to the country with only materialistic ideas! But that is not the case with you who are brought up in the Catholic manner, free from sin and naturally happy. I congratulate your teachers, able and competent to teach you and giving you a perfect example. Continue in that way, and the time will come when you will be a force and a power in the country."

His Lordship Dr. Shiel, Bishop of Rockhampton, also addressed the children. All then joined in singing "Faith of Our Fathers," the effect being very impressive. Many of the teachers and parents, besides prelates and clergy, were in attendance.

CONVERSAZIONE AT TOWN HALL

The conversazione at the Town Hall on Wednesday evening was a brilliant success. Prolonged cheers greeted the prelates on their entering the building, the "War March of the Priests" (Atilla) pealed forth from the organ.

The venerable Jubilarian thanked the Australian prelates for the great honor their presence conferred on the Dominion, and expressed satisfaction at seeing thousands present to greet them.

Archbishop O'Shea associated himself with the Most Rev. Dr. Redwood's remarks.

Mr. P. J. O'Regan, in a vigorous speech, castigated the Mayor of Wellington, who clearly did not represent the people, for failing to do his duty. He referred to Dr. Liston as the only Bishop honored by prosecution for sedition, and commended the Mayor and Council of Nelson for their recognition of a great citizen.

Archbishop Barry, Bishops Dwyer (Wagga), and Bishop O'Farrell also spoke, the latter's references to Wellington's humbledom was received with great applause. Rev. Father Ryan's singing delighted the vast audience, and the gathering provided a grand termination to a most successful series of celebrations.

The musical part of the conversazione was of excellent quality. It consisted of the following items:—"Jubilee Song" (words by Eileen Duggan, music by Bernard Page), by the combined choirs, conducted by Signor A. Truda; song, "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms" (encore, "Mother Machree"), Mr. P. Fitzgerald; song, "The Fairy Tales of Ireland" (encore, "Waiata Poi"), Miss M. McKeown; song, "The Ould Plaid Shawl" (encore, "Casey's Fiddle"), Mr. Charles Hickmott; song, "O'Donnell Abu" (encore, "Minstrel Boy," "My Little Kerry Cow," and "Snowy Breasted Pearl"), Rev. Father Ryan, S.M.; "Credo," from Gounod's "Messe Solennelle," combined choirs; and "Faith of Our Fathers" (all). A feature of the concert was the singing of two Maori songs by a quartet of Maori ladies, "Greetings to the Visitors" and "Farewell." Father Ryan's fine voice was delightful, and he was at home equally in the humor and pathos of the Irish songs. The massed singing was a fine volume of melody, an inspiring experience. The enthusiasm throughout was quite remarkable.