

and it is for this loving service as well as to carry on the work of our Redemption, to apply its graces and to bring home to all men the fruits of the Passion of Christ, that Holy Church erects her temples and surrounds their solemn opening with significant pomp and ceremony. In the venerable books which the Church uses to-day, she insists on the purposes for which the temple is built. She recalls to her priests and to her faithful people that the House of God is a house of prayer; that it is the judgment seat of God, the Oracle of Truth, the home of the Spouse, the city of God amongst men, the vestibule of heaven. The Church is a house of prayer, a place set apart from the busy turmoil of men, and from the manifold Babel of the outside world, where the soul may retire and recognise that intimate bond of union which unites it to its Creator, and in which consists the essence of religion,—that childlike, loving, trustful dependence upon the Heavenly Father, that spirit of submission to His Holy Will in all things, that hopeful longing for the final reward and the fulfilment of His divine purposes in time and in eternity. The House of God is a house of prayer in a higher sense. It is the theatre where the Church offers up her solemn supplications in the name of her people. Every public act of hers, the mighty Mass, the Divine Office, the public devotions, each is an admirable prayer, breathing the purest faith and hope and love, venerable in form and expression, laden with the aspirations and the yearnings of ages, and saturated with those divine graces which have flowed so long and so abundantly through these holy channels. Here in all patience and gentleness, the Merciful Judge awakens in the soul a sense of duty; and of the outraged majesty of God; He answers all doubts, and relieves all fears and obtains for the laws of the Eternal Father a willing and affectionate obedience. Drinking of the sweet waters of this perennial fount, the soul goes on its way, invigorated and refreshed. Thus, through the agency of this intimate and personal tribunal of the Confessional, is the discipline of a Christian life brought home to all, especially to the young whose characters are still in the moulding; and here there is nourished the spirit of self-restraint and due submission which is the saving element of society as it is the foundation of personal sanctity. And finally, the Church is the regular and usual place for the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It stands from century to century as the echo of the divine mandate: Going therefore, teach ye all nations. The Church is thus a school of divine wisdom in which God is our teacher: His mandates our constant study: His unchanging Will, our guide and criterion in all things.

And thus the teaching that will issue forth from this school of divine philosophy will reveal to the pupils who have come to be trained at the hands of the Sisters of Mercy, the origin, the purpose and the ultimate destiny of their lives, and the means whereby that destiny may be accomplished. Here will these pupils learn the one great truth in which all knowledge is contained and which Christ Himself declares to be eternal life:—This is eternal life: to know Thee, the One True God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent into the world. With the school nestling in the shadow of it, this classic temple will for ever stand as a monument of the invincible determination of the Catholic Church that as regards the children entrusted to her charge, far from being divorced from secular instruction, religion will direct it, inform, permeate, and vitalise it with her ennobling, refining, and hallowing influences.

May I, a pupil of the Sisters of Mercy, to whom I owe my first lesson in piety and religion (after those learned from a saintly mother), by whom were sown the first seedlings of my priestly and religious vocation, may I offer in my own name and in the name of the vast concourse assembled here to-day, our united congratulations to you and to all those who have been associated with you in magnanimous co-operation in the painful and long-protracted labors that to-day are so gloriously consummated, and pray that this heroic tribute of love and adoration may draw down upon you showers of divine benediction. And I feel it is meet that e'er this day of rejoicing passes away, we should recall the merits of those whose prayers have gone into this holy work, and

without whose spiritual co-operation it could not have arisen. Foremost, the great and saintly soul of Mother Cecilia, to whose sacred memory the foundation stone of this massive pile was laid. In her loving heart, this edifice first took shape and the autumn of her life was spent in ardent prayer for its realisation.

It was not given her to behold the outcome of her hopes and prayers, but we feel that she looks down upon us from the Jerusalem that is above, not built with hands, and her spirit is with us to-day, rejoices with us. And it is meet to recall on this solemn occasion, the first pupil of St. Mary's Preparatory College—Dick Barrett—who was so tragically dashed out of life, but only we feel that his untarnished soul might wing its flight into the outstretched arms of the Loving Saviour Whom in life he so deeply loved. To his fond memory, we dedicate this chaste altar of sacrifice (donated by his bereaved parents), whereon the saving blood of our dear Redeemer will plead, if needs so be, for rest and refreshment for his soul. And so we commit to its appointed tasks this glorious church. It is still burdened with debt. The loving Dweller of the Tabernacle is but a tenant at will, liable to be despoiled of His Home till the financial encumbrances incidental to its erection be removed. But, dear Sisters, fear not on this score. With the spirit of faith that has ever animated the children of Holy Church we will rally around you, willingly, cheerfully; regarding it as a privilege and a joy to be allowed to set at least one stone in this memorial of gratitude to God for all His tender mercies to His people. Come forward then "with a ready and most devout mind," with your first fruits to free His House of God from debt and present it unencumbered to the worship of your Lord and King. And in return for the love-tribute you offer to the Sacred Heart to-day, may the Great God increase in you, Sisters of Mercy and in your benefactors, the spirit of Faith; may He multiply in you the virtues of piety, humility, and charity; may He preserve you from the contagion of the world and its cankering spirit; having reared the massive walls of this city of God on earth, may He insert your purified souls in the immortal walls of the New Jerusalem, and in the Heavenly Sion, may you stand in the eternal sanctuary of the Most High, entranced with the joy and gladness that the vision of his supernal perfections awakens in the soul, and haloed with the super-resplendent glory reserved for those who in life have spent themselves in the glorious work of erecting and adorning and dedicating temples to the honor and glory of the Living God.

### A SUCCESSFUL ENTERTAINMENT

St. Joseph's Hall, Dunedin, was quite filled on last Wednesday when a charming entertainment, organised by Miss Moira Coughlan for the benefit of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, was presented. As was to be expected, a considerable portion of the programme consisted of dancing, and the display given by Miss Coughlan's numerous pupils was a very fine one indeed. The first part was opened with some pretty drill movements and the second with a fairy scena. The dances included an Irish reel, Egyptian dance, Spanish dance, Russian dance, classic and step dances. Other pleasing items were action songs, a Japanese scena, and a Maori scena. Other juvenile numbers were recitations by Master M. Coughlan and song by Master Leo McDonnell. A feature of the entertainment was the singing of Miss Clare Dillon and recitations by Miss Alice Campbell, A.T.C.L.; an especially fine number being the vocal duet by Miss Dillon and Mr. Sidney Taylor. Other vocalists were Miss Myra Wynne, Miss Olive Halligan, Messrs. L. J. McCullough and R. W. Fox. Misses Alice George and Moira Coughlan were accompanists. At the conclusion of the programme his Lordship the Bishop, who was present with several of the clergy, expressed appreciation of Miss Coughlan's kindly action in organising such a charming and successful entertainment for the benefit of a very worthy object. He thanked the performers for the pleasure they had given the large audience, and complimented Miss Coughlan on the results of her tuition as shown in the artistry displayed by her pupils.

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